

MINUTES

Of the Meeting of the

River Cree District Salmon Fishery Board

Held at The Belted Galloway, Newton Stewart

On Wednesday 6th February 2019 at 5.30 pm

Present

(A) Board Members/Mandatories

Terence Flanagan - in the Chair

Duncan Baillie

Murdo Crosbie

Jim Davidson

(B) Attendees

Billy McHarg (Treasurer)

Matthew Pumphrey (Clerk)

Jamie Ribbens (GFT)

(1) Apologies for Absence

Gene Fryatt and Steve Smith.

(2) Minutes of Meeting of 17th October 2018 and of AMP/APM of 21st November 2018

These were approved without demur. It was agreed that, if there was any question raised as to whether this meeting was quorate, then the decision to approve these Minutes and any other decisions taken at the meeting should be ratified at the next meeting.

(3) Matters arising from previous Minutes

The Chairman had written to Jamie Ribbens as requested by the AMP. The Annual Report and Audited Accounts had been sent to the Scottish Ministers.

(4) Chairman's Report

Dougie Brown had managed to persuade Finlay Carson (local MSP for Galloway) to hold a meeting on the subject of Forestry planting. The Chairman, Murdo Crosbie, Jamie Hyslop and Jamie Ribbens had attended along with Dougie Brown and representatives from SEPA and the Forestry Commission. It had been a slightly depressing meeting in that Government policy was to encourage more Sitka Spruce planting - even where there was peat.

The Chairman mentioned that, as the beginning of the fishing season was approaching, a reminder should be made of the RCHHT trophy to be awarded for the first salmon caught. Also, in order to raise the profile of the river, it might be a good idea to offer free fishing for the first week of the season. These proposals would be considered by the Angling Association.

The Chairman commented on the new legal requirement for proprietors to keep a record of "rod days" fished for salmon, to be added to the catch return sent to Marine Scotland. Guidance given to him over the telephone by Marine Scotland was that a "rod day" was any part of a day when a beat was fished for however long and if more than one person fished a beat (for however long) there would be more than one "rod day" to be reported.

(5) Treasurer's Report

Four levies, amounting to £2,512.50 in total, were still outstanding with £2,287.50 of this being due by Glentool Estates. The Treasurer's forecast for the next year was a surplus of £750. This was thought to be insufficient. However, as there were so few members of the Board present, it was agreed to defer the question of whether the levy should be raised to the next meeting. He would like to be able to issue the new levy notices in April.

It was agreed that the Clerk should seek clarification of why the two Crown Fishings had been derated in consequence of being deemed to be unworkable.

(6) GFT Report

Jamie Ribbens said there was no update on any possible new pike regulations.

GFT responded in December to a consultation on the Newton Stewart Flood Protection Scheme regarding EIA screening. It covered most things but some further mitigation measures were requested by them.

He reported on the Scottish Government's Forestry Strategy which had just been launched. GFT had submitted detailed comments to the consultation but the final version was very disappointing. He agreed with the Chairman that the meeting with Finlay Carson had not been particularly helpful.

He reiterated what the Chairman had stated regarding reporting 'angling effort' from 2019 onwards. He said that the Scottish Government had told him that there might be new legislation on gill netting at some point and also that there was a planned review of stocking processes with regard to licensing brood stock capture etc.

It had not been a particularly good year for fishing across most Scottish rivers.

He concluded on the positive note that European funding had been given for the employment of Jessica Rodger to focus on prioritising key areas for habitat restoration and delivering improvements through partnership working. The focus would be on Forestry areas. This was welcomed by the Board who would be kept in touch.

(7) RCHHT Report

Murdo Crosbie circulated a written report on the activities of the Trust since the last meeting. He emphasised that although the paragraph on "Forestry Project 2019" was small in length, an enormous amount of time and energy had been spent on removal of trees. He showed more "before" and "after" pictures from his mobile phone.

(8) Conservation Code

Amendments to the Code were agreed, to include the legal requirement to record "rod days" fished for salmon. The Chairman would circulate the amended Code to members.

(9) AOCB

None

(10) Date of next Meeting

The next meeting would be held at the same venue at 5.30 on 3rd April 2019.

The meeting closed at 6.45 pm

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Chairman

