

## Minutes

### RAFTS/ASFB Joint Working Group

### 15<sup>th</sup> Meeting: Birnam Institute, Birnam

17 August 2016

#### **Present:**

Alasdair Laing  
Andrew Wallace  
Mark Bilsby  
Brian Davidson  
Nick Yonge  
Simon McKelvey  
Jamie Ribbens  
Roger Knight  
Marshall Halliday  
Alison Baker  
Jim Henderson  
Craig MacIntyre

#### **In attendance:**

Alan Wells  
Darren Scott  
Bill Menzies  
Crispian Cook

#### **Apologies for absence:**

Chris Horrill

#### **1. Minutes of last meeting & review of actions**

These were approved.

#### **2. Matters Arising**

None.

#### **3. Update on progress with WFR**

- **Stakeholder Reference Group – update**

MB reported that there was little to report as there had not been a further SRG meeting. Papers for the next meeting on 25 August will be circulated for comment when available. **ACTION: MB**

- **Wild Fisheries (Scotland) Bill – next steps**

The programme for Government, which will be announced in September, will provide details of the forthcoming legislative programme. This will confirm whether or not the bill will be tabled in 2016/17 timetable. If it is announced, the Bill process will start at some point in the following year. It is therefore possible that the process might not start until towards the end of that period (up to Sept 2017). The Group recognised that there is a risk of losing valuable momentum if not in the 2016/17 timetable, although at the same time meaningful and essential work will continue and be needed regardless of the timetabling of the bill.

- **Update on technical working groups**

2 groups have now met – Continuous Professional Development and Fisheries Management Planning. The Crime & Enforcement Group will meet at the end of August. Promotion and Development Group, Finance and Scientific Group in progress and meetings are programmed.

- **Update on constitutional options for FMOs**

AL/AWe and Scottish Government representatives met with OSCR to consider aspects of Community Interest Companies (CIC) and their potential to provide constitutional structures for FMOs . The following points were clarified:

- CICs are similar in principle to companies limited by guarantee.
- They are regulated by Companies House, and assets are ring-fenced for activities so there is an element of protection.
- Slightly lighter regulation than charity obligations.

The scope for attraction of charitable funds was queried. Generally, it was noted that assets can be transferred from charity to CIC – but must be for similar purposes. This is to be checked. **BD/AWe**

The Group discussed the concept of CICs as a potential constitutional structure for FMOs. It was agreed that the CIC structure looked encouraging, and did not discount this as an option. The group wished, at this stage, to remain open about structures, and this included charitable structure as an option.

- **Pilot FMO programme – progress & FMA designation process**

The following points were discussed, based on the discussions led by AWa and AL conducted in recent months:

- It is accepted that in principle there will be a single FMO for each FMA.
- 15 – 17 might be a reasonable ‘target’ for Scotland (ex Northern Isles).
- From the many local discussions that have been had there has been little outright opposition and many discussions have been constructive though with a diverse range of views.
- There is no finality to the discussions and process, still matters to consider.
- A report will be prepared by the Stakeholder Reference Group (assembled from the discussions led by the ASFB & RAFTS Chairmen) and this will summarise these issues and

reflect local views. AL and AW would consult with all the relevant parties about the text to be included in the report. **ACTION: AWa/AL**

- A majority of the areas are in general agreement with geographical proposals emerging and in many areas there is strong support for the idea of testing ideas through a “pilot” programme.
- It is hoped that ideas about the proposed National Unit might similarly be tested through a pilot process.

The Chairmen fully acknowledge the issues and challenges in bringing areas together which have different circumstances, culture, practices etc. It was agreed that there may be benefit in sharing some of the local ideas and responses, where these do not breach sensitive or confidential information. This was agreed. In terms of keeping the process moving, regular, critical and constructive feedback from Government is essential. This point would be articulated at the SRG.

**ACTION: AWa/MB**

- **Identifying FMO costs and critical analysis process**

AWe reported that it would be useful to consider a series of options for different sizes of FMOs. It would be useful to get feedback on the process, and this work would be shared with the Group. The hope is that this will start to provide foundation to allow people to quantify the resources required to support FMOs – but not set in stone. **AWe/BD to circulate**

- **Update from Bailiff Development Group**

The group last met in July and there has been good dialogue with Scot Govt. Some representatives from the Group will serve on the Crime & Enforcement Group, where technical and legal matters will be fed in. The last training course was completed in August. The Group is planning the 2017 Bailiffs’ Conference. Work on a collaborative press release with PAW, concerning fish poaching and wildlife crime is underway.

#### **4. Communications**

It was agreed to increase the frequency of communications (ie news update, email updates etc). Over and above fixed communications, there have been other local discussions at regional and local level. Information is getting to members, but members may need to improve the relay of information onto local trustees, board members, anglers etc. **ACTION: ALL**

#### **5. Conservation limits**

JR reported that catch data will be updated for 2017 assessment exercise. This process is moving forward in a positive way and other data being incorporated and updated. In terms of population distribution data, most rivers have now been updated. These measures should improve the overall accuracy of river categorisations.

It was reported that Fishpal has been selected to administer the angling fund, set up to support angling clubs. There was a perception that the process in selecting Fishpal was not transparent, and their role was not clear. It was agreed to seek information on the process. **ACTION: BD**

#### **6. ASFB / RAFTS future**

The Boards of both ASFB and RAFTS have agreed recommendations for further discussion and agreement at two EGMs on 14 September. Detailed papers are being produced on the context to the recommendations and these will be presented as formal resolutions for discussion and agreement.

**7. Any other business**

JR reported that the Cree Board has made representations about a lack of local consultation and involvement in discussions about an FMO in the Solway area. It was noted that all relevant parties are working to address this. **Action: AL/AW**

**8. Date of next meeting**

10.30, 28 September - Tay Office, Almondbank, by Perth