

MULL DEER MANAGEMENT GROUP

Mull Deer Management Group February Meeting

Notes of a meeting held at the Salen Hotel on
Sunday 3rd February 2019

In Attendance

Angus Cheape	Craig	Chairman
James Corbett	Lochbuie	Vice Chairman
Tiffy Laing	Rossal	Secretary
Donald Bisset	Benmore Estate	
Emily Wilkins	NTS Ranger Service	
John Johnson	Beach Forest Estate	
Jan Dunlop	Mull and Iona Ranger Service	
Steve Irvine	Ardnacross	
John Addy	NW Mull/Ulva	
Chris James	Craignure Estates/Torosay	
Graeme Sinclair	Pennyghael	
Paul Chauvet		
Norman MacPhail	Kilfinichen	
Andrew Holman	Kilfinichen	
Rupert de Klee	Achnacraig	
Joe Lister	Torosay Hill Estate	
James Greig	FCS	
Alan Barrow	NTS	
Rory Forrester	Ardnacross	
Alex Forrester	Ardnacross	

Apologies

Apologies were received from Edouard van Puijenbroek, John Jackson, David Hooker, Roc Sandford, Jasper Heusdens, James Harmer, Nicola Harmer, Roualeyn Thurlow, Richard de Klee, Mark Horton, David Johnson and Shaun Johnson.

The Minutes of the Meeting 14th October 2018 were accepted as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

Matter Arising

All matters arising from the last meeting are covered in The Minutes.

Accounts

The Secretary said that there was £6,060 in the account with several people still owing for Membership and stag collection. The Secretary also informed the Meeting that the fourth charge for

the chiller had been sent out and asked for prompt payment. He also indicated that there may be a small cash call for the new van.

Chiller and Van and Game Dealer

The chiller is working well, and Jim Corbett confirmed that it had been serviced. The bill for electricity will be due at the end of the hind season and is not likely to exceed £200.

Given the past problems with the hoist, Jim Corbett suggested that the hoist is removed for the summer months and returned at the beginning of the stag season. In addition, he recommended buying an inexpensive back up. Jim Corbett is to investigate. John Johnson asked about the possibility of getting the chiller at Bunnissan serviced at the same time as the DMG chiller.

TL suggested that the chiller should be cleaned on the outside to remove build of green lichen/mould. JC said that he would ask Tommy to use the pressure washer on it.

JC confirmed that the van will need replacing after the end of this season. Members were encouraged to help finding a suitable van, LWB High Top with a chiller. Budget cost is between £7/8K.

There were no reports of problems with the Game Dealer other than a short term lack of payment details.

ADMG

In Bill Bewsher's absence, The Chairman confirmed that there will be an assessment of DMGs during 2019. All Members were urged to read the Plan and conform where possible in all aspects. The latent threat to voluntary deer management is not to be taken lightly.

Culls and Counts

Stag cull figures were confirmed, and final reports or estimates of the hind cull were given. A picture emerged of lower deer numbers generally and concerns as to whether there had been a satisfactory breeding season. Ben More and Lochbuie said that stag weights were average. Rory Forrester reported seeing an unusually high number of orphaned calves suggesting that there may have been poaching. Many estates reported that there seemed to be fewer culled hinds that were in calf. JC reported few calves on Glenbyre.

Jamie Hammond has confirmed to TL that the whole Island count is still planned, but timings are uncertain. Hopefully by March 2019.

TL confirmed that he had not shot any stags on Ardvergnish for 3 years and that the number of hinds appeared to be lower than before even on the low ground.

John Addy reported seeing 200 deer on Ulva after their cull.

Sheep Numbers

Ardvergnish will be putting an extra 150 sheep onto the lower part of the hill from 2019

Forestry

Joe Lister confirmed that the forestry scheme on Torosay Hill had been approved. The deer management plan for this area will be circulated and added to the Deer Management Plan for the Island.

Jim Corbett confirmed a fenced planting at Cameron Farm of 40ha.

The area where Phytophthora was discovered will be replanted in an existing fenced area.

Scoor reported a clear fell and replant exercise in an existing fenced off area.

Rossal are conducting a peat depth survey with a view to carrying out a peatland restoration project on the lower ground beside the Coladoir Bog SSI.

John Addy reported that the existing planting on Ulva was growing well.

Training

John Johnson enquired about the possibility of a training course for DMQ1 on the Island. The secretary undertook to email all member to see if there was any other interest in a local course

Ranger

Jan explained that the new leaflet was ready for publication. The DMG agreed to meet half the costs up to £300. Jan will invoice the Group directly.

New Members

TL is to contact Tilhill to enrol them as a member as they are managing the Torosay Forestry.

Next Meeting

The October Meeting will be on the 13th October, 12.00 for 12.30 at The Salen Hotel

The Meeting was closed with a vote of thanks to Tommy for his tireless work in operating our collection service, without which our lives would be rather difficult!