

STRATHTAY DEER MANAGEMENT GROUP

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING

HELD AT

DERCULICH ON SUNDAY 20TH AUGUST 2017

ACTION

1. PRESENT:

Charles Butter	Cluniemore (Chairman)
William Jackson	Derculich (Secretary)
David Stirling	Findynate
Tom Turnbull	Association of Deer Management Group
Steven Wade	Lick
Brian Troup	Cluniemore
Gary Galimore	Farleyer
Iain Wotherspoon	Farleyer
Ed Fenton	Edradynate
Michael Campbell	Edradynate
Linzi Seivwright	Consultant
Kevin Peters	FES, representing Foss and surrounding forestry

APOLOGIES:

Jon Lambert	Glengoulandie
David Murray	Farleyer
Alastair Emslie	Lick

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the previous meeting held on Sunday 21st August 2016 were approved.

3. CHANGES IN OWNERSHIP & MANAGEMENT

There were no changes in ownership.

Charles Butter explained that the baryte operation is likely to begin on Cluniemore at some stage in the next year. It was agreed by the meeting this is likely to have little effect on the deer population and management following from the joint venture between Edradynate and Derculich and the rather larger operation on Foss.

4. SNH

The meeting was again disappointed that despite all the additional work burdened on the Group by SNH, there was no representative at our only meeting of the year.

Linzi Seivwright (LS) updated the meeting on the changes over the last year. The Deer Management review had been reconsidered by Roseanna Cunningham. This had suggested that SNH should set deer culls and become much more involved in day to day management with changes in principal legislation. However, SNH are short of resources and the legislation not sufficiently tested so a working group has been put together. A review of the Code of Management is due in 2019 and it is important that the DMGs show considerable improvement by then.

The proposals suggest that SNH's position should be strengthened to enforce Section 7 Agreements and perhaps take test Section 8s whereby SNH take control of culls with Estates footing the bill.

A meeting was held at Birnam at which the Deer Management Groups actions are considered and ranked, SDMG are pretty much near the top.

The work for the year will be largely related to habitat improvement assessments.

LS undertook a training day earlier this year. The Group is extremely small and being the size of many individual estates in total, it could be difficult to ensure consistency in assessment if each estate undertakes the HIAs individually. Therefore, LS will put together a price for undertaking this work either herself or through sub-contractors. It is best the survey is undertaken in the spring. **LS**

5. ADMG

Tom Turnbull addressed the meeting and updated us on developments through the year.

Sporting rates are being imposed but the Assessors have no extra financial resources to deal with this and as a consequence are considerably behind on publishing details. It is important that all rate payers appeal their assessments although it may be that they are eligible for Small Business Relief.

The ADMG subscription has increased by 25% having remained static for quite some years. It was agreed that SDMG continue with the straight division of this cost. WNJ settles the account on behalf of the Group but requests swift reimbursement. WNJ took the opportunity to thank those who had settled the invoices so quickly.

There is funding available for peatland regeneration although there is only a small area of this within our Group.

6. E.COLI

Individual estates may be contacted to undertake and co-operate with a study of carcasses for E.coli. It was agreed that all estates, if contacted, would co-operate with this and produce one carcass. **WNJ**

Chronic wasting disease is also on the horizon. There were 4 deaths through this in Scandinavia and also in America. It is important that all kit is cleaned with preferably new kit for tenants from Scandinavia or America.

7. BDS WEBSITE

This is up and running with a section for "Heading for the Scottish Hills".

8. CULL RESULTS 2016/2017

These have been previously reported. Clunimore have culled 12 stags in the area of new planting. The gates into the new Clunimore plantation had been maliciously opened after the planting, which allowed deer to enter: 10 stags had to be culled.

Kevin Peters of FES agreed to produce the culls on all the surrounding Forestry Commission woodland. These are appended to the Minutes.

9. DEER COUNT

Gary Galimore was thanked for arranging the deer count which took place on Monday 27th March. It was agreed this was a true count with excellent weather conditions and can be confirmed by the population model and the predicted spring population.

Drones were considered as a method of counting and indeed have been tried at North Chesthill. However this is at its infancy and not an approved method.

It was agreed by the meeting that helicopter count is too expensive unless funded by SNH.

At present it is difficult to assess a realistic and sustainable population as the habitat impact assessments have not been completed. However, as a standard 15 deer per sq. km seems an appropriate target.

10. BUDGET CULL 2017/2018

After considerable discussion, it was agreed that we would retain the target cull of 75 stags and 300 hinds on the DMG area. This is allocated as follows:

Estate	Stags	Hinds
Clunimore	23	80
Glengoulandie	13	30
Foss	10	15
Farleyer	9	30
Lick	8	50
Edradynate	5	33
Findynate	4	33
Derculich	2	20
Pitcastle	1	9
Total	75	300

Further, we are required to take additional details of the beasts culled including ages and weights. Iain Wotherspoon agreed to send a table which will allow for standardisation. **IW**

It was also agreed that an interim stag cull would be circulated giving figures for 7th October.

Interim hind culls will be required on 1st December, 31st December, 14th January and 31st January. It is important that all estates co-operate if there is a shortage of beasts, please discuss with your neighbours so that this cull can be achieved.

II. TRAINING

Continuing training is vital for all Deer Management Groups. The audit of those at the meeting was as follows:

Findynate	Level 1 & Level 2
Derculich	Level 1
Edradynate	Level 1 & Level 2
Farleyer	Level 1 & Level 2
Lick	Level 1 & Level 2
Clunimore	Level 1
Edradynate	Level 1
Foss	Level 1 & Level 2

12. HEALTH AND SAFETY

Health and safety was considered at the meeting. SQWVS was discussed and is noted above.

13. AOCB

It was noted that all estates would be heather burning this season and these notes form notification of that fact.

The meeting regretted the absence of SNH at the meeting.

14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the next meeting will be held on Friday 17th August 2018 at 6pm.

There being no further business the meeting was closed.