

Meeting of Lowland Deer Network Scotland Executive Committee

At: The Leapark Hotel, Grangemouth
On: 18 January 2019

Present: Colin Shedden, Vice Chairman, BASC (CS)
Dick Playfair, Secretary (DP)
Jamie Hammond, SNH (JH)
Colin Edwards, FCS (CE)
Ian Fergusson, FES (IF)
John Bruce, BDS (JB)
David Bruce, UPM Tilhill (DB)
Ian Talboys, City of Aberdeen (IT)
Alex Stoddart, SACS
Lisa Roberts, NFUS
Iain Robertson, MOD
John Campbell-Smith, Borders DG (JCS)
John Walker, WLDG (JW)
John Walker Snr, WLDG
Peter Semple, Clyde Coast DM (PS)
Jim Govan (JG)
Ron Smith (RS)

Apologies or not present:

Richard Cooke, Chairman
Angus Corby, Transport Scotland
Donald Fraser, SNH
Alastair MacGugan, SNH
Jamie Farquhar, Confor
Alex Hogg, SGA
Mike Flynn, SSPCA
Shona Mackinnon, Wildlife Crime Unit
David Fyffe, SL&E
Jamie Stewart, SCA, SQWV (JS)
Andrew Treadaway, Barony College
Maitland Rankin, GDDG
Robert Sharp
Glen Heggs, SADG
William Brooks, NLDG
George Ritchie, BBDG
Mark Telfer, EELDG
James Simpson
David Quarrell

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| 1. | <p>Apologies, previous minutes and matters arising
Colin Shedden, vice chair, chaired the meeting as RC was unable to attend. Apologies were noted as above. The minutes of the meeting on 26 October 2018 were approved.</p> <p><u>1.1 Actions and matters arising</u>
1.25 A step-by-step matrix for producers had been produced by JB and circulated for comment with the date for the next meeting.
2.4 Done</p> |
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	<p>3.5 A draft response had been circulated to the Committee for comment</p> <p>3.10 Carried forward</p> <p>5.4 Flow chart for small processors – see 1.25 above.</p> <p>6.1 Timing for meat hygiene refresher pilot – ongoing.</p>
2.	<p>Financial report</p> <p>DP gave the financial report for the year to date. Total income received totalled £25,459 with expenditure for the year at £20,427. There was a positive balance at the bank as at 16.01.2019 of £25,261.</p>
3.	<p>Lowland Deer Panel</p> <p>3.1 DP gave an update on the Lowland Deer Panel based on Peter Watson's address to DMRT in November. That update from DMRT minutes as follows. There were several key questions the Panel had been asked to consider and provide advice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do lowland deer managers need to collaborate to achieve sustainable deer management? • If so, at what scale does this need to take place, and what is the most efficient and effective approach? • What knowledge and information are needed to support this process and to determine whether the public interest is being met? • What are the practical implications of public perceptions of deer and deer management in the lowlands? • What further action could SNH take in the context of the existing legislative and policy framework? <p>3.2 The Panel had set out to collect evidence but much of the information which had come back was subjective and opinion based. The online survey had received 160 responses including individual stalkers and environmental NGOs. The Panel had still to meet to conclude the report, conclusions and recommendations (as at November 2018) but that these would be focused around the questions posed. Wider issues which did not necessarily relate to the scope of the task had been raised and the Panel would reference these in the report.</p> <p>3.3 DMRT had asked a range of questions and concerns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was concern regarding the very limited nature of the responses especially from Local Authorities and individual lowland deer managers. • There was surprise at the lack of concern reported to the Panel from the agriculture sector, particularly that of roe deer impacts on crops and that the agricultural sector's concerns seemed to be limited to herds of marauding (red) deer. • Members also thought that there was a jump in requirements between DSC1 and DSC2 which negatively impacted on the numbers taking DSC2.
4.	<p>Events and activity</p> <p>4.1 DP advised that there had been an application for funding for a further DSC 1 course from Craigswood Deer Management to run on 23/24 March.</p> <p>4.2 PS said that Clyde Coast Deer Management was to run a first aid course in February. DP suggested submitting an application for funding support.</p>

	<p><u>4.3 Woodland Habitat Impact Assessment Awareness Days</u></p> <p>4.3.1 DP advised that the funds made available by FCS would allow up to four of these to be run in the spring by Broomhill Ecology, although it could mean some Groups joining forces to enable events to be well supported. He advised those interested to submit dates so that a recce could be organised and planning begin.</p> <p>4.3.2 JB said that whilst extremely helpful for lowland deer managers the current methodology was insufficient to be used for anything other than basic assessment. CE said that this level was a step up for many vocational stalkers.</p> <p>4.3.3 CE asked whether there was a Best Practice Guide covering Woodland Habitat Impact Assessment.</p> <p>4.3.4 CE said that it would be good to have dates organised asap as he was also requiring Broomhill to run a number of 'training the trainer' days.</p> <p><u>4.4 Meat hygiene refresher pilot</u></p> <p>4.4.1 JS had advised that he had completed the course content and that a date to test-run the event for the LDNS venison sub-group would be circulated shortly.</p> <p>4.4.2 AS suggested the Kelso stalking fair (23/24 March) as a possible venue for a public event.</p>
5.	<p>Local authority engagement</p> <p>5.1 IT presented a paper that he had circulated earlier to the chair, vice chair, secretary and the LDNS funders outlining how he might be engaged for a small fee, and with the consent of his employer, to up LDNS engagement with other local authorities and had proposed 5 days of time over a 3 month period.</p> <p>5.2 JH said that elements of what was being proposed were been or had been undertaken already and that reality was that LAs were doing quite a lot by way of developing deer plans or statements, but that this was certainly a useful proposal. SNH was also planning for a follow-up event for LAs this year.</p> <p>5.3 Caution was urged over calling LA plans 'deer management plans' as they then might find they were being help to account against these in the same way as upland DMGs.</p> <p>5.4 It was agreed that IT's proposal was good and that LDNS should support it., keeping IT fully appraised with what was intended for the Battleby LA event also.</p>
6.	<p>SNH Pilot Project</p> <p>6.1 JH said that this had now moved to Phase 2 and had been tendered with Chetwynd Rural being awarded the work. The intention was to run a series of workshops to develop 'stakeholder' engagement to examine how to deliver the 'public interest', and tap into membership of BASC, BDS and SACS.</p>

	<p>Contact would be made with these organisations by Tom Chetwynd. Completion was anticipated in June/July.</p> <p>6.2 AS said that postcode reference for the Project area would allow easier contact with appropriate members on the ground.</p> <p>6.3 JH said that a lot of information and data had been gathered from phase 1 and that a report would be on the SNH website soon.</p> <p>6.4 It was suggested that the Project could also engage with stalkers through social media and the Stalking Directory, plus the F & C register in the area.</p> <p>6.5 Engagement with the farming community was also a key objective for phase 2.</p> <p>6.6 AS said that it would probably be more effective for Tom Chetwynd to meet with the various organisation reps together rather than individually.</p>
7.	<p>Scottish venison update</p> <p>7.1 DP advised on the current status of and progress with the new Scottish venison strategy, Beyond the Glen, and also the application for PGI for Scottish Wild Venison.</p> <p>7.2 Both JB and AS stressed the importance of local food chains and facilitating putting roe venison into local markets.</p> <p>7.3 IF reported that FES would be putting its venison sales out to tender this summer. Due to the duration of the last contract, this will be the first time it has been done in 10 years. The intention is to break the sales contract up into lots (as yet undecided), with the duration of each contract lasting between 4-5 years.</p> <p>7.4 IF also advised on developments with the NFE on non-lead ammunition, and that lead would be totally phased out by 2022.</p> <p>7.5 RS asked what could be done to differentiate now between different types/species of venison or was it too early? PS said that he was receiving very good feedback from the local supply that he was developing through his own larder.</p> <p>7.6 Date to pilot Meat Hygiene Refresher for LDNS Food Group to be organised (JS)</p>
8.	<p>Deer health project</p> <p>DP and JB gave an update on the findings of part 1 of the project, and although the harmful Shiga-toxin E. coli O157 had only been found in 3 in 1000 carcasses this was still of great concern. Even a very small number of bacteria could present a significant health risk. JB also suggested that hunters should be more aware of potential risks and that continuing basic education (over issues such as use of gloves) was important.</p>

9.	<p>Regional and organisation round-up</p> <p><u>9.1 Forestry</u></p> <p>9.1.1 DB reported on planting plans in the private sector against the target of 10,000ha of new planting per annum (this will rise to 15,000ha by 2024). Some lowland sites (in Fife) are being required to be established without grant support for deer fencing. CE said that there was understood to be a general shortage of trees with restrictions over availability of some species.</p> <p>9.1.2 IF said that FES would be tendering its deer culling contracts over coming months in lots by region, of which there were now five. This was for a four to five-year period with the contract total value £10.5m. IF emphasised that this figure was no different from what is presently happening, but that FES has never merged all its deer culling contract requirements into one tender exercise before. Those applying would need to register on the Public Procurement Scotland website https://www.publiccontractsscotland.gov.uk/ to get onto the tender framework. Community groups along with Deer Groups would be eligible to tender. In response to a question IF said that the procurement process was independent of FES and could not be simplified.</p> <p><u>9.2 Fife</u></p> <p>RS said that there had been concerns raised over deer health and winter mortality. JB supported this saying that roe in east Scotland had been badly affected by the weather in 2018, and in the uplands there was a similar story with hinds and calves emaciated and mature stags underweight.</p> <p><u>9.3 Borders – JCS</u></p> <p>Advised that Castle Game, South Queensferry might be of interest as a new outlet for roe processing.</p>
10.	<p>Dates of next meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friday 5 April, Executive Committee, Grangemouth • Friday 3 May, LDNS AGM, Grangemouth. Peter Watson, chair of the Lowland Deer Panel has been invited to address the meeting. <p>DP advised also that nominations were being sought for the AGM for Committee representatives for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LDNS Chairman • SW Scotland (Andrew Treadaway is incumbent) • Central Scotland (no current representative following stepping down of David Ferguson) • NE Scotland (George Ritchie is incumbent)
11.	<p>Action point summary</p> <p>4.3.1 Groups to submit dates asap for woodland habitat impact assessment awareness days so that recces can be organised (all).</p> <p>4.3.3 Check if there is woodland habitat impact assessment Best Practice Guidance (DP)</p> <p>5. IT to progress proposal for Local Authority engagement (IT)</p> <p>6.1 Contact Chetwynd Rural regarding briefing for stakeholder organisations on phase 2 of Pilot Project. Possible attendance at 5 April meeting? (DP)</p> <p>6.2 JH to advise Pilot Project postcodes to organisations (BASC, SACS, BDS)</p>

10. Nominations for regional representatives for LDNS Committee. DP to follow up.

Carried forward from previous minutes

- Draft inventory of LDNS 'capacity' (DP)
- (7.6) Date for Meat Hygiene Refresher Pilot (DP to agree with JS)

Final