

The North and West District Salmon Fishery Board

Annual Board Meeting

Friday 29th May 2026 at 14:30

Macphail Centre, Ullapool

Attendees

Sara Harkins (SH)

Anastasia Young – Clerk (AY)

Robin Vestey – Convenor (RV)

Alan Balfour (AB)

Richard Osborne (RO)

Lana Richardson (LR)

Shona Marshall – WSFT (SM)

Andy Johnson - WSFT (AJ)

Alan Wells – FMS (AW)

Keith Dunbar (KD)

David Davies – Vice Convenor (DD)

The Convenor welcomed all to the 2026 Annual Board Meeting.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Dougal Lindsay and Cathel MacLeod.

A representative from Loch Duart was due to attend however had car issues. Loch Duart sent their apologies post meeting.

2. Declarations of Financial Interest

LR is Trustee of both the West Sutherland Fisheries Trust and the Flow Country Rivers Trust.

SH is also a Trustee of WSFT and works on the North West 2045 group.

AY to update the register.

3. Complaints

A complaint was received from Andrew Graham-Stewart regarding the levels of Sea Lice reported by Loch Duart, and how the Board have been dealing with this matter. AY has been liaising with AGS and responded to his concerns on behalf of the Board.

While the Board has done everything in its powers to raise this matter with Loch Duart, it does not have statutory powers to enforce against them.

4. Minutes of Meeting held on 25th of November 2025

The minutes were circulated and approved prior to the meeting.

AY to update the third paragraph of matters arising from resurgence to recovery.

5. Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

6. Financial report

The Clerk gave an update on the financials. The bank balance at the date of the meeting was £8441. The debtors are sitting at £7000. The Clerk will be chasing the debtors and will ensure contact details are up to date.

The budget to actual report was as expected. The clerk noted a few payments were still to be made. Accounting costs were increased this year as the audit firm invoiced for two years' worth of accounts.

7. Budget – Year to 28th May 2027

The Clerk gave an overview of the budget report. The assessments will be increased to 42p in the pound this year. This will allow the Board to contribute a further £5000 to the West Sutherland Fisheries Trust.

It was noted that the budget will leave a gap in cash flow, however the Clerk hopes payment of the debts will fill this.

8. Triennial elections

A triennial election was held and agreed as follows:

Upper Proprietors

R Vestey

D Davies

S Harkins

L Richardson

G Osborne

Lower Proprietors

D Lindsay
A Balfour

Co-opted Members

C Macleod
K Dunbar

Convener and Vice Convener

A Balfour – Convener
D Davies – Vice Convener

Clerk

Anastasia Young (Bell Ingram LLP)

The Board thanked Robin Vestey for his commitment over the years and welcomed Alan Balfour as the new Convenor.

9. West Sutherland Fisheries Trust report

The WSFT report was circulated prior to the meeting and an overview was provided.

AJ was introduced to the Board and provided background on his work with the Trust.

It was noted that costs are rising and grant funding is becoming less available. AB mentioned funding is coming available through SSERF (Scottish Salmon Education Research fund), formally Wild Fisheries Fund.

Members discussed the importance of asking anglers and visitors to donate to the Trust.

10. FMS update

An update was given by AW on FMS activity -

- FMS have been working on the Wild Salmon strategy.
- Paul Sizeland is working on the Rivers Fund.
- FMS have been successful in Parliament, with the introduction of stricter fines through the Natural Environment Bill.
- The Marine Scotland Fund was a success. Enforcement equipment was issued to Board members.
- Helen Feenan has continued to lead and engage on salmon farming.

It was noted that SEPA appeals have concluded and a response should be received shortly.

11. Any other Business

There have been reports of Freshwater Pearl poaching, members were urged to be vigilant.

Members were alerted that RV had two boats damaged through vandalism.

12. Date of next meeting

The next meeting will take place on the 12th November at 10:00 via Zoom.