

Morvern Deer Management Group

AMENDED Minutes for meeting held at Kinlochteacuis Estate 16 July 2018

Attendees

Steve Fox (Carnoch-Vice Chair), Susan Larson (Kingairloch Secretary), Rob Lintott (Kingairloch-Minutes), Linda Campbell (ADMG), Iain Thornber (Member) Torquil Kennedy (FCS), Simon Boulton (Ardtornish), Alan Kennedy (Ardtornish), Graeme Taylor (SNH), Angus Davidson (Angus Davidson Ltd), Victor Clements (ADMG), Jamie Cameron (Kilmalieu), Craig Harbison (Kilmalieu), Mark Foxwell (SWT), Peter Lawson (Kinlochteacuis-Chair) .

Apologies: John MacDonald (Kilundine), Derek Lewis (Drimnin), John Jackson (FCS), Neil Roberts (Laudale), Bill Rosier (Rahoy), Shaun Corrigan (Kingairloch), Ian Collier (FCS) Matt Wilson (Oronsay), Hugh Raven (Ardtornish).

1	Peter Lawson (PL) welcomed everyone to the meeting, and confirmed that a pre meeting had been held with Victor Clements (VC) to offer pre-assessment to the group review, funded by ADMG.	ACTION BY
2	PL asked if there were any amendments or additions to spring meeting minutes. PL confirmed he had written to Rosanna Cunningham on the matter of Sporting Rates and he had received a reply confirming that this was in effect a 'property tax'. No members had received any news on appealing these rates. The majority of members had lodged timely appeals.	
	Ardtornish out of season cull figures were reported by Alan Kennedy (AK) and Simon Boulton (SB) as 10 stags, 9 hinds and 5 calves. These had been shot in the Beach area as a compensatory cull for the new fenced area. SB and AK confirmed that these animals will be included within the 2018/19 cull proposal and not in addition to this figure.	AK SB
	AK confirmed that the heli count figures were in line with population totals, however, there were approximately 100 stags more and 100 hinds less than expected, so Ardtornish would likely increase stag cull and reduce hind cull from agreed figures from 3 year plan. AK confirmed that the heli count figures would be professionally modelled and any change in proposed cull figures would be reported to the group in advance of the season. Graeme Taylor (GT) asked if a current accurate live deer management plan was in place and AK confirmed it would be updated. GT asked for changes in population from count to be reflected in updated plan. PL requested accurate cull figures to be given as some uncertainty was affecting other members.	AK SB
3	Winter Mortality and recruitment rates for the group were discussed and reported, based on limited counts, as follows:	

	Ardtornish – SB counted 84 hinds with only 18 calves, so a low calving rate	
	Kinlochteacuis – 15% recruitment 40% calving rate, fewer than expected yearlings present there was also increased evidence of winter mortality compared to previous winters	
*	Glensanda – Iain Thornber (IT) observed 30 -40 animals seen dead. Calving low from partial inspection. * IT amended at the Autumn meeting that he Estimated the figure	
	Kilmalieu – Jamie Cameron (JC) and Craig Harbison (CH) reported last year high calving percentage. This year unknown.	
	Kingairloch – SL reported last year calf recruitment 10%, calving at 14%. 15 stags and 6 calves found dead	
*	SWT – Mark Foxley (MF) didn't have figures but would report back * Amended No deaths	
	Laudale – Neil Roberts (not present) had reported recruitment at 30% but mixed mortality. 8 stags 12 hinds found dead in woodlands.	
	PL summarised mortality as higher in general and suggested a general figure of 10% of stags might be used for population figures/modelling. Torquil Kennedy (TK) confirmed FCS awaiting results from dung counts to give numbers.	
4	PL and GT thanked members and helpers for their hard work and cooperation in a successful heli count. Conditions were near perfect.	
	GT suggested the count was too early to give accurate figures for winter mortality so advised members to monitor their ground. Calving in general was 33% and was confident of good accuracy all round. Linda Campbell (LC) asked if there were any discrepancies from previous foot counts and all reported good accuracy from these. SL requested copy of flight paths and GT will supply. GT confirmed only open hill areas counted as forested areas such as Glencripesdale were not.	Members GT
	VC and GT also commented that the group foot counts had provided good accuracy and were not necessarily required on an annual basis (every 2-3 years sufficient) if the group wished to change its annual foot count policy.	Members
5	Ring fenced areas such as Drimnin were agreed with members to be appropriate if sub groups are to be used.	
*	PL concerned that Ardtornish plans would have major impact on Glensanda, Kingairloch and Laudale, and questioned if SNH proposed sub groups would address this adequately due to variance in desired densities. IT confirmed Glensanda was now looking at returning to a more sporting plan as they wished to entertain clients, so would require current cull figures (10 stags) and deer density (circa 10/km ²) to be achieved. * IT Amended Shootable Stags	

	SL stated Kingairloch would stay as a whole if group has to be subdivided and AK agreed it made sense due to the different aims of Ardtornish and Kingairloch. GT disagreed but confirmed that all affected parties need to discuss options based on population models, and suggested collaborative working such as culling on marches to help neighbours achieve objectives. GT confirmed that there are no requirements for sub-groups long as population targets etc are considered.	
	AK confirmed that Ardtornish LTFP is yet to be signed off and GT requested again for DMP to be updated from 2016 with new objectives. PL confirmed DMP does not reflect the current objectives for Ardtornish.	AK
	VC suggested that there are potentially too many sub groups for the area of Morvern and could model as a whole group effectively. PL asked Angus Davidson (AD) to offer different population models using different sub groups to compare the outcomes for neighbours of Ardtornish, comparing to whole group model also.	AD
*	MF confirmed that Rahoy Reserve currently has a deer density of c25/km2 and had received a consent from SNH to cull 10 hinds this year. MF confirmed they would look to reduce numbers slowly, suggesting a 5 year time period and closely monitoring at all stages, whilst working with Kinlochteacuis. IT pointed out that Kinlochteacuis had a Veto on culling on the Reserve. PL stated that if Kinlochteacuis was carrying out the cull as an extension of their own cull then under these circumstances there would not be an issue. PL and MF to discuss. *Amended to collaboration between the SWT and Kinlochteacuis on cull numbers based on scientific justification. No Veto.	PL MF
	Proposed stag cull figures were supplied as follows:	
	SNH – 10	
	Carnoch – 12-14	
	SWT – 0	
	Kinlochteacuis – 10-13	
	Rahoy Hills- 0	
	Ardtornish – 30 (to be confirmed following professional modelling)	
	Glensanda – 10	
	Kingairloch -30-35	
	FCS – 80-100	
	Kilmalieu – 5	
	New woodland creation – SB confirmed there are 3 new blocks at Ardtornish, and AK confirmed that there are plans for further blocks in 2019 and 2020 although they are at the application stage currently.	AK SB

	SL asked for any comments on the re-stock / replanting plans for Laudale (supplied by Ian Collier). IT was concerned for road safety due to lack of sight lines once trees re grow on a fast stretch of road, and proximity of trees to the road edge. Other members agreed to investigate and reply directly if appropriate.	
	GT confirmed the sporting lease for SNH Glencripesdale was up for tender and had received lots of interest. SNH keen to award to a local applicant ideally but would confirm shortly.	GT
6	A) VC summarised pre meeting and his assessment criteria for the benchmark survey in preparation for the 2019 SNH assessment. Overall standing based on the morning pre meeting was that the benchmark (compared to 2016) was the same score – (some areas upgraded to 2 (green) and some downgraded to 1 (amber)), but with many positives to work on. The Public Interest assessment came out 6 percentage marks higher than 2016. VC commented that many areas in benchmark survey were marked down because of polarity over Ardtornish plans, but if members could achieve densities and objectives based on current DMP, the scores in the benchmark would be upgraded. VC also commented that the HIA undertaken by the group was scoring slightly higher than many other groups he had assessed so far.	Members
	VC suggested word heavy DMP to be summarised and compressed for website, and to improve understanding for all.	
	B) Info for review list circulated to the group. PL asked Angus Davidson (AD) to collect information on behalf of the group and for him to chase it up directly. Members that have not already done so will send estate audit forms to SF for collaboration and recording to update DMP.	Members
7	AK has completed group fencing maps, (17 areas) and passed to AD for digitising and inclusion in ongoing updating of DMP.	AD
8	PL asked if a business reference number (BRN) should be sought for the group in view of future funding. It was agreed to deal with on an arising basis if needed.	
*	PL and SF raised the issue of office bearers using personal email addresses should backups ever be required by new members etc. It was agreed that a generic morverndmg@gmail.com should be CC'd into important emails so that an electronic backup is available for office bearers in the future. *AMENDED morverndmg@gmail.com,mdmgchair@gmail.com, mdmgvice@gmail.com,mdmgsecretary@gmail.com	
9	SF to action emailing of CWD leaflets to members for foreign clients, as well as other notifiable diseases, to ensure ongoing compliance.	SF

	GT confirmed SNH survey work of Sunart Woodlands and SSSI SAC now complete but draft report not yet available. GT to make available imminently.	GT
	Cathy Mayne's post is being replaced by Andrew MacMaster from FCS.	
	PL requested members to supply historic, current and future infrastructure costs for stalking on VC recommendation for benchmarking. Generic costs to be agreed but suggested £15k/argo, £40k/assured larder, £20k/non-assured and access tracks at £15/m?	Members
	PL confirmed next meeting dates as:	
	Wed 31 October at Lochaline Village Hall	
	Wed 24 April 2019 Spring meeting. Venue TBC	
	Linda Campbell (LC) requested EScope stalking rents research questionnaire from Knight Frank to be completed and returned. Next ADMG regional meeting is to be held at Balloch on 13 August. PL asked that ADMG give more notice of meeting. Linda will raise at ADMG.	Members
	IT requested that the chair of Morvern Community Council be included on email confirming future meeting dates and locations to ensure public aware of these and are free to attend. IT to supply secretary with email address.	IT SL
	AK confirmed he is now representing Ardtornish at MDMG meetings. PL asked for written notification from the Ardtornish voting member (Hugh Raven) to observe correct procedure for the group. AK will action.	AK HR