

FINDHORN BAY LOCAL NATURE RESERVE (FBLNR)
MINUTES OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD IN THE JAMES MILNE INSTITUTE, FINDHORN AT
1930HRS ON WEDNESDAY 21 JUNE 2017

Committee members present:

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

Colin Bell (CB) - The Moray Council
Glenn Buchanan (GB), Royal Findhorn Yacht Club
Pat Carroll (PC), Findhorn & Kinloss Community Council
Karen Cunningham (KC), RSPB
Bob MacKay (RM), FNDWA
Lisa Mead (LM), Friends of Findhorn Bay
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: Bill Barber, Pete Finch, Jen Heatley, David Shaw

1. Welcome & recent news

RHD welcomed everyone and recent bird sightings/happenings discussed.

2. Minutes of meeting held on 28 March 2017

The minutes were accepted - proposed by RS-C, seconded by GB.

Previous actions:

a. Bird hide maintenance - Pete Finch had arranged for this to be carried out, and advised via e-mail that re-painting will take place mid-August. MC also commented that Pete had arranged for the access contact details to be amended also. **ITEM CLOSED**

b. Waste outlet pipe - issue still not resolved, but a visit is being conducted next week by SEPA. RS-C also reported a septic tank leakage from a private house. **ITEM CLOSED**

c. RHD had discussed the planning permission matter re the nature trail pavilion with Tom Brown. **ITEM CLOSED**

d. RHD reported that further praise had been received on the new information boards. GB apprised the meeting that planning permission for board 6 had been sought and granted. Boards 7 and 8 are in the process of being installed, though arrangement for number 9 (due for Netherton) is on hold following discussions with the landowner. The final two boards will be progressed in due course. **ITEM CARRIED FORWARD**

e. MC reported that Findhorn, Nairn & Lossie Fisheries Trust had only conducted hogweed control down to mouth. PC stated that Wild Things have conducted some spot control of such in Waterford, while PC himself has done some spraying around the bird hide with more to do. RS-C observed on the growing issue of Japanese knotweed. **ITEM CLOSED**

3. Chairman's report.

RHD reported that he had met with the new and re-elected members of TMC, and Stephen Cooper (Head of Direct Services) to apprise them on FBLNR issues. Cllr Claire Feaver has been elected chair of the council's environment committee.

RHD reported on the wildfowling sub-committee meeting, held immediately prior to this FBLNR MC meeting to discuss the trial proposals for the 2017/18 season; notes are attached at Appendix A.

RM expressed his concerns that the area and time restrictions as outlined in the current proposals may not be acceptable to a number of wildfowling, and offered a counter proposal. RHD invited RM to present it, which he did, however the majority of the committee showed a lack of interest in changing what had already been suggested.

Regarding the administrative aspects of the wildfowling permit system, RHD asked CB to confirm that The Moray Council could provide for printing of such. **ACTION Colin Bell**

PC asked for clarification in the previous minutes regarding days of the week and locations of 'no shooting'; MC replied that the minutes as written were

proposals at the time of writing (28 March) but subsequent discussions by RHD had seen these amended. Again, proposals are contained in the notes at Appendix A.

4. Treasurer's update on finances

No report.

5. New matters arising

a. Tern raft

RHD had met with Simon Paterson and the tern raft has been constructed and is ready to siting; although this year's breeding season has passed it may be sited in order to get the birds used to it. Approval for the siting falls under Simon's current authorisation to place moorings, etc.. Secretary's note: RS-C sent e-mail comments post meeting to suggest that the raft be situated well to the west of the Mosset Burn channel due to the number of human (and dog) disturbance that could be possible when the raft settles at low tide. **ITEM CARRIED FORWARD**

b. Future bird hide

RHD commented that one future project for consideration by the committee would be the construction and siting of a new bird hide, ideally situated in the area south of the rifle butts to provide better views (i.e. closer and better situated for light conditions) of the key areas for birds on the bay. **ITEM CARRIED FORWARD**

c. Honorary wardens

RHD stated a need for honorary wardens to be appointed to oversee the various activities in the FBLNR, such as wildfowling, wildlife and environmental protection plus engagement with users and members of the public. RS-C and MC expressed their happiness to do so, and RHD asked all committee members to discuss with their colleagues and acquaintances - anyone doing should e-mail MC at the usual address. It is hoped that TMC's ranger could provide a short induction for such, and CB will make initial enquiries. **ACTION ALL**

6. Any other business

a. RHD met with Christine Hunt of the Findhorn Village Conservation Company re use of the land south of the bird hide for motor homes. MH expanded on this to say the hardstanding could accommodate 5-6 campervans with appropriate infrastructure, with the land being acquired by

FVCC as a capital asset transfer from TMC. After a short discussion, the committee felt that the concept was flawed in a number of ways (location versus access to beach and village facilities, etc.) and could not support the initiative, at least in its current form. MH said that a formal proposal paper will be drawn up and brought before the committee in due course.

10. Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 21 September 2017 at 1930hrs, at the James Milne Institute, Findhorn.

Our last meeting for 2017 will be held as follows, again at the JMI:

Wednesday 6 December at 1930hrs (note this is a change from the previously advised date of 5 December, due to another JMI booking).

prepared by Mike Crutch, Secretary FBLNR

Appendix A

FINDHORN BAY LOCAL NATURE RESERVE (FBLNR)
NOTES OF THE WILDFOWLING SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD IN THE JAMES MILNE INSTITUTE, FINDHORN AT
1800HRS ON WEDNESDAY 21 JUNE 2017

Sub-committee members present:

Roy Dennis (RHD) - Chair
Mike Crutch (MC) - Secretary

Bob MacKay (RM), FNDWA
Lisa Mead (LM), Friends of Findhorn Bay
Dr Colin Shedden (CS), BASC
Richard Somers-Cocks (RS-C), nature conservation/ornithology

Secretary's Note:

Since the last meeting of the FBLNR Management Committee where proposals for the 2017/18 wildfowling season were discussed, RHD had conducted discussions with all parties and the following proposals currently stand. Note that some of these are amended over those discussed within the main committee at their meeting on 28 March 2017:

- 1. Byelaws would be enacted (by TMC and/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 members (FNDWA and BASC), one member representing public interests (Friends of Findhorn Bay), one member representing bird conservation and the Chairman, with Secretary in support.*
- 3. There would be no shooting on Sundays and Mondays.*
- 4. Wildfowling - both local residents and visitors could shoot on Tuesdays, 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 the bay at Kinloss, delineated from the Mosset Burn eastwards, would be open for shooting during the months of September, October and November and be closed to wildfowling outwith these months. This is to*

protect the wading bird species that roost/feed in the colder winter months, and ahead of their return to breeding grounds.

7. Local wildfowlers only could apply for a season permit.

8. Visitors could apply for day permits, up to a maximum of 5 visiting wildfowlers per day, and for a maximum three day period Tuesdays to Fridays.

9. A range of other management issues would be decided by the wildfowling sub-committee, and ratified by the FBLNR Management Committee.

1. Introduction

RHD welcomed those present and stated that the aim of this sub-committee was to take forward the proposals (as detailed above) and agree upon the way ahead for the permit production and issuing thereof. It was agreed by all that this sub-committee would convene pre- and post-season each year, once in steady state.

RHD also stated that he wanted members of this sub-committee to be focussed and committed to a positive outcome to all of the work undertaken thus far.

2. Permit content, administration, and production

RHD - again with reference to the proposals above - put forward that the permit would take on a small booklet-style format containing pertinent information (including a map of the FBLNR). White permits would be issued to local users, and yellow for visitors. The meeting agreed that the permits would be kept on the person of each user, rather than displayed in their vehicle.

Applications would be made to the permit administrator (initially MC, as FBLNR secretary) via online application to be placed on the FBLNR website. Promulgation of such would be via press release, social media, etc., as appropriate. Information to be included, in addition to that contained on the drafts shown at the meeting, would be vehicle model and registration number. For visiting wildfowlers, their bag return information should be contained therein also.

It was recognised that with the 2017/18 season fast approaching, all work to draft the content and agree upon such, set-up the necessary online application portal and produce the permits needs to be completed as soon as possible. RHD will draft the permit and circulate to members, and RHD will engage with a colleague regarding the online form construction and progress with RS-C. MC will address any Data Protection Act aspects needed regarding personal data received and handled. **ACTION RHD/RS-C/MC**

3. Wardening arrangements

The meeting agreed RHD's proposal of honorary wardens, with a cross-section of users of the FBLNR and not just focussed on wildfowling. RHD asked RM to review who within the local wildfowlers would be best suited to performing the role. **ACTION RM/ALL**

4. Media coverage/information cascade

The meeting agreed that The Moray Council should lead on the announcement regarding the proposed trial scheme which will then be reflected in the various interested media. CS stated that the print deadline for the 2017/18 BASC handbook had passed therefore cascade of information would have to take place outside of that. RHD will discuss with TMC.
ACTION RHD

5. Any Other Business

RM expressed his concerns that the proposals as they stand will not be accepted by large numbers of wildfowlers. RM presented a counter proposal to the group, and RHD invited RM to put this to the main committee later in the evening.

6. Date of next meeting

To be advised.

Prepared by Mike Crutch, Secretary