

**MINUTES of the MEETING of the NORTHERN DISTRICT SALMON FISHERY BOARD held on
TUESDAY 22nd SEPTEMBER 2020 at 2.10PM via VIDEOCONFERENCING**

Present: Mr Toby Ward (Chairman)
Lord Iliffe (Naver)
Mr S Green (Naver)
Mr P Gray (Naver)
Mr D Buchan (Naver)
Mrs L Lyle (Naver)
The Hon G Lopes (Naver)
Mr D Hurst-Brown (Halladale)
Mr A Adamson (Kinloch)
Mr V Hackel (Strathy)

In Attendance: Mr A Youngson (Scientific Advisor)
Mrs A MacAuslan (Clerk)

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Mr J Gray, Mr A Nicholson, Mr J Stewart and Mr A Muat.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No adjustments were required to the existing members' declarations of interest.

3. MATTERS ARISING

No further matters arising were raised other than those already tabled on the agenda.

4. COASTAL PATROLS AND BAILIFF LIAISON GROUP

- 4.1 ***Sea Patrols 2020:*** The Chairman reported that as a result of Covid restrictions earlier in the year, only four patrols were launched using Guiding Star and W Grant as Bailiff. The Chairman proposed that the Board continue to use D Hodge to carry out patrols in 2021 and D Hodge has confirmed that his costs would remain as per 2020, should this be agreed. A Adamson confirmed that the Wildland Rib had not been in the water for the majority of the season, however he suggested that some evening patrols be carried out by the Northern DSFB in 2021 as potential evening activity was spotted at times this season.

D Buchan reported his concerns that the average cost of a patrol seems to have increased quite significantly. After discussion, it was agreed to ask D Hodge to undertake the patrols for 2021, retaining 2020 costs and A MacAuslan undertook to contract D Hodge with this decision.

- 4.2 ***Bailiff Liaison Group:*** The Chairman reported that both R Wright and W Grant left their respective employment over the summer, however both still hold their Bailiff cards at present. After discussion, it was agreed to review this arrangement in Spring

2021. The Chairman also confirmed that Reuben Sweeting was a NDSFB warrant card holder and should be added to the list.

5. FINANCIAL REPORT

5.1 **2020 Year to Date Income & Expenditure:** The Clerk referred to the summary in the briefing paper regarding the 2020 income and expenditure. There were no comments regarding this.

5.2 **Draft Budget for Year ending 31st December 2021:** The Clerk referred to the draft 2021 budget circulated prior to the meeting. The meeting confirmed they were happy with this draft 2021 budget.

6. SCIENTIFIC UPDATE

6.1 **Scientific Update:** A Youngson advised the National report on NEPS findings for 2019 has been published and he will produce a summary report at river level for Board members.

River Gradings for the 2021 season have been published based on catch data to 2019. Lord Iliffe commented that 2020 catches were likely to be lower due to angling restrictions earlier in the season and asked whether this would be taken into account in future gradings. A Youngson advised that he would be happy to argue this case should the need arise.

The temperature loggers have been deployed on both the Naver and the Halladale and some of these loggers have been downloaded for the first time. A Coyne and R Sweeting have copies of the downloaded data and A MacAuslan agreed to ask for copies of these.

A Youngson summarised the new MS hatchery policy and advised that it will make it very difficult for Northern Board rivers to successfully apply for a license in the future. A Youngson is not sure if there will be an opportunity to consult on the new policy.

The Smart Rivers project has been delayed due to current restrictions. The team are due to be on the Halladale on 28th September however the training element of the project has been deferred until May 2021.

6.2 **Review of Existing Electrofishing Programmes:** It was agreed that A Youngson would pull together a proposal for how existing electrofishing programmes could be amended to provide better value for money whilst still producing useful information. This proposal would be discussed in greater detail at the next Scientific Sub Group before being presented to the Proprietors.

7. FISHERIES MANAGEMENT SCOTLAND

7.1 **Regional Meetings 2020:** A summary of this meeting was provided in the briefing paper. No further comments were raised.

- 7.2 **Seal Licensing:** A summary of this issue was provided in the briefing paper. No further comments were made.
- 7.3 **Scottish Fisheries Co-ordination Centre:** S Duggan of SFCC has proposed that the SFCC annual subscription currently paid by River Naver Fisheries could be extended to all rivers in the Northern DSFB area, if the subscription was paid by the Northern DSFB. After discussion, it was agreed that from 1st April 2021, the subscription would be paid for by the Northern DSFB.

8. **PLANNING CONSULTATIONS/APPLICATIONS UPDATE**

The Clerk referred to the planning consultations/applications detailed in the annual report. There were no comments regarding these.

10. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

- 10.1 The Hon G Lopes announced his intention to resign as an Upper Proprietor Board member with immediate effect. His resignation was accepted by all Upper Proprietor Board members present and the proposal that Mrs Lorna Lyle be elected as an Upper Proprietor Board member with immediate effect was also unanimously passed by all Upper Proprietor Board members present. A MacAuslan undertook to send Mrs L Lyle a declaration of interests form for completion.

11. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was agreed that the dates for the 2021 meetings would be moved to a Wednesday and the dates for meetings to be held in 2021 were therefore confirmed as follows:
Wednesday 5th May 2021 at 2.00pm : Annual Public Meeting and Northern DSFB Meeting.

Wednesday 22nd September 2021 at 2.00pm: Annual Meeting of Qualified Proprietors and Northern DSFB Meeting.

It is hoped that both meetings can be held at the Bettyhill Hotel however the Clerk will confirm meeting arrangements nearer the time.

LIST OF ACTIONS ARISING FROM MEETING

Write to Mr D Hodge with proposal for 2021 season sea patrols	Clerk
Add R Sweeting to list of Warranted Bailiff card holders and review list in Spring 2021	Clerk/Proprietors
Maintain copies of downloaded data from temperature loggers	Clerk
Convene meeting of Scientific Sub Group	A Youngson/Clerk
Contact S Duggan to confirm change to SFCC subscription	Clerk
Send Declaration of Interests Forms to L Lyle	Clerk
Confirm Venue for Next Meeting Date	Clerk

ATM/NDSFB
September 2020