

WKDMG Meeting and AGM Agenda

Venue: Held via Zoom 9 November 2020 at 11:15.

Present: Rupert, Jim, Iain B, Iain W, David F, Elisabeth, Machiel, Fred, Grant,

1. Apologies

Ally MacAskill (JMT), Luise Janniche (Bhromasaig), Simon Laird (EKDMG).

2. AGM business - Nomination of Office Bearers and Secretary; Group membership fees for 2020-21.

Nomination forms for Office bearers attached. The existing office bearers were re-elected with unanimous support:

- Chair – Rupert Soames
- Vice-Chair – Jim Brown

Proposed by Elisabeth, seconded by Christoph.

The position of Dr Cathy Mayne as Secretary was agreed with unanimous support. Proposed by Iain, seconded by Elisabeth.

A range of options for membership fees for 2020-21 was tabled as outlined in the attached paper (Paper 1). The Chair proposed holding the subscriptions at the same rates as last year. Unanimously approved.

3. Minutes of last meeting

No comments.

4. Reports from the Chair and the Treasurer

Finance spreadsheet attached (Paper 2). After payment of the Secretary's invoice, the accounts will be in credit.

5. Mechanisms to manage deer.

Foot and helicopter count 2021. To carry out the foot count irrespective of helicopter count as soon as possible after hinds. AMcM reports funding secured but there could be restrictions related to COVID to put a stop to that. EKDMG concerned about cost to their group in the light of current financial challenges.

EKDMG also committed to a foot count. Action: **JB to coordinate the foot count.**

Stag numbers – nothing from JMT, Action: **CM to chase plus info on OoS license application.**

Cull targets and population model for WKDMG and the wider combined west and east KDMGs (Papers 3.1, 3.2, 3.3). Strong hind cull is needed in 2020/21. Informal group-wide check on numbers taken from end of year might help to deliver that.

Venison market – if carcass disposal is not possible then what happens? Taking an early cull may be helpful for this.

6. Delivery of designated features into favourable condition

See HIA report 2020 (Paper 4). Great to see the HIA work from Barisdale;. Serco satellite mapping of Kilchoan and Camusrory showing bracken cover. Action: all areas with HIA in place to resume in 2021.

7. Manage deer to retain and improve existing native woodland cover

See below.

8. Contribution to woodland expansion target

Reports of any proposed new woodland.

Barisdale thinking about woodland creation scheme, Machiel working with Grant to develop this. Barisdale, Camusrory and Kilchoan likely to want to increase vegetation cover and tree cover over the next few years. NS site visit in October failed to materialise.

9. Monitor and manage deer impacts

HIA results and maps attached (Paper 4)

10. Ability to store carbon through ecosystem health

JB – KF restoration feasibility study – no news.

11. Reduce and mitigate invasive non-native species

Reports of any sika shot, or sightings of other non-natives (feral pigs included).

Pig(s) at Kyles, fairly fresh pig sign repeatedly in the last couple of months. No sign of sika so far.

12. Protect designated historic/cultural features

13. Deliver higher standards of competence in deer management

14. Contribute to public health and well-being

Reports of any disease of health issue among culled deer to date - none. Update on occurrence of Lyme disease – one case at Kilchoan. Report back of any US clients (or others from CWD areas) and how biosecurity has been handled - none.

Reports of any conflict with recreation. Surge in visitor numbers has been a challenge.

15. Economic costs and benefits associated with deer management

Update on the impact of COVID-19 on the local economy and stalking/venison revenue. All estates reported 100% loss of clients, budgets cut, staff furloughed etc. KF had just got to the point where the deer operation was sustainable, now been torpedoed. Asked NatScot whether there is any financial support to deliver the culls required. AMcM – none that he knows of yet.

16. Effective communication on deer management issues

Any updates to contact information; contacts spreadsheet has been updated with new emails for Kilchoan and Camusrory.

17. Deer welfare at individual and population level

Mechanisms for understanding condition in winter and thresholds to trigger appropriate action. What should that action be?

18. AOCB

Simplify the agenda – JB. Use the Action Plan to go through this. **CM to revise the agenda template; all webpage items to be updated.**

19. Data protection

Email correspondence within the group (and agencies) sent to all visibly. **Confirm.**

20. Review of action points

Action: **CM to update.**

21. Date and venue of next meeting

Barisdale to host the next meeting. Monday 28 June 2021. Boats from Camusrory and potentially Kilchoan with pickups at Mallaig. Boat also from Kinlochhour.