

FINDHORN BAY LOCAL NATURE RESERVE (FBLNR)
MINUTES OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD IN THE JAMES MILNE INSTITUTE, FINDHORN AT
1930HRS ON TUESDAY 28 MARCH 2017

Committee members present:

Roy Dennis (RHD) - Chair
Mo Hyde (MH) - Vice Chair, also representing Findhorn Heritage
Ian Hampson (IH) - Treasurer
Mike Crutch (MC) - Secretary

Bill Barber (WB), Findhorn Angling Club
Glenn Buchanan (GB), Royal Findhorn Yacht Club
Pat Carroll (PC), Findhorn & Kinloss Community Council
Karen Cunningham (KC), RSPB
Pete Finch (PF), Findhorn Foundation
Jen Heatley (JH), SNH
Bob MacKay (RM), FNDWA
Simon Paterson (SP), Findhorn Marina
David Shaw (DS), Dyke & Landward Community Council
Dr Colin Shedden (CS), BASC
Richard Somers-Cocks (RS-C), nature conservation/ornithology
Ian Suttie (IS), nature conservation/ornithology
Davina Thomas (DT), Findhorn Village Centre

Apologies: Lorna Creswell, Colin Bell, Lisa Mead

1. Welcome & recent news

RHD welcomed everyone. Recent news for the bay included two Snow Goose amongst the residual flock of Pink-footed Goose (in excess of 2,300 currently), and the first Osprey sighting of the year on 26/3 (by RS-C) although this appears to have been in transit and not from a nearby nest. Several committee members had enjoyed RHD's recent Osprey talk in Findhorn.

2. Minutes of meeting held on 6 December 2016

a. Corrections to the minutes:

RHD clarified that the Friends of Findhorn Bay representative (Lisa Mead) is a

full voting member of the committee.

The minutes were accepted - proposed by PC, seconded by DS.

3. Chairman's report

RHD added nothing further to the report presented at the AGM earlier.

4. Treasurer's update on finances

IH commented on the need to budget for website renewal/maintenance fees , around £100 per annum and £10 per annum for the two website addresses (URLs). A brief discussion concluded that www.fblnr.org should be retained in favour of the non-abbreviated version to reduce this unnecessary cost. IH, PC and others suggested that TMC administrative funding may be forthcoming to cover some or all of the costs. **ACTION: RS-C to arrange to reduce to one website address with Canary Dwarf, MC to contact TMC/Colin Bell re admin grant funding.** *Secretary's Note: RS-C action completed on 29/3, the surplus web address will be discontinued at the end of the current billed period in April 2018*

5. Wildfowling framework proposals for 2017/18 onwards

RHD had met with wildfowling (BASC, FNDWA and local non-affiliated wildfowling representatives) prior to this evening's meetings. RHD re-iterated the nine proposals he led on:

1. Byelaws would be enacted (by TMC or SNH) for the 2018/19 wildfowling season and a voluntary system brought in for 2017/18.
2. Future wildfowling arrangements would be overseen by a wildfowling sub-committee comprising the following members of the FBLNR management committee; two wildfowling, one representing public interests, one bird conservation and the Chairman.
3. There would be no shooting on Sundays, Mondays and Tuesdays.
4. Wildfowling - both local residents and visitors could shoot on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays.
5. Local wildfowling resident in Moray & Nairn, within 20 miles of Forres, would have exclusive use on Saturdays.
6. The area of highest conflict at the bay at Kinloss, delineated from the Mosset Burn eastwards, would be open for goose shooting during the month of October and be closed to wildfowling outwith October.

7. Local wildfowlers could apply for a season permit.
8. Visitors could apply for day permits, up to a maximum of 5 visiting wildfowlers per day, for Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays.
9. A range of other management issues would be decided by the wildfowling sub-committee, and ratified by the FBLNR management committee.

The committee discussed and agreed upon each of the points presented, but the wildfowler members collectively could not agree to points 3 and 6. For Point 9 (wildfowling sub-committee), it was recommended that it meet in March and August of each year, i.e. post- and pre-wildfowling season, and consist of a chairperson, two wildfowlers, two conservationists/ornithologists and a local resident; DT suggested for the latter that a Kinloss resident would be most appropriate.

In terms of validity and costings for permits, although these would be formally set by the sub-committee in due course, RHD envisaged local wildfowlers (as defined) to have a season permit with a fee circa £5 to cover administrative costs, whereas day permits for those outwith the local area would be available at 5 per day, with a cost of around £20 per day/£50 for three days. Permits would not re-issued to those contravening the LNR byelaws or the local byelaws covering litter/dog fouling/de-breasting iterated as will be outlined on the permit provisions.

The meeting continued to discuss the two points outstanding that could not be agreed upon by the wildfowling community. Discussion led to a possible change to point 3 that would see no shooting in just the Kinloss Bay area (as defined) Sunday to Tuesday inclusive, and to point 6 which would see no shooting in the Kinloss Bay area (as defined) outwith September to November inclusive. MC commented that the main driver for this is Curlew (red listed under the British Trust for Ornithology's Birds of Conservation Concern effort) feeding and roosting in the Kinloss Bay area. With some 500 Curlews at their peak observed by RS-C, this reduction in disturbance in the cold winter months also helps maximise their chances of good health before departing to their breeding grounds in Spring and their subsequent success there.

RHD will consolidate these views and secondary proposals and circulate to the negotiating parties, as well as TMC, for consideration however RHD once again stressed that very little time should continued to be spent on gaining an agreeable solution. **ACTION: RHD**

6. FBLNR Management Plan progress

PC had circulated the draft in recent days, and some comments had already been generated. However RHD now wished to directly have control on the

final drafting, with assistance from RSPB and SNH representatives, in order for the contents to be agreed upon as smoothly and quickly as possible. In the coming weeks, RHD will review content and assign actions as required in order to progress to publication. **ACTION: RHD**

7. Update on signs

IH reported that purchase of all major items has taken place, with sundry items (paints, tools, etc.) still required expenditure and therefore have to be sourced from FBLNR funds. GB gave an overview of which signs have already been upgraded, commenting that the work involved much more than just replacing of the signs themselves due to the various states of the stands, etc.. With some landowners still yet to be contacted for erecting new or replacing existing signs, GB stated that the project will still take the team some weeks to complete. RHD thanked everyone for their efforts thus far, and others gave positive feedback on the new signs already in place. **ITEM CARRIED FORWARD**

8. New matters arising

None notified.

9. Any other business

a. Planning application for Kinloss Nature Trail pavilion

A formal application had been submitted to TMC on 10 March for the above, with comments closing on 11 April. The location on the salt marsh, and the proximity to feeding/roosting wading birds was of some concern, as was the apparent erection of the base for said pavilion in the location, despite planning permission not having been granted yet. PC said that F&KCC had raised no objections, and RM stated the difficulties the location presents to wildfowling. RHD will contact the TMC planning case officer to discuss. **ACTION: RHD**

b. RS-C asked for inputs required to the FBLNR website for walking and swimming, in particular responsibilities and obligations thereof. MH and IS also commented that cyclists had been seen recently crossing the bay at low tide. **ACTION: All**

c. IH commented that the bird hide was in clear need of algae treatment and appropriate re-painting; PF will arrange. **ACTION: PF**

d. Various members made comments regarding hogweed and Japanese knotweed; PC will be preparing to tackle the former in the coming weeks. MC suggested that Findhorn, Nairn & Lossie Fisheries Trust may have some

ability to deal with the knotweed issue as part of their ongoing work. MC will contact FNLFT in the first instance. **ACTION: MC**

e. PC reported that he had still yet to receive a response from SEPA and Scottish Water regarding the rusted waste overflow outlet pipes in Findhorn village.

Secretary's Note:

Due to time constraints, mainly due to the attempt to resolve the wildfowling issues, the following actions have been held over until the next meeting:

a. To make initial moves to establish a tern species breeding island in the bay (action to be assigned)

b. Form sub-group to provide overview of the land management aspects (leases, etc.) around FBLNR (RHD to lead)

10. Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 21 June 2017 at 1930hrs, commencing with the AGM, at the James Milne Institute, Findhorn.

Other 2017 meetings will be held as follows, again at the JMI:

Thursday 21 September at 1930hrs

Tuesday 5 December at 1930hrs

prepared by Mike Crutch, Secretary FBLNR