

**Minutes of the AGM and Autumn Meeting of the
EAST SUTHERLAND DEER MANAGEMENT GROUP held at the GOLSPIE INN, GOLSPIE
Friday 9th December 2016 at 2.00pm**

Present:

Mr. T. Chetwynd. (Chairman, Loch Choire)	Ewan Batchelor – Tilhill Forestry (Rosal)
Mr. J. McMorran (Vice Chairman, Balnacoil)	Derick MacAskill (FES)
Mr. R. Rowantree. (Secretary, Gordonbush)	Brian Lyall (Badanloch)
	David Paterson – SNH
	Sir Michael Wigan (Borrobol)
	Blair Colvin (Kintradwell)
Mr Victor Clements (Deer Plan Consultant)	Grant Symmers (Balnacoil)
Ian McMyn - SSE (Gordonbush)	Alex Plummer (Badanloch)
Andrew MacKay (Dalnessie)	John Billett (Kintradwell)
Becy Strickland (Clebrig)	John A. Billett (Kintradwell)
Andrew Robertson (Clebrig)	Megan Rowland (Gordonbush)
Pieter Bakker (Altnaharra – Part)	Paddy Davidson (Dunrobin/Dalreavoch)
Alistair Grant (Kildonan)	James Urquhart (Dunrobin/Dalreavoch)
Tom Glover – Savills	Bertie Boa (Sciberscross)

1. Welcome

The chairman welcomed those present to the meeting.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from:

Lorne MacNicol (Tressady)
Mr & Mrs Ryan (Dalnessie)

Neil MacKay (Loch Choire)
John Leonard (Torrish Woodland)

3. Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on the 22nd October 2016 were circulated at the meeting. They were proposed by Andrew MacKay and seconded by John Billett.

4. Matters arising

There were no matters arising that were not covered in the agenda

5. Financial Statement

The financial statement was approved. The consolidation of the two bank accounts following the final payment of the SNH Deer Plan grant was agreed. A proposal to allow operation of the bank account electronically by the Secretary was put to the group. It was proposed by Tom Chetwynd and seconded by John McMorran. It was passed unanimously.

6. Deer Management Plan.

Victor Clements presented the East Sutherland Deer Management Plan with the accompanying maps and spreadsheets. There was a constructive debate among members on the plan detail. It was agreed to reset the spreadsheet details following the proposed SNH Helicopter count in Spring 2017. Victor agreed to return for the spring meeting with the revised plan. With these changes agreed there was a proposal made to the group that the plan be adopted. Proposed by Sir Michael Wigan, seconded by Andrew MacKay and agreed unanimously.

7. Count.

There was an assurance from SNH that the count would take place if possible and was included in the programme for this Spring.

8. Hind Cull.

The hind cull was agreed among the members who were present and was to follow the broad guidelines outlined in the current draft of the most recent Deer Management Plan.

9. Deer Management in Scotland – SNH Report to Scottish Government

There was a report from the chair on the discussion that took place at the regional meeting of ADMG in Inverness on reaction to the recent report on deer management by SNH. The report was not well received by many of those present at the meeting, due to the view that there were factual inaccuracies and a disjoint between the introduction and conclusions and the body of the report.

10. ADMG report.

There were several items to discuss from various ADMG Meetings and circulars

- Fundraising for the “SWARD” data gathering and analysing program
- Sporting rates – 55 000 properties identified as being liable
- Training for Habitat Impact Assessment
- Chronic Wasting Disease in Norway – Taking Biosecurity Measures
- E-coli 0157 in deer, the reaction of the Food Standards Scotland

11. AOCB

Several items of other business were discussed.

- The chair reported that Sutherland Estates is offering to sell Gartymore Estate to a Helmsdale Community Group. The ESDMG had offered any assistance necessary.
- A copy of the Sciberscross Forest Long term Forest Management plan was available for circulation to interested members
- Deer Management Qualifications had now become electronic and DSC 2 could no longer be completed by paper from now on. Existing portfolios could still be completed.

It was agreed that the next meeting would be held on Friday 5th May 2017 at the Golspie Inn at 2.00 pm following the SNH helicopter count.