

MINUTES OF SWRFT TRUSTEES' MEETING

Ledgowan Lodge Hotel, Achnasheen	PRESENT: David Barclay (DB) – Chair Alasdair Macdonald (AM) Derek Dowsett (DD)	Ian Lindsay (IL) Neil Cameron (NC) Bob Kindness (BK)
DATE: 22 nd March 2018		
OPENED AT: 11.00 CLOSED AT: 14.50	APOLOGIES: Richard Greene (RG) Mark Williams (MW) Isabel Moore (IM) Bill Whyte (BW) Ally Macaskill (AMac) Duncan Burd (DBd)	James Close (JC) Nigel Pearson (NP) Veronica Mullaney (VM) Melanie Smith (MS) Ewan Macpherson (EM)
IN ATTENDANCE: Peter Cunningham (PC) Peter Jarosz (PJ) Mary Gibson (MG) Audrey Sinclair (AS)		

1. Matters Arising from the Minutes of Meeting on 13th December 2017

- There was one amendment that should be recorded in the 13th December minutes under item 3 bullet point three that “IL explained that the MoU guarantees discretion to the Trust of the academic and intellectual integrity.” – this replaces the original “IL explained that strategy underlines the academic and intellectual integrity.”
- There were no other specific matters arising from the minutes of the last meeting.

2. Approval of the Minutes

The minutes were then approved by IL, seconded by AM and confirmed as a true record of the meeting.

3. Apologies

James Close was not able to attend. SWRFT understands that there may have been changes at Gairloch High School and DB and PJ were asked to refresh our relationship with senior management there in order to ensure continued co-operation/collaboration.

Richard Greene had tendered his resignation as a trustee and SWRFT-accepted his resignation with regret and the meeting asked for their thanks for his contribution over the years to be recorded.

4. Meetings and Correspondence (PJ)

There have been no meetings, meriting reporting, since our last SWRFT meeting.

4. Financial Reports

- PJ had previously circulated the cash projections (February 2018) that reflects a healthy financial situation and indicates a slight surplus at the end of the year.
- The bank account at RBS is still not fully operational though most of the necessary alterations have been implemented by RBS and we are waiting their confirmation for its full use.
- IL and DB asked if VM would produce a regular management “profit and loss” report for ease of understanding our finance situation at any given time.

5. BIOLOGISTS' REPORTS

5.i IM's Report (in absentia)

- IM's report had been previously circulated.
- IL reported that IM's first Scientific Paper has been accepted in a peer reviewed journal – it is likely to be the first of four papers arising from her PhD project.

5.ii PC's Report

Peter C reported:

- The SWRFT Annual Review (January 2018) has been printed and copies are available for provision to proprietors, ghillies etc..
- There was a discussion on the importance of the weight of salmon smolts in relation to their survival at sea. In telemetry projects even the tagging process can be a factor in smolt

survival. SWRFT now has expertise regarding telemetry work to offer via IM so do we need to consider if SWRFT should collaborate with the MSS Loch Torridon smolt tracking in 2018? The meeting agreed, and asked PC to follow up initially.

- In light of the recent work on smolt size, for the coming field season, it was agreed that SWRFT should be weighing the fish caught while electro-fishing the range of sites. Additionally DNA could be used to discover more about fish occurrence in some of the many small lochs and lochans in the SWRFT area.
- There is a possible nutrient project in Dundonnell as well as a possible DNA project.
- There is a range of possible projects but we need to develop a research committee/register and promote a pro-active programme of possible applied projects of value/relevance to SWRFT DB agreed to lead.
- A link with the Wester Ross Biosphere is recognised as a most useful liaison for some projects.
- PC reported on the SISI project that SWRFT has a role in with relation to mink. Whilst not core work, it is an important project that fits in well with the aims and objectives as well as raising the SWRFT profile. It is cost positive.
- It is likely that, for this year at least, there may be less funding from ScotGov for our traditional sweep-netting sites (both in Wester Ross and Skye). FMS have passed on MSS's suggestion that we focus on the Kannaird site. However it was decided that should SG's funding be reduced, SWRFT will look to other sources of funding to continue with all sweep-netting sites.
- PC will progress the advent of Salmon and Trout in the Classroom (S&T in the C) on Skye with DD doing the project delivery. PC will do the electro-fishing first with a view to setting up S&T in the C next season. DB suggested he discuss the arrangements with AM - it may be appropriate to fund an increase in educative effort from our own/Board sources.

6. PLANNING AHEAD

Structure and 5-year plan

- The strategic 5-year plan needs updating to reflect the aims/objectives of the Trust, policy environment and funding streams. The 5-year strategic plan should include focus on education, research and active changes to the environment.
- Once this is in place, we can then formalise the Fisheries Management Plans (FMP) for both Skye and Wester Ross.
- We need to match our available resources to our ambitions – but, at the same time, expand core monitoring, publish relevant data sets, undertake innovative/flagship projects and expand our educational delivery.
- Our existing strengths include a strong reputation, good project delivery and a variety of funding sources.
- Our current weaknesses include a disproportionate burden of planning and administration on a few core staff, no succession planning and little staff capacity for large projects.
- All of which presents an opportunity for greater input from Trustees with a view to develop “critical” mass.
- Do we need to re-appraise the roles of Trustees and/or set up project groups (e.g. research project group mentioned earlier)?
- Do Trustees have the time to offer to such an approach?
- The Trust is the “delivery arm” of the Board so it needs to respond to the Board and feed back to the Board.
- Does the Board need representation on any sub-groups?
- The immediate proposed sub-groups are Fundraising, Research, and Education, for the latter two of which DB and AM respectively agreed to lead.

Other Issues

- ScotGov has issued a consultation on the Loch Carron MPA. The consultation runs from 20th March 2018. Currently there is a temporary time limit on the Loch Carron MPA – this consultation is to offer the opportunity for this MPA to become permanent.
- NC is no longer the chairman of the Portree Angling Club (PAC) and is, therefore, considering resigning as a SWRFT trustee. Iain Stewart is the new chairman of the PAC and will be invited to our next meeting so that he can see just what SWRFT does, and what is required of Trustees.
- The SWRFT, as a Company Limited by Guarantee (CLG), requires an Annual General Meeting (AGM) each year at which there needs to be a rotation of trustees and voting by members for new trustees (or the re-instating of existing trustees). Our recognised “start” date as a CLG was August 2017 with our first-year accounts running from 1st July 2017 to 31st March 2018 so we could look at an AGM later in the year once our accounts have been finalised.

7. AOB

- NC reported that the PAC at its spring meeting proposed an extension to its salmon season to the end of October each year on Skye. Some years ago the salmon season was brought forward from the end of October but NC said that he was unclear whether this was ever reported to ScotGov. However, he did realise that this proposal would need to go to ScotGov via the Skye District Salmon Fishery Board.
- PJ reported that the RBS bank account still needs to be finally approved by RBS. A recommendation that it would prove advantageous for this account to have internet access with payments then made electronically (via internet banking) was agreed in principle.

6. Date of next meeting

DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

DATE	LOCATION	TIME	STATUS
30/05/2018	SWRFT Office	11.00	Proposed
09/08/2018	SWRFT Office	11.00	Proposed