

**MINUTES OF THE RIVER BRORA DISTRICT SALMON FISHERY BOARD
MEETING**

**Held at Dunrobin Castle
On Thursday 14th April 2016 at 11am**

Present		In Attendance	
The Earl Cadogan, Lower Brora North Bank	LC	Neil Wright, Clerk to the Board	NW
Mrs Angela Tyser, Upper Brora and Loch Brora	AT	Martin Livings, Head Bailiff	ML
		Robert Rattray, Sporting Agent for Lord Cadogan	RR
		Murdo Ballantyne, Brora Angling Association	MB
		Christian Wroe	CW
		Iain Mackenzie	IM

1	APOLOGIES	Action
	Peter Voy, Factor for Sutherland Estates The Hon. Martin Janson, Lower Brora South Bank	
2	MINUTES OF THE 14th AUGUST 2015 MEETING	
	The minutes of the previous meeting have been circulated and LC signed a copy as being a true reflection of the meeting. The signed copy was handed to the Clerk.	
3	MATTERS ARISING	
	<p>LC opened the meeting and explained that there would be two meetings held, the first will be the public meeting, followed by a private meeting for the proprietor and agents.</p> <p>LC introduced Neil Wright as the new Clerk, who replaces Rob Whitson.</p> <p>LC stated any matters arising are to be dealt with during the course of the meeting. An additional meeting was held in January 2016 to discuss the Thin report and to look at the season ahead for the Brora. The Brora is now a Category 2 river with no fish being killed before the 1st of April. During this meeting it was decided that Robert Rattary was to update the fishing rules for the river (copy attached with these minutes). Martin Livings was appointed as Head Bailiff and Leigh Haigh was appointed as Bailiff subject to him passing all of his exams and certificates.</p> <p>ML stated that the exam results for Leigh should be out within a week.</p>	
4	HEAD BAILIFFS REPORT	
	<p>ML went through his Bailiffs Report and discussed the number of fish being caught up to the meetings date.</p> <p>LC commented that the water was between 1ft and 6inches and they were not seeing any fish. A 3.5kg Hen was caught but it was not in good condition and it was put back. It has been mainly sea trout and kelts being caught.</p>	

	<p>ML asked if the Hatchery should be looked at again but also to look at starting the season later. The low number of fish being caught are due to low numbers of fishermen, probably due to the introduction of the no killing prior to April rule.</p> <p>LC did not think that a hatchery would be easy to start in this political climate and the licences may not be easy to get.</p> <p>Parr fry have always been satisfactory but on the lower river spates have damaged the redds, mainly due to gravel above the magazine pool. There has been a movement of boulders and soil with a change in the islands.</p> <p>AT asked CW to comment on SEPA approved works that he has been researching.</p> <p>CW mentioned he is in touch with SEPA on the River Lossie. AT would like to carry out remedial work at Gordonbush.</p> <p>RR SEPA is not adverse to remedial work being carried out but it is important to identify what is actually remedial.</p> <p>ML mentioned that the Angling Association have asked if the board would have an open week on the river.</p> <p>AT stated this will be discussed at the private proprietors meeting where a fuller discussion could be had.</p> <p>ML commented on how good the thermal sight had been, ML went on to say that the two way radios needs to be replaced as they were very old. ML enquired about a radio licence as he had thought one had been in place for the Board, but after investigation with Evelyn and Rob there does not seem to be one.</p> <p>LC expanded that it was a very complicated item and may not work 9 out of 10 times. LC explained that mobile phone signal can also be very poor but the best option would be line of sight radios.</p> <p>RR states that line of sight would be the most suitable for the Bailiffs.</p> <p>LC has been using a line of sight radio for the week he has been on the river and it has worked fine, all of his keepers now have them.</p> <p>AT confirmed that the Board should now purchase new line of sight radios.</p>	
5	FINANCE UPDATE	
	<p>NW provided a summary of the year end accounts. The accounts have not yet been audited due to the financial year only just ending.</p> <p>The Board has accumulated surplus funds for the year due to a decrease in the running costs of the board but the subscriptions have remained at the same level. The Boards running costs for the year was £74,333 compared with a subscription income of £105,000.</p> <p>The subscriptions will be reviewed again this month, NW</p>	

	<p>proposed that £30,500 should be transferred back to the proprietors which would leave £7000 in the account for emergencies. The proprietors agreed to this.</p> <p>LC suggested that he would like Tim Nixon to carry out bailiffing repairs and maintenance. The Cadogan Estates will purchase a strimmer similar to the new strimmer's purchased by the Board and this will be kept at Sunrise for Tim's use. Tim will invoice his time to the board and ML would supervise the work.</p> <p>CW asked if the accounts would change under an FMO. NW stated that most proposed shadow FMOs are going for a federal system and so a river may be able to retain its independence, but it is too early to say as no FMO has yet been set up.</p>	
6	SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT REVIEW OF WILD FISHERIES MANAGEMENT – CONSULTATION	
	<p>NW passed to the Proprietors and attendees the consultation response from the ASFB and RAFTS to the Wild Fisheries (Scotland) Bill. This is to be read individually and any comments to be returned to NW for inclusion in the response. The response has to be with the Scottish Government by the 2nd May 2016.</p> <p>LC stated that we should keep our stance that we are only dealing with migratory fish and not stocked fishing. LC would also not like to see fishing on Sunday, as has been proposed, as it is a day of peace and rest.</p>	
7	CONSERVATION	
	<p>IM raised concern over the erosion on the Lower Brora and if anything could be done to prevent or repair it.</p> <p>LC commented that the damage has been done by spates, there had been concerns that the field might have been eroded completely and some gravel was moved some time ago to help the situation.</p> <p>LC wanted to know what was happening with the track from Malcolm McColl's land down to the river and whether it could still be driven, due to the erosion.</p> <p>IM mentioned he was not sure where the new road would go but agreed that the old track is not drivable anymore. IM mentioned that he had been reading the Agricultural press and wanted to know if SEPA would allow river bank work.</p> <p>CW thought that SEPA might allow this type of work.</p>	
8	AOCB	
	<p>Nothing to report.</p> <p>LC closes the public meeting and asked the public to leave for the proprietors meeting to take place.</p>	
9	DATE OF NEXT MEETING	
	Thursday 11 th August 2016 at 11am – Sunrise	