

**MINUTES of the BOARD MEETING of the
NORTH AND WEST DISTRICT
SALMON FISHERY BOARD held on
Friday 21st May 2021
at 11.30 am by Zoom**

Present: Mr R Vestey (Convener)
Mr D Davies (Vice-Convener)
Mr A Balfour
Mr T Kirkwood
Mr C Macleod

In Attendance: Mr R Whitson (Bell Ingram - Clerk)
Dr S Marshall (WSFT)
Mr I Munro (Member of the Public)

Apologies: Mr D Lindsay
Mr K Dunbar
Mr R Bradford

The Convener welcomed all present to the video conference Board Meeting.

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Mr D Lindsay, Mr K Dunbar and Mr R Bradford.

2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Alan Balfour informed the meeting that he no longer had any financial interest in Loch Duart Ltd, having sold his shares during 2020.

3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 22 MAY 2020

The Minutes were agreed and signed as an accurate record.

4. MATTERS ARISING

The Clerk was asked to give an update on seal management and the implications of the latest legislation surrounding the protection of fish farms from marauding seals.

5. FINANCIAL REPORT

The Clerk gave the meeting an overview of the present financial position having resolved the difficulties with the bank and opened a new Board account which allowed electronic access and payments.

The bank position was £37,244.82. There was one outstanding assessment for the year totalling £72 that was in hand,

6. BUDGET AND PROPOSED ASSESSMENTS

The Clerk presented the proposed budget for the year to 28th May 2022. The Board considered it and asked for a revised budget to be adopted based on a 36p in the pound assessment for the coming year.

The annual donation to the WSFT is to remain at £15,000 for the coming year.

7. WEST SUTHERLAND FISHERIES TRUST REPORT

Shona Marshall's report had been circulated with the meeting papers.

There were two key points where activities had been curtailed; namely that the education programme for the year had suffered in line with the Covid restrictions, also the ghillies seminar had been cancelled also due to Covid. There were no questions.

The WSFT plans for the coming year are as stated in the assessment and improvement of migratory salmonid populations in West Sutherland paper circulated with the meeting papers.

8. FISH FARM UPDATE & FMS

The Clerk gave an update on the present situation regarding fish farms in the Board area. Polly Burns, the Fishery Farm Interactions Manager had left FMS and has been replaced by Charlotte Middleton. The Board asked that Charlotte be invited to join the next meeting if she is available.

The Missing Salmon Alliance is about to start its' west coast project, designed to replicate the project conducted on the east coast and to inform survival and migration patterns.

Alan Balfour stated that he felt there should be no more fish farming in the Board area, which was agreed by all.

David Davies was concerned about the situation with the local Marine Harvest takeover of the broodstock facility at Inverpolly. His main concerns were related to possible increased pollution and would report back to the Board once the plans were clearer.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Board welcomed Tim Kirkwood as mandatory for Braesgill, WildLand. Tim has extensive experience in the fish farming sector and would be a valuable addition to the Board given the problems we are facing with the sector.

Tim explained some of the work being undertaken by WildLand on Loch Eriboll, with an underwater survey being undertaken to inform conservation initiatives and to promote sustainable fishing.

The project, which is being undertaken in conjunction with Glasgow University is also planned to be used as an exemplar with the key to its success being the interaction with the community, identifying how ecosystems can be connected from mountain to loch.

10. DATE OF AGM AND NEXT BOARD MEETING

Date: Wednesday 10th November by Zoom, with the Spring 2022 meeting to be provisionally face to face TBC

Bell Ingram
Chartered Surveyors
High Street
Beaulieu

RSMW/NW/1
June 2021