

MINUTES of A BOARD MEETING of THE RIVER UGIE DISTRICT SALMON FISHERY held at Broad House, Broad Street, Peterhead on Thursday, 21st May 2026 immediately following the Public Meeting of the River Ugie District Salmon Fishery Board.

Present: Joseph Yule (Convenor) (JY)
Alexander Buchan for Lunar Fishing Company Limited (ABL)
William Stephen for Ugie Angling Association (WS)
Simon Stephen for Ugie Angling Association (SS)
Stephen Buchan for Ugie Angling Association (SB)
John Fraser for Ugie Angling Association (JF)
Elaine Booth for Ednie Fishings (EB)

In Attendance: Louise Kershaw, Clerk to the Board (LK)
David Will, Water Bailiff (DW)
Jack Pocock, Nature Scotland (JP)

Apologies: Alexander Buchan for Score Group plc (ABS)
James Ritchie for Ugie Angling Association (JR)

MINUTES

WS proposed that the Minutes of the last Board meeting held on 13th November 2025 be taken as read and this was seconded by ABL.

FINANCE AND RATES

LK produced a cashflow forecast for the 12 months up to 31st May 2027.

After careful consideration of the projections by the Board, ABL proposed that the current rate of £2.20 in the pound be increased to £2.60 for the coming year and this was seconded by SS.

LK agreed she would issue the notices accordingly.

Q&A SESSION WITH JACK POCOCK (JP) FROM NATURE SCOTLAND ON UGIE PEATLAND PARTNERSHIP (UPP)

JP introduced himself as one of the members of the UPP team and briefly explained the aim of the UPP which is the restoration of peatlands within the River Ugie catchment area.

JP explained that the UPP are looking for any assistance that the Board is willing to provide by way of knowledge, consultancy, liaison with landowners etc. with a view to building a broad skillset amongst everyone involved in the restoration project.

JY commented that the project had many potential advantages, including solving the discolouration problems in the water.

JP agreed with this, and advised that one of the main issues the UPP is facing is trying to get landowners on board with the project, and perhaps that could be something the Board could help with.

EB asked JP if he was aware of the 'Sma Wids' project, and offered to send him some information regarding this.

JY asked JP what exactly the UPP was looking for the Board to do to assist. JP advised that this was totally up to the Board, and the UPP would be grateful for any involvement – ideally they would be looking to call on the Board for ecological advice regarding the river, assistance with communicating with landowners and general input/ perspective.

JY thanked JP for attending, and it was agreed that the Board would follow up with him but in the meantime he should feel free to get in touch with any queries. DW provided JP with his contact information.

MATTERS ARISING

Review and Approval of Complaints Procedure

LK advised that as part of a recent Good Governance review, the Board is required to have a documented and approved Complaints Procedure in place. LK produced to the Board a Complaints Procedure she had prepared in line with the Good Governance guidance, and this was approved.

Netherton Hub/ Wind Farm Cables

JF provided an update on the Board's formal request for the Voluntary Environmental Appraisal carried out by SSEN. Nothing has been provided yet, but JF will continue to chase Ross McKenzie (SSE) for the report.

JF commented that it was very frustrating that all the planning applications submitted by the various cable and wind farm companies have been passed with no consultation with the Board.

JY agreed. Although he has been attending the various community meetings and submitting the Board's concerns to the companies at every opportunity, he acknowledged that ultimately there is no stopping the cables coming ashore; however the Board must do all it can to hold them accountable.

EB advised that Ednie Farms has also been in discussion with the electricity companies. JY asked if she could provide a list of the companies they have been in contact with to make sure the Board is aware of all of the ongoing projects.

JF advised that according to SSE, the process of drilling under the River to install the cables will take 140 days. Fisheries Management Scotland (FMS) are currently running tests to establish the effect that electro magnets have on fish, and so far the fish have suffered no ill effects and are still swimming. JF went on to say that FMS should employ an Environmental Officer dedicated to the River Ugie for a period of time after the cables are installed to monitor the effects on the River, and this could be funded by SSE.

JY asked LK to look into the legal position in terms of what powers the Board would have to hold SSE and other companies accountable for the environmental impact and potential damage to the River as a result of these projects, and to oblige them to consult with and involve the Board for the duration of the projects.

LK agreed she would carry out some research on this and draft a letter to send on behalf of the Board.

FISH COUNTER REPORT

ABL reported that the numbers for the first 4 months of the year have been good, possibly the best January to April ever seen. ABL confirmed he would arrange for the fish counter report to be emailed to LK so that she could forward it on to the Board.

A.O.C.B

Big River Watch

JY asked JF how the UAA's participation in the Big River Watch had gone. JF advised that it went well, and JY commented that it is important for the Ugie to take part in the Big River Watch.

Smolt Catching Project

JY asked WS and SS how the rotary trap project was coming along. WS advised the project continued to do well, the trap is still working as it should and the project has been a good learning experience.

WS went on to explain that the goal would be to move on to catching salmon smolts (instead of sea trout smolts), however it is not possible to do this whilst the Ugie is a Category 3 River. WS is going to query with Shaun Robertson why the Ugie is still a Category 3 River.

Monitoring of River Temperature

JY asked DW if he is monitoring the River temperatures. DW confirmed that he is continuing to monitor the temperatures, and will carry out the Board's instructions accordingly.

DW went on to advise that the current guidance is that the River should be closed when the temperature reaches 20 degrees.

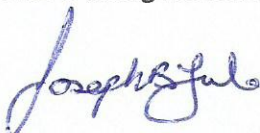
ABL suggested that it is maybe better to restrict certain types of fishing rather than closing the River altogether.

JF suggested purchasing underwater thermometers to monitor the temperature at different points in the River. This way only certain areas might need to be closed off depending on the temperature. It was agreed that JF would source prices and see to the purchase of the thermometers.

NEXT BOARD MEETING DATE

The date for the next Board meeting was set for Thursday 19th November 2026 at 3pm.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 5:30pm.



Joseph Yule
Convenor