

Minutes

RAFTS/ASFB Joint Working Group

12th Meeting: Birnam Institute, Birnam

20 January 2016

Present:

Alasdair Laing
Andrew Wallace (Chair)
Chris Horrill
Brian Davidson
Jamie Ribbens
Nick Yonge
Simon McKelvey
Roger Knight
Marshall Halliday
Alison Baker

Jim Henderson
Craig MacIntyre
Chris Conroy

Apologies:

Mark Bilsby
Roger Brook

1. Minutes of last meeting & review of actions

OSCR advice – this was not discussed at last SRG meeting. It is possible that charitable status may not be prescribed in legislation. It was generally felt that there should be more strategic direction from Government on constitutional requirements. It was agreed that it would be useful to seek clarity on Government view as to how tightly structures and constitutional form might be defined and how close they might wish to be to a statutory footing. **Raise at next SRG: CH/SMcK/AL**

Enforcement - JH confirmed that there is ongoing liaison on legal and technical matters via the Bailiff Development Group. Updates will be provided.

2. Matters Arising

Conservation limits

CC confirmed that the Ness DSFB are in the process of questioning the approach on data, which is not felt to be credible. The Group remained concerned about the science underpinning the measures. It was considered that the handling and process throughout had been poorly managed – it was agreed to take up with Scottish Government. **AWa/AL**

3. ASFB / RAFTS – working group on transition period

A small working group is examining how both organisations might operate in a future structure, in terms of functions and form – AWa and AL Will keep JWG informed. **AWa/AL**

4. Update on progress with WFR

4.1 FMO representation paper – everyone agreed that this is on the right track. There may be a role for local authorities in facilitating representation - possibly Inspired by Tweed model. It was agreed that the principle of ‘requiring’ involvement rather than leaving it optional is useful to ensure participation. Everyone agreed with the principle that there should be a sound ‘induction’ process – coupled with an assessment of skills/experience which ‘board’ members should bring to the organisation in response to identified need. It was agreed to identify appropriate training as a requirement. As an underlining principle, it was agreed that each FMO must have a defined interlink with national policy and some way of feeding upwards to inform national thinking. It was agreed to seek written comment on the paper from JWG, seek views from ASFB and RAFTS Boards and pass to SRG. **ACTION: AWa/AL**

4.2 Angler contribution system – AWa reported the angler bodies had met, and it was recognised that a future system as it currently stands would face a deficit in resources of around 2-£3M. It was agreed that there is a need to have some agreement in principle with those bodies to look at funding options. This remains a difficult and politically sensitive issue, and it was recognised that there is unlikely to be any likelihood of obtaining a high level ministerial steer soon (and prior to May elections). It was agreed to discuss this with Scottish Government. **AWa/AL**

4.3 Strategy Development Group – It was agreed to seek copy of latest draft (and prior to public consultation) via SRG. **AL/CH/SMcK**

4.4 Report on progress and transparency of public sector reference group – It was noted that there was very little information on the process and engagement from the ‘public sector’ reference group with other stakeholder groups. It was agreed that it would be useful to seek a report on progress with group. **SMcK/CH/AL**

5. FMOs

Geographic areas – progress with critical analysis – AWa felt strongly that the development of successor bodies needs a strong principle of local support and consent – it will not happen without that process, and this point has been made to Scottish Government. One of the key ‘selling points’ and underlying principle of an FMO network was to achieve economies of scale but this appears not to be the case from the analyses so far.

6. Updates:

6.1 Report from meeting with Scottish Government and Assessors' Association

Al and BD Met with SAA on 14 January to discuss the 2017 revaluation of salmon fisheries and how ASFB might facilitate and encourage DSFBs to request valuations. There is a need to ensure all Boards make request to assessors, as otherwise assessors will not be able to undertake the exercise without a formal request. It was possible that there might be some complacency in light of WFR. ASFB will be contacting all members shortly to underline the importance of this exercise and to provide guidance. **BD/AL**

6.2 Baits & lures

A working group has been formed by Scottish Government to consider whether there is a need to consider regulation on baits and lures to complement conservation measures. BD, Eddie Weatherly (RTC) and Paul Devlin (Glasgow Angling Centre) will be contributing. BD is unable to make the first meeting and Alister Jack (ASFB Management Committee) will attend. Updates will be provided. **BD**

7. Approved contractor status for Trusts

It was suggested that RAFTS might consider the appropriateness of a trading arm and how this could fit with RAFTS/members? Such a mechanism would need to be squared with agreed FMO actions and fit with approved status. It was agreed to look at other examples (ie rivers trust) – there is likely to be tax and vat implications. **CH/AWa**

8. Communications – no issues, and news updates and briefings continue to be produced.

9. Any other business

- CC wished to underline the likelihood of a rise in enforcement activity to ensure compliance with the new conservation measures. This will have cost and resource implications for the Ness Board.

10. Date of next meeting – 29 February, Birnam Institute, 10.30