

## Minutes of the 8th Annual General Meeting of the Lowland Deer Network Scotland

**Held at:** The Leapark Hotel, Grangemouth  
**On:** Friday 3 May 2019

**Present:** Richard Cooke (RC), Chairman  
Colin Shedden (CS), Vice Chair  
Donald Fraser (DF), SNH  
Kevin McCulloch, SNH  
Ian Fergusson (IF), Forestry and Land Scotland (FLS)  
Angus Corby (AC), Transport Scotland  
Peter Watson (PW), Lowland Deer Panel  
David Bruce, Tillhill Forestry  
John Bruce (JB), British Deer Society  
Frank Byrne, UKDTR Tracking and Deer Rescue  
John Campbell-Smith (JDCS), Borders DG  
Ben Clinch, Doune Woodlands  
Jamie Farquhar, Confor  
James Govan, Clyde Coast DM  
Robert More, Police Scotland  
Carl Munter, Highland Game  
Hugh O'Neill, Clyde Coast DM  
Stuart Paton, Dunkeld DMF  
Maitland Rankin, Galloway  
Iain Semple  
Peter Semple, Clyde Coast DM  
Robert Sharp  
Robert Smith  
Ian Talboys, Aberdeen City Council  
John Walker Snr, WLDG  
John Walker Jnr, WLDG

**Apologies:** Alistair Bolton  
Colin Edwards, Scottish Forestry  
David Fyffe, Scottish Land & Estates  
Jamie Hammond, SNH  
George Ritchie  
Lisa Roberts, NFUS  
Iain Robertson, MOD  
James Simpson  
Ron Smith  
Jamie Stewart, SCA  
Alex Stoddart, SACS  
Mark Telfer  
Dr Alasdair B Young

1.	<b>Welcome and apologies</b> RC in the chair welcomed those attending. Apologies received were noted.

2.	<p><b>Minutes of LDNS AGM, 17 April 2018</b></p> <p>There being no matters arising the minutes from the LDNS AGM held on 17 April 2018 were approved. Proposed by JDCS and seconded by AC.</p>
3.	<p><b>Chairman's report</b></p> <p>Richard Cooke, LDNS Chairman, gave his <a href="#">report for the year</a>. This is available on the LDNS website.</p>
4.	<p><b>Annual accounts</b></p> <p>The annual accounts were circulated. Subject to minor amendments (change Forest Enterprise Scotland to Forestry Commission Scotland; add training to narrative under expenditure; addition of 2018 Game Fair costs under expenditure) these were approved.</p> <p>RC reminded those members of the Committee present that they were entitled to charge for mileage at 45p/mile.</p> <p>He said that less events had been delivered than budgeted in 2018/19, and that there was a need to undertake more initiatives locally.</p> <p>RC advised that funding was likely to be reduced in 2019/20 with no funding committed by Scottish Forestry, and that any other reduction in income from the public sector would be of real concern.</p> <p>Subject to the amendments above, the accounts were proposed by JB and seconded by JDCS.</p>
5.	<p><b>Election to Chairman and Regional representatives on Committee</b></p> <p>There were two candidates for the post of LDNS Chairman, these being John Bruce, proposed by RS, and Colin Shedden, proposed by MR.</p> <p>The ballot was explained. Both candidates were then invited to say a few words before leaving the meeting.</p> <p>The result of the ballot for Chairman, a show of hands by LDNS members, resulted in Colin Shedden being elected.</p> <p>There then followed an election for vice Chairman, John Bruce, proposed by JDCS, and Alex Hogg proposed by JG. John Bruce was duly elected.</p> <p>There followed an election of regional representatives to Committee. Jim Govan had declined to stand for SW Scotland leaving Maitland Rankin as sole candidate. Robert Sharp had been nominated for Central, and George Ritchie to continue for NE Scotland. These were proposed en bloc by CS and seconded by JB, and duly elected.</p>
6.	<p><b>SNH Report</b></p> <p>Donald Fraser gave the SNH report. He said that the three yearly deer review was imminent this autumn, and that the Lowland Deer Panel report would form a part of it. In addition, SNH would be reviewing the Deer Code,</p>

	<p>and a significant review process was under way in the uplands. SNH would submit its report to Government in September.</p> <p>Phase 2 of the Lowland Deer Project was underway assessing what actions were in place on the ground. This was being undertaken by Chetwynd Rural. A third phase, yet to be commissioned, would address whether changes were and proposals for these.</p> <p>Much work was going on with Local Authorities. 12 currently had a deer strategy/plan in place and the intention was to increase this to 15 by the end of the year. A further Battleby seminar for Local Authorities was being taken forward by Kevin McCulloch. Around 10 LAs had attended the last event.</p> <p>DF said that the Deer Working Group was separate and independent, lowland deer was part of its remit, and it too would report in September.</p> <p>Future funding for LDNS would be discussed with the new Chair and Vice Chair to ensure that LDNS is aligned with the outcomes of the Deer Review and the Lowland Deer Panel report, and that the right priorities are drawn from these.</p> <p>RC commented that no other rural sector was as closely scrutinised as the deer sector, and no one could say that those within it had not risen to the challenge. The SNH report will show how the deer sector is performing and the Deer Working Group will be making recommendations for change having looked at other systems.</p> <p>There was a question about the thermal imaging trial in relation to the Authorisations Review. DF said that the methodology had been developed and the plan was to trial this with Forestry and Land Scotland towards the end of the year.</p> <p>There was a question about Best Practice events and the Best Practice Guides. DF said that Best Practice now had a new Chair, Doug McAdam, and that the Guides were being updated, and it would be the responsibility of the BP steering group to take forward.</p>
7.	<p><b>Changes to Forestry agencies</b></p> <p>IF explained that after 100 years of the UK body, the Forestry Commission, and steady devolution over the last four years, two agencies had been set up within Scottish Government. The Forestry Commission had become Scottish Forestry, and Forest Enterprise had become Forestry and Land Scotland which had moved from being 10 districts into five regions with separate management teams. IF is part of the FLS Technical Services Team. He advised that any questions should be directed to the regional offices as shown on the website. The aim going forward was for FLS to be more open and transparent.</p>

8.	<p><b>Events and immediate planned future events</b>  DP gave a short report. This is contained in the latest <a href="#">LDNS Annual Review</a> now on the website.</p>
9.	<p><b>Venison</b>  DP gave updates on both the changes at the Scottish Venison Partnership and the Deer Health Project.</p>
10.	<p><b>Presentation by Peter Watson</b>  Peter Watson, guest speaker, gave a presentation on the Lowland Deer Panel report. His <a href="#">presentation</a> is available online.</p>
11.	<p><b>Questions, discussion and AOB</b>  DP advised that the consultant undertaking the Lowland Deer Project Part 2 had been hoping to attend and o give an update but had not ultimately been able to. DP reported that there had been 120 responses to the project survey from those within or adjoining the project area, and that a further meeting/workshop was planned for May.</p> <p>There was discussion about access to the National Forest Estate, and issues around stalkers moving from DSC1 to DSC 2</p>
12.	<p><b>Presentation to Richard Cooke</b>  Jim Govan gave a short address highlighting the considerable work that outgoing Chairman Richard Cooke had put in to moving the lowland deer sector forward. This was welcomed and warmly appreciated. A presentation to Richard Cooke followed.</p>