

**Minutes of the Quarterly Meeting  
of the River Annan District Salmon Fishery Board  
held in the Lesser Room, Lockerbie Town Hall, on Tuesday, 10<sup>th</sup> May, 2016 at  
7.30pm**

**Board Members Present:** A W Jack, Proprietor (Chairman)  
Earl of Annandale & Hartfell  
G Birkbeck  
J Cunningham-Jardine  
L Devery  
A Dickson  
F Sykes  
J Warwick

**Staff and Public** M Colville (Staff)  
G Clark  
A Donnelly (Staff)  
M Fearn (Staff)  
C Stones (Staff)  
J Reid (Public)  
A N Other (unreadable signature)

**Apologies:** R Brodie  
A Guthe  
D Rothwell  
O Routledge  
F Sandison

### **1 Apologies**

The Chairman welcomed everyone, opened the meeting and intimated apologies received.

### **2. Declaration of Interests**

There were no new declaration of interests.

### **3. Approval of Minutes**

The minute of the 4<sup>th</sup> February, quarterly meeting (previously circulated to members of the board) were submitted for approval. These were proposed by L Devery and seconded by J Cunningham-Jardine. These will now be published on the website [www.riverannan.org](http://www.riverannan.org).

### **4. Directors Update**

The Director of Fisheries, Tony Donnelly, gave a brief update on matters. He reported on an incident of possible pollution where the river coloured up. It was very slow moving and after investigation it was thought that this was most likely bankside erosion.

One of the problems highlighted by the investigation was the late notification of the incident and he re-iterated the need to report timeously.

Tony also informed members of his concerns with gravel management on the Ae, Cumrue and Kinnel – he has brought the matter up with SEPA’s senior ecologist but is dismayed that there appears to be some inconsistency in the application of rules. He will continue to monitor this.

Michael reported that the smolt trap has been in operation on Ae tributary with so far only 3 sea trout and no salmon parr which is concerning. The trap will now be removed. G Birkbeck asked what the plan was for next year as regards its placement. Michael in conjunction with Tony have had early discussions and are looking for suitable sites on the Moffat or Evan Water.

Chris Stones intimated that current indications are that a slight reduction in Invasives funding for the 2016/17 was likely.

## **5. Finances**

The financial reports, circulated earlier round board members were looked over. G Birkbeck expressed concern by the figure for survey work. The Clerk intimated that so far this year only a couple of fish rescues had taken place and been billed out. Generally, survey work is carried out July thru September with reporting and billing taking place in the last quarter of the year. Tony Donnelly added that he was on track to achieve the budgeted figure.

There were no further issues indicated.

## **6. Milnby Weir**

Tony Donnelly, David Rothwell and Alister Jack have reviewed the matter and agree there is still uncertainty over ownership of the structure. Newbie stated that Magnox re-iterated that they will not pay for removal. Tony Donnelly advised that because of the structure the river has been downgraded by SEPA to “poor” ecological status as is all the other waterbodies above the structure but whilst this may be so SEPA have priorities other structures. He plans to meet with SEPA’s ecologist later this month and feels that they need to move their stance on this since removing any barriers upstream will still not result in the overall status changing from “poor”. SEPA have advised to apply for funding but there will be no guarantees. The matter will be kept under review and Tony agreed to report back at the next meeting.

## **7. Wild Fisheries Reform**

Alister Jack intimated that the plan to go with FMO’s (ie the “shadow” organisation as suggested by him to members by earlier telephone calls) was still current but he feels that timings may slip as there is potential for Ministerial changes – when asked he felt certain it would be no earlier than 2018. He is also hopeful of re-categorisation of the Annan following re-calculation using GIS mapping by C Stones of the wetted area. Marine Science Scotland now agree that the science behind the present categorisation is somewhat flawed and that previously areas such as Sark, Lochar Water, Kirtle, Pow and Castle, Kirk, and Mill Lochs bodies used in previous calculations was an error. John Warwick also queried the use of Rod & Line statistics and five year average in

extrapolating the figures. Alister Jack was sure that rod and line only had been used but agreed that he would email for confirmation from Scottish Government. He intimated that the deadline for re-categorisation review is September. Lawson Devery asked about the position regarding rod licence. Alister Jack indicated that a management and conservation levy was being pushed as a good idea by both the coarse fish and SANA representatives but nothing was certain other than there being a huge shortfall with the current financial models.

Responding to a question on hooks, lure and baits, Alister Jack and Tony Donnelly both confirmed that singles with no ban on barbless trebles but this may change as the legislation makes it way through the Scottish Parliament.

## **8. AOB**

The Chairman, Alister Jack, informed the members that he had received a letter from Solway Salmon Management Limited seeking a reduction in river assessments following removal of commercial netting as a result of the Conservation of Salmon (Scotland) Regulations 2016. The matter was discussed at length. The Clerk reminded the members that whilst these fisheries were still on the Valuation Roll then there was no way around issuing invoices as all proprietors are billed according to the value on the roll. She suggested that Solway Salmon Management should approach The Assessors office to have these fisheries reduced in value. She also intimated the loss of revenue to the Board and the budget agreed in February. Members after discussing the issue voted to support any net fishery wishing to have their fishery re-valued and that the loss to the Board for this year would be absorbed rather than be passed around the other proprietors. G Birkbeck asked whether in this instance an appeal could be made to the Scottish Government – The Chairman agreed to raise this when they next met.

George Birkbeck asked whether there was any essential equipment requiring replacement by the Board, as that at recent meeting of RAFIA the committee having some surplus had voted to make available some funds for this. All the staff agreed that the generator, required when electrofishing, was a fair age and probably on its last legs and had been repaired twice in the last year or so. The Director of Fisheries agreed to look into replacement costs and report back.

Andy Dickson, made the members and staff aware of a possible source of grants/funds through Angling for All. Several members were aware of this but Tony Donnelly thought that this was only available to clubs and associations for discount schemes and marketing and that as far as he was aware there were conditions attached.

Before closing the meeting, the Chairman thanked everyone for attending. The next meeting is the Annual Public Meeting on the 16<sup>th</sup> August in Lockerbie Town Hall at 6 pm. He also asked for the December meeting to be changed to the 28<sup>th</sup> November – all were in agreement. The Clerk would check that the venue was available and confirm this to the members.



16.08.16