

**MINUTES**

**of the ANNUAL MEETING of the  
EAST SUTHERLAND DEER  
MANAGEMENT GROUP held at  
DUNROBIN CASTLE, GOLSPIE on  
FRIDAY 11<sup>th</sup> November 2011 at 2.15 pm**

Present:

Mr & Mrs V Ryan	Dalnessie
Mr A Mackay	Dalnessie
Mr I Smith	Dunrobin
Mr A Murray	Lairg
Sir Michael Wigan	Borrobol
Ms R Stickland	Clebrig
Mr J McMorran	Balnacoil
Mr N Mackay	Loch Choire
Mr T Chetwynd	Loch Choire
Mr B Lyall	Badanloch
Mr R Rowantree	Gordonbush
Mr A Grant	Kildonan
Mr R Bain	Torrish
Mr J C Billett	Kintradwell
Mr J A Billett	Kintradwell
Mr H Stuart	Kintradwell
Mr B Colvin	Kintradwell
Mr P Voy	Bell Ingram

In Attendance:

Mr S Coghill	SNH
Mr R Rose	SNH
Mr D Patterson	SNH

**1. WELCOME**

With Chris Whealing having stepped down as Chairman, Sir Michael Wigan took the chair and welcomed all present to the meeting

**2. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Mr J Nicholson, Clebrig; Lord Joicey, Loch Choire; Lord Strathnaver, Sutherland; Willie Lamont and Derick Macaskill, FES.

**3. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 29<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2010**

Minutes of the meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> October 2010 were approved as an accurate record.

**4. MATTERS ARISING**

It was agreed that any matters arising would be discussed under the agenda heads.

**5. FINANCIAL STATEMENT**

The Secretary summarised the financial statement. Subscription income was up from £6,306 in 2010 to £7,929 in the current year. Expenditure had increased from £4,252.75 in 2010 to 5,997 in the current year. The opening balance of -£1,128 had changed to a closing balance of £803

**6. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

Sir Michael had spoken to Chris Whealing and agreed that it was best for the Group to elect a new Chairman. Sir Michael proposed that Peter Voy take on the role and Peter was duly elected and chaired the remainder of the meeting.

**7. CULLS AND COUNT 20010/ 2011**

The cull, count and management information was circulated in the usual format. The Chairman asked the member estates to comment on the figures in light of their own experience. It became clear that some stalkers and owners had noticed a reduction in deer numbers, particularly towards the south and west of the Group area. Some were worried about a shortage of hinds and others said that there was an absence of mature stags. It was agreed that member estates should make individual decisions about whether or not to reduce their cull and that the Group should carry out a co-ordinated count in Spring 2012.

**8. HABITAT ASSESSMENT**

For SNH, Ronald Rose circulated a plan of the East Sutherland area showing the designated sites and proposed areas for habitat sampling and fixed point photography which would assist with monitoring. Ron had been dealing with estates on an individual basis and would continue to do so. He also agreed to look at how the data could be collected and mapped in a meaningful way.

**9. SNH UPDATE**

Sinclair gave an update on the WANE Act. Although it was now law, not everything had been enacted and this would happen over the coming months. The Code of Practice for Deer Management had been accepted by the Minister and was likely to become law early in 2012. Sinclair stressed the need for management plans and for Groups to work together to resolve differences and competing objectives.

**10. WINDFARMS**

For Dalnessie, Vincent Ryan gave a brief update on the Dalnessie Windfarm proposal. Details of the proposal had been exhibited at a public meeting in Lairg and would be submitted for planning permission. At this stage, it was too early to give any indication of the impact on deer numbers but he was not anticipating a significant reduction in numbers as a result of any development.

**11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There being no other business, the Chairman closed the meeting.