

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL
PLANNING, ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT
COMMITTEE
20 May 2009

Agenda Item	
Report No	

Findhorn, Nairn and Lossie Fisheries Trust: Invitation to Nominate a Highland Council Representative to become an Associate Member of the Trust

Report by Director of Planning and Development

SUMMARY

The following report introduces an invitation from the Findhorn, Nairn and Lossie Fisheries Trust (FN&LFT) to nominate a Highland Council Member who will become an Associate Member of the Trust. Following a brief consideration of the role and structure of the Trust, the report recommends that Committee nominate Cllr Fraser of Ward 19 (Nairn) to become the Associate member of the FN&LFT.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 FN&LFT was incorporated on 31st October 2008. The Trust is a Company Limited by Guarantee and not having a share capital, and the maximum number of Members is twenty. Elected by the Members, the board consists of 7 – 13 directors, one of which is elected chairman. Trust Members are expected to meet twice a year. The Trust is a member of the Rivers and Fisheries Trusts of Scotland (RAFTS) organisation.
- 1.2 The Trust is a charitable organisation focusing on the preservation, protection, development and improvement of the Rivers Findhorn, Nairn and Lossie, and the native fish stocks within their catchments. The Trust supports local holistic catchment management which draws together all stakeholders and provides a vehicle to allow them to invest in such management.
- 1.3 A summary note of the Trust's early work is attached to this report.
- 1.4 Specific objectives of the Trust are to:
 - Conserve and restore all species of freshwater fish and improve their habitats, and to;
 - Advance education and understanding of the aquatic ecosystems and river catchment management
- 1.5 Fuller details on the Trust are available in the Members' Lounge where two copies of the following documents have been placed:
 - Letter of invitation to appoint associate member
 - Articles of Association

- Memorandum of Association
- Summary note on the early work of the Trust.

1.6 In recent years fishery management in Scotland has evolved, combining the statutory role of the Fishery Boards with the charitable role of the Fishery Trusts to provide more holistic management of all native fish species. Management is driven by jointly agreed regional fisheries management plans, which seek to co-ordinate fishery management with wider catchment management processes. This is evidenced by the extent of co-operation which now takes place between Fishery Boards, Trusts, SEPA, SNH and the Council on biodiversity issues.

2. NOMINATING A MEMBER REPRESENTATIVE

2.1 The invitation now being considered is for a Highland Council Member appointment to the Trust. The appointment should help build links between the work of the Council and the Trust and to raise the profile of freshwater fisheries in the Findhorn, Nairn and Lossie catchments. The Member appointed will be supported where appropriate by staff within the Planning and Development Service.

2.2 The FN&LFT is concerned with the management and improvements of rivers draining into the Moray Firth and running through the Highland and Moray Council areas. Given the rivers concerned, Council Ward 19 seems the most appropriate from which to nominate a Member. This is especially the case given that the Council owns the lower beat of the River Nairn and so is a lower proprietor represented on the Fishery Board by the Nairn Angling Association, to which the fishing is let. Income from the River Nairn fishings contributes to the Nairn Common Good Fund.

2.3 Members of Ward 19 (Nairn) have been consulted on the Trust's invitation and have agreed that Cllr Fraser become the nominated Highland Council representative. It is suggested that the Committee will wish to endorse the Ward's proposal.

3. Fit with the Programme for the Highland Council

3.1 It is suggested that accepting the FN&LFT's invitation to nominate an Associate Member representative assists the Council achieve its objectives for the environment.

4. Resource Implications

4.1 There are no resource implications attached to this paper. The nominated Member will receive appropriate support from staff within the Planning and Development Service.

RECOMMENDATION

That Committee nominate Cllr Fraser of Ward 19 (Nairn) to become the Associate member of the FN&LFT.

Signature:

Designation: Director of Planning and Development

Date: 12 May 2009

Author: G Hamilton (CHNRM) Ext 2568

Ref:

Background Papers:

1. Letter received from the Chairman, Findhorn, Nairn and Lossie Fisheries Trust, 3rd March 2009.

Findhorn, Nairn and Lossie Fisheries Trust

This newly formed Fisheries Trust becomes a full member of the Rivers and Fisheries Trusts of Scotland (RAFTS) in March. It has already achieved limited company and charity status.

The Trust's objectives are:

To conserve and restore all species of freshwater fish and improve their habitats, and

To advance education and understanding of aquatic ecosystems and river catchment management.

The Trust is working in close coordination with the three District Salmon Fisheries Boards (DSFBs) and with the angling associations, local councils, SEPA and SNH.

This year, 2009, it is helping with fishery management planning and intends to conduct and support a variety of projects on the rivers such as habitat improvement, obstacle removal and survey work. Details of specific activities will be published in May. The Trust has already donated £500 to the Moray Firth Sea Trout Project. The current lack of sea trout is of particular concern on all our rivers.

These practical endeavours, and educational projects, will all need to be funded. The Trust will receive a grant from the Scottish Government through RAFTS, but it will be seeking donations and sponsorship from both corporate bodies and private individuals. A voluntary Anglers' Contribution scheme has just been launched with the approval of the DSFBs and the help of fisheries' owners.

It will publish its first newsletter and a leaflet in May.

The Trust will be proactive in its efforts to restore fish stocks, to improve river habitats and to educate and inform. Contributions and support will be most welcome!

The Board of the Trust is as follows: Chairman: Maj Gen Seymour
Monro; Treasurer: Philip Mackenzie (Findhorn); Members: David
Broadfoot (Findhorn), Graham Bell (Forres AA), Rosie Rose (Nairn), James Dunbar (Nairn
AA), Ian Mackay (Lossie), David Smillie (Elgin AA).
The Company Secretary is Jamie Whittle.

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