



**Moray Firth Partnership  
Minute of Annual General Meeting 20<sup>th</sup> May 2016  
Held at Great Glen House, Inverness 1.30pm**

**Present:**

Maureen Macmillan (Chair) (MM)	George Hogg (Vice Chair) (GH)
Bill Ruck (BR)	Graham Grant (GG)
Gordon Mackie (GM)	

Carol Barbone (by VC link) (CB)	Ben Leyshon (BL)
Alex Yelland (AY)	

Kathryn Logan (MFP Staff) (KL)	Robyn Shilland (MFP Staff) (RS)
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**Apologies:**

Michael Comerford (MC) retiring board member

Apologies had been received from other members.

**Welcome and Housekeeping**

Maureen Macmillan, Chair, welcomed members and guests, then introduced fellow directors and current MFP staff. It was announced that KL would be leaving the Moray Firth Partnership at end July 2016 after more than fifteen years with the MFP, and RS would be replacing her as Manager.

**Notice and Quorum**

Notice of the meeting, copied to members, was taken as read. More than 10 members being present, or duly represented, the meeting was declared quorate and proceeded to business.

**1. Chair's Report**

The Chair updated members on the range of successful core and project activities completed in the previous year, despite changes in staffing. This included the provision of secretariat services to various groups, fisheries liaison re tanker anchoring issues, a public meeting on regional Marine Planning in May 2015 and work on the Seafood- See Here! project. Further work on the Gansey and Seafood – See Here! projects was being considered, which might be led by other organisations rather than the MFP.

The core work plan for 2016/17 was also highlighted. A key element of this would be continuing stakeholder discussions and developing an options report on how a future regional marine planning partnership might best be structured for the Moray Firth, and what role the MFP might have in that. The options paper would also consider what preparatory work could be undertaken by the MFP and wider stakeholders to proactively gather information that would be required by the future MPP when preparing its assessment of the firth, preparatory to starting work on developing a regional marine plan.



## **2. Formal Resolutions:**

### **Resolution 1 - Accounts & Reports (KL)**

To receive the statement of accounts of the Partnership for the period ended 31 March 2015 and the balance sheet as at that date, with the reports of the Board of Directors and Independent Financial Examiners thereon. KL gave a brief summation of the results for the year to March 2015, including core (unrestricted) and project (restricted) activities. There was a combined deficit for the year of £8,728 partly due to the timing of project receipts. The accounts, which had been examined by the Independent Financial Adviser Brian Colgan of Scott-Moncrieff, were accepted unanimously.

### **Resolution 2 - Election of Directors (GG)**

To elect up to three members to the Board. The Partnership can have a maximum of 7 directors in terms of its Articles of Association. Each year, one third of the directors must retire by rotation.

#### **Retiring members of the Board:**

George Hogg (retiring by rotation and not standing for re-election)  
Michael Comerford (retiring by rotation and not standing for re-election)

#### **Individuals standing for election as members of the Board:**

Alex Yelland  
Carol Barbone  
Ben Leyshon

Thanks were given to the two retiring members of the Board, George Hogg and Michael Comerford. Both have committed many years to the Partnership in various capacities, and their contribution was recognised as significantly benefitting the organisation. GG presented information on each of the new candidates and their reasons for wishing to join the MFP board. He highlighted that candidates are elected as individuals, and not representing any employer body or organisation.

All three nominees were unanimously accepted as Board members.

#### **Composition of Board following the election:**

Following this election, the Board had a full complement of seven directors:-  
Maureen Macmillan (current Chair), William Ruck, Graham Grant, Gordon Mackie, and the new directors Carol Barbone, Ben Leyshon and Alex Yelland.

#### **Appointment of Chair**

Members were advised that the Chair is elected annually by the Board at its first meeting following the AGM. The current Chair of the Partnership, Maureen Macmillan, would be standing again. Any current director was eligible to stand. Details of this appointment would be circulated to members in due course.



### **Resolution 3 - Appointment of independent financial examiners (GG)**

To authorise the Board of Directors to appoint an Independent Financial Examiner to the Partnership and to fix the remuneration. Members were advised that the Board proposed to continue with the services of Brian Colgan of Scott-Moncrieff as Independent Financial Examiner. Resolution 3 was agreed unanimously.

### **3. Votes of Thanks**

The Partnership gave thanks to the wide range of organisations that provide support both with funds for core and project work, as well as expertise and advice. Particular mention was made of the key core funders per the 2014/15 accounts, who had provided long term support - Aberdeenshire Council, Chevron Upstream Europe, Marine Scotland, Port of Cromarty Firth, and Scottish Natural Heritage.

It would not have been possible for the Partnership to achieve the work it has done, or to lever in such significant project funds to benefit local communities without this core support. Other funders were thanked for their support of project work, including in kind donations, as well as individuals who have volunteered time and skills to enable a range of activities around the Moray Firth.

There being no further questions, the formal business was closed.

A gift was presented to George Hogg with thanks for his many years of service to the MFP.

**END**



**Note of Programme following the formal AGM business:-**

- a) **Update on regional marine planning issues - Marine Scotland**
- b) **Open discussion session**
- c) **Talk by George Brown - "Underwater Pixels - the marine life of the Scottish Highlands and Islands"**
- d) **"Meet the mud dwellers" – a display and microscope session set up by Fish Vet Group Environmental**

**(a) Update on regional marine planning and coastal management by Rhona Fairgrieve, Scottish Coastal Forum on behalf of L. Ross, Marine Scotland.**

Following the close of the formal AGM business, Rhona Fairgrieve (RF) of the Scottish Coastal Forum gave a presentation on behalf of Marine Scotland on recent developments in regional marine planning in Scotland, and provided a wider European context. The National Marine Plan and its review process were discussed.

The first Marine Planning Partnership pilots were in the Clyde and Shetland. Shetland MPP constitution had just been formally signed off by ministers and the Clyde was expected to follow after the May election. The set up in each area was quite different, in line with the Scottish Government expectation that different areas might have quite different needs both in terms of the formation of the MPP and their respective Regional Marine Plans. No timescale had yet been announced for the formation a second round of MPPs. There was useful work that could be done in the interim however, and recognition was given to the proposals by the MFP in its 15/16 work plan as well as other local coastal partnerships to help progress matters.

The 'MSP Challenge 2050' marine spatial planning game (featured at the Scottish Coastal Forum Conference in March 2016) had received highly positive feedback and was considered an excellent tool to have for marine spatial planning in the UK. Options were being explored for a Scottish version of the game, highlighting the challenges of local and cross-regional planning.

20 May is European Maritime Day and the 2017 event will be in Poole, Dorset, at which Marine Scotland is likely to have a strong presence. Cross-border marine planning was also discussed, with the Solway Firth Partnership and the SIMCelt project used to illustrate the challenges of co-ordinating marine spatial planning across geographical boundaries.

**(b) Open discussion session**

Topics discussed during the open session included:

- The quantity / quality of data held by Marine Scotland and the consequent ability of Marine Scotland to make decisions based on these data.

The National Marine Plan Interactive (NMPi) was cited as a vital data portal and visual tool for accessing and viewing data and new data sets were continually being added.



- Issues of coastal erosion around the Moray Firth (with specific mention of Fortrose and Rosemarkie) and whether or not this would be included in the regional marine plan.

It was noted that significant local issues, such as coastal erosion, should be picked up during the assessment of each area by the regional MPP and reflected in the regional marine plan e.g. coastal erosion had been identified as a significant pressure in the Clyde area. Preparatory work in information gathering.

- How to incorporate ecosystem services into marine planning, particularly with limited public awareness and understanding of the concept.

RF agreed that ecosystem services are a difficult concept for the public to grasp, and have received attention through several programmes and workshops including Sciencewise (which held public engagement exercises in relation to the concepts of the National Ecosystem Assessment) and at the upcoming Sea Scotland event.

**(c) "Underwater Pixels - the marine life of the Scottish Highlands and Islands"**

George Brown, a well-known local diver and marine enthusiast presented high magnification images he had taken of underwater life around the coast, including images from the Tain Bombing range, which had been undisturbed for many years. Members showed their appreciation for a fascinating presentation.

**(d)** Members were then encouraged to see local wildlife close up through the microscopes set up in the atrium, thanks to the Fish Vet Environmental Group and local staff Kate McEwan and Caz Roy.

