

Deer Commission for Scotland
295th Open Board Meeting on Wednesday, 2nd December 2009
Great Glen House, Inverness

Agenda

OPEN SESSION – 10.45

- | | | |
|---|--|--------------|
| 1 | Apologies | |
| 2 | Draft Minutes of Meeting of held 28 th September 2009 | Paper: 295/1 |
| 3 | Matters Arising from Meeting held on 28 th September 2009 | Paper: 295/2 |

FOR DECISION

- | | | |
|---|---|--------------|
| 4 | Revisions to Annual Business Plan for 2009-2010 | Paper: 295/3 |
| 5 | Revised Budget for 2009-2010 | Paper: 295/4 |

FOR DISCUSSION

- | | | |
|---|--|--------------|
| 6 | Progress on Joint Working Sites | Presentation |
| 7 | Embedding Carbon Accounting into Planning and Decision Making Frameworks | Paper: 295/5 |

FOR NOTING

- | | | |
|----|--|---------------|
| 8 | Scottish Land Use Study and Strategy | Paper: 295/6 |
| 9 | Wildlife and Natural Environment Bill Update | Oral Update |
| 10 | DCS/SNH Proposed Merger: Update on Progress | Paper: 295/7 |
| 11 | External Meetings Attended by Chairman and Chief Executive | Paper: 295/8 |
| 12 | Minutes of Meetings | |
| | a) Deer Management Committee
Draft Minutes of Meeting held on 2 nd November 2009 | Paper: 295/9 |
| | b) Strategy Committee
Draft Minutes of Meeting held on 2 nd November 2009 | Paper: 295/10 |
| | c) Resources & Audit Committee
Draft Minutes of Meeting held on 2 nd November 2009 | Paper: 295/11 |
| 13 | Any Other Business | |
| 14 | Date of Next Meeting (8 th March 2010 – Pitlochry) | |

**Deer Commission for Scotland
Draft Minutes of 294th Open Board Meeting on
Monday 28th September
Craignure Village Hall, Mull**

OPEN SESSION

Present: Prof J Milne (Chairman)
Dr C Shedden
Dr P Mayhew
Mr A Hamilton
Earl of Dalhousie
Sir Michael Strang Steel
Prof. J Pemberton

Mr N Halfhide (Chief Executive)
Mr A MacGugan (Director of Stakeholder Relations)
Mr R Kernahan (Director of Deer Management)
Dr L Seivwright (Project Officer)
Ms K McNeil (Director of Policy, Projects Research)
Mr J Scott (Deer Officer)
Mr J Irvine (Deer Support Officer)
Mr J Hammond (Deer Officer)
Mrs J Findlay (Policy Officer)
Ms Fiona Newcombe (Research Officer)

Mr R Burton (Scottish Natural Heritage)
Mr W Boyd Wallis (Cairngorms National Park Authority)
Mr Mike Liddle (Scottish Government)
Ms A Gemmell (Scottish Government)
Mr J Risby (Forestry Commission)

1. OPENING REMARKS

- 1.1. The Chairman welcomed all present.
- 1.2. There were apologies from Dr A Barbour, Mr N Rowantree, Mr S Pepper, Dr S Walker and Sir Patrick Hunter Blair (SNH).
- 1.3. There were two members of the public present.

2. DRAFT MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 9TH JUNE

Paper: 294/1

2.1. The minutes were **approved** subject to the following changes:

- Spelling of Ms E Hudleston's name.
- Insertion of 'towards favourable condition' after 'features' in last bullet point under 7.3 on page 4.

Action: Raymond Edwards

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM MEETING HELD ON 9TH JUNE

Paper: 294/2

3.1. Members **noted** the contents of the paper

4. CARBON FOOTPRINT TARGET

Paper: 294/3

4.1. Jessica Findlay introduced the paper seeking approval for proposals to reduce DCS' carbon footprint in 2009/2010 and outlining the way forward to address the need to reduce carbon emissions in the longer term.

4.2. Members discussed the short-term proposals centring on the three biggest carbon emitters: Great Glen House, vehicles and helicopters. Members **noted** the need to balance the reduction of carbon with the need for census data to inform cull targets to achieve biodiversity objectives. Members **agreed** that the Inverpolly and Ardvvar Section 7 Steering Groups should be given the opportunity to think through the implications of not counting this year before reaching their decision on whether or not a helicopter count should go ahead.

4.3. After discussion members **agreed** the following short term proposals:

- Reduce the number of desks in Great Glen House in the MOTO agreement from twenty-four to twenty.
- Increase in travel sharing and the use of public transport by staff and Board members, both with other Board members/DCS staff, and with other agency staff.
- Remove three helicopter counts from the 2009-2010 programme subject to discussions with the Section 7 Steering Groups for Inverpolly and Ardvvar, and a consideration of the practicalities of carrying out a ground count on Scarba and the Garvellachs.

Action: Nick Halfhide

4.4. Members **noted** that, due to previous reductions, DCS had already reached a situation where the need to make carbon savings had the potential to impact on the delivery of core business.

4.5. Members **agreed** that an approach to embed carbon accounting into the planning and decision making framework to develop a low carbon approach to the deer function would be presented to the Board at their December meeting for approval.

Action: Jessica Findlay

5. DEER AROUND SCOTLAND'S CITIES AND TOWNS

Paper: 294/4

5.1. James Hammond introduced the paper providing an outline of the work to date on issues with deer in and around Scotland's towns and cities, and seeking discussion on three main areas:

- The usefulness of counting in the low ground setting as a way to obtain accurate data and as a PR and policy making tool.
- How to encourage accountability and collaboration through smaller land holdings in the central belt.
- How to engage with local authorities through single outcome agreements.

- 5.2. Members **noted** the trialling of Night Vision Goggles and Thermal Imaging Cameras to count deer in urban areas and that the trial had indicated that thermal imagery was the most appropriate for data capture. Members also **noted** that the need to capture data on numbers of deer in urban areas was in part driven by the need to integrate this data into the planning process. Members **agreed** that low ground counting was essential. Members **noted** that the types of counting methods proposed will only provide data on the relative abundance of a population i.e. will provide an index.
- 5.3. Member **noted** the fragmented land ownership which often exists in areas around Scotland's towns and cities and the implications of this for deer management. Members **agreed** that the advice developed for deer management should reflect the specific issues inherent within an urban and suburban setting and therefore would be different to guidance for the open range and more extensive patterns of land ownership.
- 5.4. Members recognised the value of contributing where possible to the natural heritage section of local authority Single Outcome Agreements, and the value of Best Practice Guidance for local authorities.

Action: James Hammond

6. SCOTLAND'S WILD DEER – A NATIONAL APPROACH: ACTION PLAN UPDATE

Paper: 294/5

- 6.1. Jessica Findlay introduced the paper outlining progress in Quarter 1 on the delivery of the Action Plan for 'Scotland's Wild Deer: A National Approach' (WDNA) and setting out the proposals for developing a set of actions for delivery in 2009/2010.
- 6.2. Members **noted** that by the end of Quarter 1 84% of actions were on track, 11% had been achieved and 5% were not on track. Members also **noted** that this quantitative analysis was underpinned with a degree of qualitative analysis provided in the form of supplementary narrative on the web-based reporting tool.
- 6.3. Members **noted** that a meeting had been set for 23rd October for the WDNA Action Group which was comprised of both agencies and stakeholder groups. It was noted that actions would be derived from outline actions in the existing plan together with objectives in the WDNA.
- 6.4. Members agreed that Jessica Findlay should circulate the full text of the Q1 update.

Action: Jessica Findlay

7. WILDLIFE AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT BILL: UPDATE ON CONSULTATION

Paper: 294/6

- 7.1. Katy McNeil introduced the paper providing an update on the progress of the Wildlife and Natural Environment Bill.
- 7.2. Members **noted** that the consultation, which had included all of the recommendations of the DCS Review of Legislation submitted to Ministers in January 2009, had closed on the 4th September. There had been a high response rate (around 450 responses) A full analysis of the responses should be available by December 2009.

8. DCS/SNH PROPOSED MERGER: UPDATE ON PROGRESS

Paper: 294/7

8.1. Nick Halfhide introduced the paper providing members with an update on the proposed DCS/SNH merger.

8.2. Members **noted** that Stage 1 of the Scottish Parliament's consideration of the Public Sector Reform (Scotland) Bill had begun and that DCS along with Environment LINK, SNH and ADMG had provided oral evidence to the Rural Affairs and Environment Committee on 16th September.

9. MINUTES OF MEETINGS

a) Deer Management Committee

Draft Minutes of Meeting held 25th August 2009 `

Paper: 294/8

9.1 Members **noted** the draft Minutes of the Deer Management Committee meeting held on 25th August 2009.

9.2 The Chairman drew Member's attention to the good progress being made with Glenfeshie Estate and that discussions were planned on how to communicate this success at the end of the Section 7 Agreement in June 2010.

b) Strategy Committee

Draft Minutes of Meeting held 26th August 2009

Paper: 294/10

9.3 Members **noted** the draft Minutes of the Strategy Committee meeting held on 26th August 2009.

9.4 The Chairman drew Member's attention to the issues outlined in the 'Stimulating Economic Activity' item and asked Members to pass any further ideas to Katy McNeil.

Action: Board Members

c) Resources & Audit Committee

Draft Minutes of Meeting held 26th August 2009

Paper: 294/11

9.5 Members **noted** the draft Minutes of the Resources & Audit Committee meeting held on 26th August 2009.

10 EXTERNAL MEETINGS ATTENDED/TO BE ATTENDED BY CHAIRMAN AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Paper: 294/12

10.1 Members **noted** the contents of the paper detailing external meetings attended and to be attended by the Chairman and Chief Executive.

11 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

11.1 There was no other business.

12 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

12.1 The next meeting of the Board will be held on 2nd December in Inverness.

Matters Arising from Open Meeting of the Board of the Deer Commission for Scotland held on Monday, 28th September 2009

**Prepared by: Nick Halfhide, Jamie Hammond, Jessica Findlay, Katy McNeil and
Raymond Edwards**

1. Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to update members on matters arising from the meeting of the Board held on Monday 28th September 2009.

2. Action

To note the following actions.

3. Matters Arising

2 Draft Minutes of Meeting held on 9th June 2009

2.1 The draft Minutes were amended.

4 Carbon Footprint Target

4.3 The number of desks in Great Glen House in the MOTO agreement has been reduced from twenty-four to twenty. Members are considering a decision making framework under Item 7 on the Agenda. A ground count was carried out on Scarba and the Garvellachs in November. Discussions are on-going with the Section 7 Steering Groups for Inverpolly and Ardvar on the need for a helicopter count this year.

4.5 See Item 7 on the Agenda.

5 Deer Around Scotland's Cities and Towns

5.2 Following agreement from the Board there will be further development of the techniques for low ground census work and count programme.

5.3 The development of Best Practice Guidance for local authorities and decision makers will continue as part of the work outlined in the deer in and around towns project plan. It will also draw from lessons learned through a bespoke demonstration event planned for the Central Belt.

5.4. The Deer Officer South has started discussions on how DCS' work with deer in and around towns can be incorporated into Single Outcomes Agreements.

6 Scotland's Wild Deer – A National Approach: Action Plan Update

6.4 The Quarter 1 update was circulated to Board Members.

9 Minutes of Meetings

b Strategy Committee – Draft Minutes of Meeting held on 26th August 2009

9.4 No further suggestions for action under the 'stimulating economic activity' heading have been received from Board Members. As a follow-up the Strategy Committee discussed the Wildlife Watching Project on 2 November and agreed a project plan.

Revisions to Annual Business Plan for 2009-2010

Prepared by: Nick Halfhide (Chief Executive)

1. Purpose

To seek the Board's approval to revisions to the Annual Business Plan.

2. Action

- Agree revisions to the targets in the Annual Plan for submission to the Scottish Government.

3. Background

The DCS Board agreed the Annual Business Plan for 2009/2010 in March 2009. It was submitted to the Scottish Government on 5th March 2009 and approved on 24th March 2009.

4. Revisions to Annual Plan Targets

During its recent review of the Annual Business Plan, the Management Team identified a small number of targets that required significant revision. These were discussed by the Resources and Audit Committee on 2nd November 2009 and the following were agreed:

- 1.9 Following on from the discussion at the Deer Management Committee in November, include a new activity to carry out research into bare peat in the Monadhliath SAC
- 4.2 In line with the project plan on wildlife watching agreed by the Strategy Committee in November, replace the existing activities with 'acquire an understanding of the challenges and opportunities relating to deer watching activities in Scotland and wider dissemination of information by Q3; and implementation of events to provide guidance, advice and feedback, and to facilitate professional networks between landowners, deer managers and activity providers by Q4'
- 8.2 In line with the timetable for developing the Code agreed by the Board in September, replace the final activity with 'agree the scope of a code of sustainable deer management by the end of Q4'.
- 9.3 Include a new activity - contribute funding to a research project by Strathclyde University into analysing human DNA samples from poached deer

The proposed changes are highlighted in red and italics in the list of activities in Annex 1.

5. Next Steps

Following the Board's consideration of these proposed revisions, staff will seek the approval of the Scottish Government.

List of Annual Business Plan Activities for 2009-2010		
	AP No.	Activities, Targets and Milestones
Contributing to a High Quality Environment		
1 Achieve the favourable condition of Scotland's most important nature conservation sites	1.1	Participate in Programme Board overseeing Government target for the condition of features on designated sites; Report quarterly to the Board on progress to meet targets.
	1.2	Agree Joint Working Priorities for 2009/2010 work programme by April 08. Review resource requirements on all sites in 2009/2010 work programme by June 2009. Ensure lead responsibility for sites are agreed at a local level and project plans are in place by Sept 09. Chair 4 meetings of the Joint Working Programme Management Team by March 09.
	1.3	Habitat Impact Assessments - Carry out annual habitat monitoring on five S7 sites by August 09. Ensure baseline surveys are revisited at Monadhliaths, Strathglass and Ballochbuie by September 2009.
	1.4	Deer census - Summer Census carried out on three Joint Working sites by August 2009 (Beinn Dearg, Beinn a Ghlo and Caenlochan). Ensure Winter count programme is carried out by March 2010.
	1.5	Promote the Joint Working Process - ensure relevant site specific Joint working information on DCS website is reviewed and updated at least quarterly.
	1.6	Complete research on Natura case law (RP 68c)
	1.7	Maintain field readiness - annual audit of field equipment and operational procedures, and ensure that staff undergo field training (including cull training, mountain awareness and disease recognition).
	1.8	Purchase of capital items to support field readiness.
	1.9	NEW carry out research into bare peat in the Monadhliath SAC
2 Conserve and enhance biodiversity in the wider countryside	2.1	1) Assess the effectiveness of estimating the productivity of deer in urban settings and approximate densities of deer in and around urban areas by Q4: 2) Develop understanding of the need for strategic planning with 2 (Q2) then a further 3 (Q3) Local Authorities to deal with the impacts of wild deer in and around communities: 3) Produce a critical review of the impact of facilitated roe management on 2 peri urban sites and identify any additional training needs (Q4): 4) Produce guidance on planning to manage deer in and around towns. (Q3)
	2.2	Non Native Species - promote changes to the Destructive Imported Animals Act 1932 and agree timescale for consultation with SG by May 2009; promote extension of 1999 Sika Order under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (to cover Scarba, the Garvellachs and Lunga); Manage contract for re-testing of refugia populations.
	2.3	Monitor and investigate any reports of muntjac in the wild on an on-going basis.
	2.4	Explore changes to legislation to licence the movement of wild deer into and within Scotland.
	2.5	Keep under review input to local LBAP plans quarterly. Ensure DCS review and input into the upland and woodland ecosystems groups within the new structures for the delivery of biodiversity action in Scotland.
	2.6	SRDP - Attend RPACs as required. Provide prompt response and advice to all consultations on SRDP applications with a deer element, particularly in relation to woodlands. Ensure review of SRDP includes relevant and appropriate prescriptions for funding of deer management activities, including funding of complex grazing plans.
3 Contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation	3.1	Understanding the role of deer management: Prepare and circulate explanatory material aimed at deer managers arising from seminar concentrating on the two themes of moorland and woodland by Oct 2009.
	3.2	Continue to contribute to national work on the links between deer and climate change with particular focus on peatland and heather moorland.
	3.3	Monitor progress quarterly on DCS' carbon output; consider and implement new measures to ensure that DCS reduces its carbon output towards the Corporate Plan target.

		AP No.	Activities, Targets and Milestones
	Contributing to Sustainable Economic Development		
4	Enhance the economic benefits derived from wild deer	4.1	Increase the economic value and consumption of venison: 1) Produce recommendations on how Government policies could better work for venison by Q4. 2) Prepare a critical analysis of current supply and whether collaboration at the local level can increase return on investment using two pilots within the DCS Case Studies by Q4. 3) Implement pilot events to promote venison in schools in two areas, seeking to develop effective partnerships that enable stand alone initiatives by Q3. 4) Develop an Action plan to extend venison promotional events to all Local Authorities in Scotland by Q2. 5) Facilitate the inclusion of venison on the menus of two public bodies by Q3. 6) promote the findings of the research into the carbon life cycle assessment of wild venison by Q2.
		4.2	REVISED Acquire an understanding of the challenges and opportunities relating to deer watching activities in Scotland and wider dissemination of information by Quarter 3 2009/2010; Implement events to provide guidance, advice and feedback, and to facilitate professional networks between landowners, deer managers and activity providers by Quarter 4 2009/2010.
		4.3	Undertake research to better understand the national economic value of the deer sector.
5	Minimise costs to land-use objectives and rural development	5.1	Maintain the Fit & Competent Register. Ensure controller details are accurate and evidence provided is current, relevant and authentic in line with DCS authorisation procedures.
		5.2	Process 95% of requests for authorisations within 10 days.
		5.3	Contribute to the National Access Forum to reduce the negative impact of public access on the cost of deer management. Provide advice to the Stalking subgroup.
		5.4	Investigate sites where damage to crops is reported, assess the evidence, and take appropriate and proportionate action to resolve.
	Contributing to Social Wellbeing		
6	Increase opportunities and quality of experience for observing and enjoying wild deer	6.1	Develop with SNH promotion of Scotland's wild deer through 'Eco schools' and community chests, and scope further opportunities within the private sector.
7	Safeguard health and safety	7.1	Implement and monitor mitigation on existing RTA priority sites.
		7.2	Carry out strategic analysis of the 'Deer Collisions UK' database in Scotland and identify areas for further investigation. Monitor progress of the DCUK contract and liaise with partners including the Deer Initiative, Transport Scotland and local authorities as appropriate.
		7.3	1) Implement road awareness campaign for spring dispersal followed up by reminder for the autumn clock change combined with targeted promotional material in 1 hot spot area by Q3. 2) Review effectiveness of campaign by Q4.
		7.4	Implement DCS procedures on receiving expressions of concern in relation to public safety.
		7.5	Keep under review approaches to RTA in other parts of UK and abroad
		7.6	Contribute to national efforts to reduce the spread of disease which may affect wild deer and domestic stock and ensure information flow on disease surveillance to practitioners.
		7.7	Undertake research to investigate lead residues in wild venison, and the effectiveness of non lead ammunition in safeguarding the welfare of wild deer.

		AP No.	Activities, Targets and Milestones
	Cross cutting		
8	Develop effective frameworks for sustainable deer management	8.1	Ensure DCS representation is provided for all Deer Management Group meetings as invited and that DCS provides DMG with an update on key issues.
		8.2	REVISED Set up a 4th case study to consider current approaches to sustainable deer management at a local level by May 2009. Provide a quantitative analysis of the economic costs/benefits of Deer Management decisions within the case studies by August 09. Supported by the Steering Group, and linked to the outcome of legislative review agree with agency partners the scope of a code of sustainable deer management by the end of Q4.
		8.3	Develop a web-based cull-planning management tool.
9	Safeguard the welfare of wild deer	9.1	1) Depending on the outcome of the Legislative review, refine proposals with the deer sector to ensure that everyone who shoots deer can demonstrate fitness and competence at the appropriate level. 2) Develop recommendations with input from stakeholders for a responsibility of care providing guiding principles to safeguard welfare in the context of sustainable deer management by Q4.
		9.2	Contribute to research into deer health and welfare methodologies RP 64.
		9.3	NEW Contribute funding to a research project by Strathclyde University into analysing human DNA samples from poached deer.
10	Use sound science to underpin management decisions	10.1	1) Develop and test a RFID data collection system: 2) Carry out options appraisal involving stakeholder input and make recommendations on implementing a Unified data system subject to the outcome of the legislative review.
		10.2	Co-ordinate deer-related research across the public sector - hold 1 co-ordination meetings per year.
		10.3	Collect, collate and analysis cull and venison returns, and post on web by August 2009.
		10.4	Summarise outputs from research projects in an easily digested and engaging form, and publish through web on an on-going basis.
		10.5	Complete research to develop a methodology for measuring national and regional deer populations by end of Q1; implement the method by end of Q4.
		10.6	Undertake research to better understand public attitudes to deer and deer control, particularly in relation to red deer.
11	Raise awareness and understanding of wild deer and their management	11.1	Best Practice Partnership: 1) Administer partnership including review of 74 guides and update/develop 6 guides and NOS/BPG cross mapping exercise by Q4. 2) Run 1 BPDE by Q3. 3) Run 2 in depth workshops by Q4. 4) Develop 2 BPG workshops targeted at DMG/estates on habitat assessment/cull planning by Q2.
		11.2	Facilitate industry skills uplift: 1) Through LANTRA guide keep under review the relevant NOS. 2) Provide technical guidance to new and existing training and assessment activities in particular the development of modern apprenticeship schemes.
		11.3	Promote the work of DCS to practitioners in the deer sector at the RHS, Scone and Moy.
		11.4	Use a wide range of channels to communicate the work of DCS to key audiences; issue at least one press release per month; review contents of website weekly.
		11.5	Develop and implement proposals to transfer DCS' web material onto SNH website as part of the merger preparations.
		11.6	Hold regular meetings with agency and NGO stakeholders to facilitate and co-ordinate implementation, including DMRT
		11.7	Hold an annual conference with open hill practitioners by July.
		11.8	Support the 9th European Roe Deer Congress (Edinburgh).
12	Implement and monitor the impact of the Strategy for Wild Deer	12.1	Lead the Implementation of the Strategy 1) hold regular meetings with partners on progress 2) develop implementation database by June. 3) integrate 2010/11 planning with agency annual planning processes by March.
		12.2	Monitor implementation of the Strategy: seek independent scrutiny of emerging indicators to test their effectiveness in showing progress towards the vision in the Strategy.
13	Review the deer legislation	13.1	Take forward the review of deer legislation, responding to the feedback from the Minister for Environment

		AP No.	Activities, Targets and Milestones
14	Board Functions	14.1	Provide efficient and effective support to the Board and Committees; produce high quality papers and provide support for Board and Committee meetings.
		14.2	Make public Board meetings as accessible as possible.
15	Administration	15.1	Review possibilities for co-location in Stirling by May 2009.
		15.2	Manage DCS' resources effectively, efficiently and economically; report progress against budget on a quarterly basis; Spend within 2% of budget by March 2010.
		15.3	Reduce annual running costs to deliver 2% efficiency in addition to 2% efficiency in 2008-2009.
		15.4	Respond to 95% of FOI enquiries within 20 days; review procedures by Aug.
		15.5	Produce Annual Report for 08-09 by Aug 09
	Staff Management	16.1	Provide staff with high quality training and developmental opportunities relevant to their work and their professional aspirations; agree staff training plan by end of May 2009 and review implementation by end Nov 2009.
		16.2	Ensure that DCS provides a safe working environment; report any accidents and near misses to the Board on a quarterly basis and implement within 4 weeks any resultant steps to reduce risk.
		16.3	Manage DCS staff to maintain a top quality team with high morale and clear understanding of DCS' business; complete staff appraisal for 2008-2009 by end of April 2009 and in-year reviews by end Oct 2009.
		16.4	Review staff resources to deliver Annual Plan on a quarterly basis.
		16.5	Facilitate internal staff communication through at least quarterly meetings and web-based intranet.
	Efficient Government	17.1	Contribute to Phase 2 of the SEARs initiative.
		17.2	Work with SG and SNH to put in place preparatory plans for the proposed merger with SNH in 2010 (subject to Parliamentary agreement).

Revised Budget for 2009-2010

Prepared by: Nick Halfhide (Chief Executive)

1. Purpose

To present a revised annual budget for 2009-2010.

2. Action

- Agree a revised budget.

3. Background

The DCS Board agreed the Annual Business Plan for 2009/2010 in March 2009. It was submitted to the Scottish Government on 5th March 2009 and approved on 24th March 2009.

4. Revised Budget for 2009-2010

The Management Team recently carried out a review of the budget for 2009-2010 based on expenditure during the first two quarters of the year and expected expenditure during the last two quarters.

The Resources and Audit Committee discussed the findings of this review in November 2009; and a proposed revised budget based on their discussions is presented at Annex 1.

The most significant changes proposed in the revised budget are to use c. £40k saved from Habitat Impact Assessments (which were cheaper than expected) on additional temporary staff; and to use this year's capital allocation to buy a thermal imaging camera (c. £43,000).

The additional temporary staff are required to increase capacity to allow staff to prepare for the merger, particularly to reconfigure DCS' IT systems and electronic data to make it compatible with SNH's.

The revised budget also contains provision for the two new activities proposed under the previous agenda item.

5. Additional Items

In anticipation of further variation in the second half of the year, staff have prepared an initial list of additional items:

- £10k for Visual Impact Assessments for fencing proposals on DCS-led sites within the Joint Working process
- £10k for new navigation hardware for Census operations (Nav Tablet upgrades)
- £19k to replace four digital cameras which are now 5 years old and due for replacement with improved specification

The Resources and Audit Committee discussed and approved these additional items in November 2009.

6. Next Steps

Following the Board's consideration of the revised budget, staff will submit it to the Scottish Government for their approval.

Annual Business Plan Activities for 2009-2010 - Revised Budget							
		AP No.	Activities, Targets and Milestones	Notes	Profiled Expenditure for 2009-2010	Proposed Revised Profile for 2009-10	Comments
	Contributing to a High Quality Environment				1,834,000	1,831,000	
1	Achieve the favourable condition of Scotland's most important nature conservation sites	1.1	Participate in Programme Board overseeing Government target for the condition of features on designated sites; Report quarterly to the Board on progress to meet targets.				
		1.2	Agree Joint Working Priorities for 2009/2010 work programme by April 2008. Review resource requirements on all sites in 09/10 work programme by June 2009. Ensure lead responsibility for sites are agreed at a local level and project plans are in place by Sept 2009. Chair 4 meetings of the Joint Working Programme Management Team by March 2009.			204	
		1.3	Habitat Impact Assessments - Carry out annual habitat monitoring on 5 S7 sites by August 2009. Ensure baseline surveys are revisited at Monadhliaths, Strathglass and Ballochbuie by September 2009.		90,000	51,745	Successful tenders much less than profiled
		1.4	Deer census - Summer Census carried out on 3 Joint Working sites by August 2009 (Beinn Dearg, Beinn a Ghlo and Caenlochan). Ensure Winter count programme is carried out by March 2010.		180,000	180,000	
		1.5	Promote the Joint Working Process - ensure relevant site specific Joint working information on DCS website is reviewed and updated at least quarterly.			1,337	Late invoice from 2008/09
		1.6	Complete research on Natura case law (RP 68c).		5,000	11,500	
		1.7	Maintain field readiness - annual audit of field equipment and operational procedures, and ensure that staff undergo field training (including cull training, mountain awareness and disease recognition).		50,000	45,000	
		1.8	Purchase of capital items to support field readiness.		20,000	44,900	Proposed purchase of thermal imaging camera
		1.9	NEW carry out research into bare peat in the Monadhliath SAC.			10,000	
	TOTAL				345,000	344,686	
2	Conserve and enhance biodiversity in the wider countryside	2.1	1) Assess the effectiveness of estimating the productivity of deer in urban settings and approximate densities of deer in and around urban areas by Q4: 2) Develop understanding of the need for strategic planning with 2 (Q2) then a further 3 (Q3) Local Authorities to deal with the impacts of wild deer in and around communities: 3) Produce a critical review of the impact of facilitated roe management on two peri urban sites and identify any additional training needs (Q4): 4) Produce guidance on planning to manage deer in and around towns. (Q3)		3,000	3,000	
		2.2	Non Native Species - promote changes to the Destructive Imported Animals Act 1932 and agree timescale for consultation with SG by May 2009; promote extension of 1999 Sika Order under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (to cover Scarba, the Garvellachs and Lunga); Manage contract for re-testing of refugia populations.		24,000	24,000	
		2.3	Monitor and investigate any reports of muntjac in the wild on an on-going basis.				
		2.4	Explore changes to legislation to licence the movement of wild deer into and within Scotland.				
		2.5	Keep under review input to local LBAP plans quarterly. Ensure DCS review and input into the upland and woodland ecosystems groups within the new structures for the delivery of biodiversity action in Scotland.				
		2.6	SRDP - Attend RPACs as required. Provide prompt response and advice to all consultations on SRDP applications with a deer element, particularly in relation to woodlands. Ensure review of SRDP includes relevant and appropriate prescriptions for funding of deer management activities, including funding of complex grazing plans.				
	TOTAL				27,000	27,000	
3	Contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation	3.1	Understanding the role of deer management: Prepare and circulate explanatory material aimed at deer managers arising from seminar concentrating on the two themes of moorland and woodland by Oct 2009.		5,000	5,000	
		3.2	Continue to contribute to national work on the links between deer and climate change with particular focus on peatland and heather moorland.		10,000	6,133	
		3.3	Monitor progress quarterly on DCS' carbon output; consider and implement new measures to ensure that DCS reduces its carbon output towards the Corporate Plan target.				
	TOTAL				15,000	11,133	

		AP No.	Activities, Targets and Milestones	Notes	Profiled Expenditure for 2009-2010	Proposed Revised Profile for 2009-10	Comments
	Contributing to Sustainable Economic Development						
4	Enhance the economic benefits derived from wild deer	4.1	Increase the economic value and consumption of venison: 1) Produce recommendations on how Government policies could better work for venison by Q4. 2) Prepare a critical analysis of current supply and whether collaboration at the local level can increase return on investment using two pilots within the DCS Case Studies by Q4. 3) Implement pilot events to promote venison in schools in two areas, seeking to develop effective partnerships that enable stand alone initiatives by Q3. 4) Develop an Action plan to extend venison promotional events to all Local Authorities in Scotland by Q2. 5) Facilitate the inclusion of venison on the menus of two public bodies by Q3. 6) promote the findings of the research into the carbon life cycle assessment of wild venison by Q2.		10,000	11,721	
		4.2	REVISED Acquire an understanding of the challenges and opportunities relating to deer watching activities in Scotland and wider dissemination of information by Quarter 3 2009/2010; Implement events to provide guidance, advice and feedback, and to facilitate professional networks between landowners, deer managers and activity providers by Quarter 4 2009/2010.		5,000	5,000	
		4.3	Undertake research to better understand the national economic value of the deer sector.		10,000	10,000	
	TOTAL				25,000	26,721	
5	Minimise costs to land-use objectives and rural development	5.1	Maintain the Fit & Competent Register. Ensure controller details are accurate and evidence provided is current, relevant and authentic in line with DCS authorisation procedures.				
		5.2	Process 95% of requests for authorisations within 10 days.				
		5.3	Contribute to the National Access Forum to reduce the negative impact of public access on the cost of deer management. Provide advice to the Stalking subgroup.				
		5.4	Investigate sites where damage to crops is reported, assess the evidence, and take appropriate and proportionate action to resolve.				
	TOTAL				0	0	
	Contributing to Social Wellbeing						
6	Increase opportunities and quality of experience for observing and enjoying wild deer	6.1	Develop with SNH promotion of Scotland's wild deer through 'Eco schools' and community chests, and scope further opportunities within the private sector.		2,000	2,000	
	TOTAL				2,000	2,000	
7	Safeguard health and safety	7.1	Implement and monitor mitigation on existing RTA priority sites.		4,000	4,000	
		7.2	Carry out strategic analysis of the 'Deer Collisions UK' database in Scotland and identify areas for further investigation. Monitor progress of the DCUK contract and liaise with partners including the Deer Initiative, Transport Scotland and local authorities as appropriate.		12,000	14,222	
		7.3	1) Implement road awareness campaign for spring dispersal followed up by reminder for the autumn clock change combined with targeted promotional material in 1 hot spot area by Q3. 2) Review effectiveness of campaign by Q4.		2,000	2,000	
		7.4	Implement DCS procedures on receiving expressions of concern in relation to public safety.		5,000		
		7.5	Keep under review approaches to RTA in other parts of UK and abroad.				
		7.6	Contribute to national efforts to reduce the spread of disease which may affect wild deer and domestic stock and ensure information flow on disease surveillance to practitioners.				
		7.7	Undertake research to investigate lead residues in wild venison, and the effectiveness of non lead ammunition in safeguarding the welfare of wild deer.		5,000	5,000	
	TOTAL				28,000	25,222	

		AP No.	Activities, Targets and Milestones	Notes	Profiled Expenditure for 2009-2010	Proposed Revised Profile for 2009-10	Comments
			Cross cutting				
8	Develop effective frameworks for sustainable deer management	8.1	Ensure DCS representation is provided for all Deer Management Group meetings as invited and that DCS provides DMG with an update on key issues.				-
		8.2	REVISED Set up a 4th case study to consider current approaches to sustainable deer management at a local level by May 2009. Provide a quantitative analysis of the economic costs/benefits of Deer Management decisions within the case studies by August 2009. Supported by the Steering Group, and linked to the outcome of legislative review agree with agency partners the scope of a code of sustainable deer management by the end of Q4.		25,000	25,000	
		8.3	Develop a web-based cull-planning management tool.		3,000	3,000	
		TOTAL			28,000	28,000	-
9	Safeguard the welfare of wild deer	9.1	1) Depending on the outcome of the Legislative review, refine proposals with the deer sector to ensure that everyone who shoots deer can demonstrate fitness and competence at the appropriate level. 2) Develop recommendations with input from stakeholders for a responsibility of care providing guiding principles to safeguard welfare in the context of sustainable deer management by Q4.		2,000	124	
		9.2	Contribute to research into deer health and welfare methodologies RP 64.				
		9.3	NEW Contribute funding to a research project by Strathclyde University into analysing human DNA samples from poached deer.			3,000	
		TOTAL			2,000	3,124	
10	Use sound science to underpin management decisions	10.1	1) Develop and test a RFID data collection system: 2) Carry out options appraisal involving stakeholder input and make recommendations on implementing a Unified data system subject to the outcome of the legislative review.		3,000	9,300	
		10.2	Co-ordinate deer-related research across the public sector - hold 1 co-ordination meetings per year.				
		10.3	Collect, collate and analysis cull and venison returns, and post on web by August 2009.			748	
		10.4	Summarise outputs from research projects in an easily digested and engaging form, and publish through web on an on-going basis.				
		10.5	Complete research to develop a methodology for measuring national and regional deer populations by end of Q1; implement the method by end of Q4.		15,000	2,188	
		10.6	Undertake research to better understand public attitudes to deer and deer control, particularly in relation to red deer.		10,000	10,000	
		TOTAL			28,000	22,236	
11	Raise awareness and understanding of wild deer and their management	11.1	Best Practice Partnership: 1) Administer partnership including review of 74 guides and update/develop 6 guides and NOS/BPG cross mapping exercise by Q4. 2) Run 1 BPDE by Q3. 3) Run 2 in depth workshops by Q4. 4) Develop 2 BPG workshops targeted at DMG/estates on habitat assessment/cull planning by Q2.		30,000	30,903	
		11.2	Facilitate industry skills uplift: 1) Through LANTRA guide keep under review the relevant NOS. 2) Provide technical guidance to new and existing training and assessment activities in particular the development of modern apprenticeship schemes.				
		11.3	Promote the work of DCS to practitioners in the deer sector at the RHS, Scone and Moy.		15,000	15,000	
		11.4	Use a wide range of channels to communicate the work of DCS to key audiences; issue at least one press release per month; review contents of website weekly.		17,000	17,000	
		11.5	Develop and implement proposals to transfer DCS' web material onto SNH website as part of the merger preparations.				
		11.6	Hold regular meetings with agency and NGO stakeholders to facilitate and co-ordinate implementation, including DMRT.		4,000	4,000	
		11.7	Hold an annual conference with open hill practitioners by July.		5,000	6,840	
		11.8	Support the 9th European Roe Deer Congress (Edinburgh).		3,000	2,000	
		TOTAL			74,000	75,743	
12	Implement and monitor the impact of the Strategy for Wild Deer	12.1	Lead the Implementation of the Strategy 1) hold regular meetings with partners on progress 2) develop implementation database by June. 3) integrate 2010/11 planning with agency annual planning processes by March.		5,000	2,050	
		12.2	Monitor implementation of the Strategy: seek independent scrutiny of emerging indicators to test their effectiveness in showing progress towards the vision in the Strategy.		5,000	1,000	
		TOTAL			10,000	3,050	

		AP No.	Activities, Targets and Milestones	Notes	Profiled Expenditure for 2009-2010	Proposed Revised Profile for 2009-10	Comments
13	Review the deer legislation	13.1	Take forward the review of deer legislation, responding to the feedback from the Minister for Environment.				
TOTAL							
14	Board Functions	14.1	Provide efficient and effective support to the Board and Committees; produce high quality papers and provide support for Board and Committee meetings.	Board salaries	75,000	77,200	
		14.2	Make public Board meetings as accessible as possible.		21,000	9,500	
			Resources, Strategy and DMC meetings.			8,300	
			Board T&S		12,000	10,260	
TOTAL					108,000	105,260	
15	Administration	15.1	Review possibilities for co-location in Stirling by May 2009.	accommodation	133,530	134,000	
		15.2	Manage DCS' resources effectively, efficiently and economically; report progress against budget on a quarterly basis; Spend within 2% of budget by March 2010	IT	62,000	60,200	
		15.3	Reduce annual running costs to deliver 2% efficiency in addition to 2% efficiency in 2008-2009.	capital for equipment	20,000		Capital allocation to be used under 1.8 for thermal imaging camera
		15.4	Respond to 95% of FOI enquiries within 20 days; review procedures by Aug.				
		15.5	Produce Annual Report for 2008-2009 by Aug 2009.		5,000	5,000	
TOTAL					220,530	199,200	
	Staff Management	16.1	Provide staff with high quality training and developmental opportunities relevant to their work and their professional aspirations; agree staff training plan by end of May 09 and review implementation by end Nov 2009.	staff salaries	794,000	855,500	Extra temporary staff recruited to help with merger
			Overtime		21,000	23,000	
			T&S		67,280	67,000	
			Training		34,000	16,944	
		16.2	Ensure that DCS provides a safe working environment; report any accidents and near misses to the Board on a quarterly basis and implement within 4 weeks any resultant steps to reduce risk.				
		16.3	Manage DCS staff to maintain a top quality team with high morale and clear understanding of DCS' business; complete staff appraisal for 2008-2009 by end of April 2009 and in-year reviews by end Oct 2009.	recruitment	5,000		
		16.4	Review staff resources to deliver Annual Plan on a quarterly basis.				
		16.5	Facilitate internal staff communication through at least quarterly meetings and web-based intranet.				
TOTAL					921,280	962,444	
	Efficient Government	17.1	Contribute to Phase 2 of the SEARs initiative.				
		17.2	Work with SG and SNH to put in place preparatory plans for the proposed merger with SNH in 2010 (subject to Parliamentary agreement).			562	
TOTAL						562	
Grand Total					1,833,810	1,836,380	

Embedding Carbon Accounting Into Planning And Decision Making Frameworks

Prepared by: Jessica Findlay, (Policy Officer)

1 Purpose:

To outline a process for embedding carbon accounting and accountability into DCS planning and decision making.

2 Action:

To discuss proposals to embed carbon accountability into planning and decision making.

3 Background:

To continue to make progress against its corporate carbon footprint target DCS needs to explicitly incorporate carbon accountability into decision making and forward planning. This means being clear on the costs and benefits of any decision from a carbon as well as a financial, staff resource/time and operational perspective. The most effective way to analyse carbon impacts alongside the financial, time and organisational impacts is through a 'decision support framework'. This framework will enable options to be explored and will expose the trade offs which need to be explicitly considered within the decision making process.

Carbon Decision Support Framework:

The proposed 'Carbon Decision Support Framework', which has been agreed in principle by the Carbon Footprint Sub Group, is attached at Annex 1. The framework takes the form of a series of questions and has been designed to be used as a tool to guide DCS to make carbon accountable decisions. It can be used both to inform proactive annual planning and individual decision making with regard to travel choices.

The framework focuses on the two key sources of carbon emissions from a DCS Annual Plan perspective:

- Deer Census activities (annual plan activity specific)
- DCS Travel (integrated throughout the annual plan)

DCS staff will receive training on how to use this decision making tool.

Risks to DCS Task Delivery and Reputation:

One of the key purposes of the decision support framework is to minimise the impact of decisions not to undertake travel or other activities in pursuit of the carbon target, by enabling an assessment of the risks. These risks fall into two broad categories:

- Task delivery risk
- DCS reputation risk

A set of criteria will be developed to assess the category of risk on a particular activity.

External Inputs/Wider Context:

DCS' carbon target sits in the context of the Scottish Government target of a reduction of greenhouse gases by 42% by 2020. Input and advice has been sought from SNH and DCS is being consulted on and included in the development of the new SNH environmental management database. The development of the DCS 'Carbon Decision Support Framework' will incorporate, where possible, processes and environmental systems and decision making processes used by SNH to avoid DCS staff having to adopt a new system come the merger. Advice has also been sought and ideas shared with other agencies including SEPA.

4 Recommendations:

The Board is asked to consider, in principle, the 'Carbon Decision Support Framework' as a decision making and planning tool.

Carbon Decision Support Framework

Introduction:

The 'Carbon Decision Support Framework' below has been designed to be used as a tool to guide DCS to make carbon accountable decisions. This tool has been divided into the two key sources of carbon emissions which can be influenced at a planning and decision making level:

- Deer Census (i.e. Count Programme)
- DCS Travel

Deer Census (i.e. Count Programme):

Purpose:

To produce a count programme which has considered the carbon implications alongside the overall purpose/benefits of the programme, the carbon impacts need to be explicitly considered.

The following questions should be considered:

- Does DCS need to carry out a count in this area?
- How often does a count need to be carried out in this area?
- What is the most effective way of carrying out a count?
- Could ground counting be used as an appropriate census method?
- Is the area being counted a Joint Working Site?
- How will the data contribute to the management of the site?
- What is the risk to the management of the site of not having 'accurate' deer census data?
- Have opportunities to share helicopter costs with other public bodies or organisations requiring aerial photography been explored?

DCS Travel:

Purpose:

To consider and reduce carbon emissions from travel at the planning stage and at the individual travel decision stage. When planning the delivery of annual plan activities, the lead member of staff should consider for the project as a whole. This could be an annex to the Project Plan document:

The following questions should be considered for **all travel**:

- Is travel essential to the delivery of this activity?
- What type of travel is essential (business/operational)?
- If meetings are an essential part of the activity can we stipulate where/how they take place e.g. GGH using VCR?
- If site visits are essential can we combine with other agency visits (e.g. habitat monitoring)?
- Is there a reputational risk to DCS of not holding face to face meetings as part of this activity?
- What is the risk to the delivery of this activity if travel is not undertaken – have the alternatives e.g. phone/email etc been explored?
- Can this activity piggy back off other DCS-led meetings – e.g. held before or after wider meetings such as DMRT?

The following questions should be considered for **Business Travel** (travel between offices, travel to scheduled meetings):

Generally this type of travel should be possible by public transport and this should always be the default position where possible. The questions below could be organised into a flow chart with a developing series of yes/no answers:

- Does there need to be DCS representative at the meeting?
- Can the meeting be held by VCR/phone conferencing?
- Can DCS staff travel to the meeting by public transport?
- Can DCS staff share a car journey with others (stakeholders, agencies, other staff) if public transport is not available?
- What is the most carbon efficient vehicle to take?
- What is the benefit of attending this meeting?
- What would be the risk of not attending this meeting to the activity?

Travel to Site Visits (Operational Travel - e.g. habitat impact assessments, site visits for Authorisations etc.)

Generally this type of travel is to more remote locations, off the beaten track and/or at unsociable hours. Using public transport is often not an option. The decision making process is the same as that outlined above, but it is likely that the car sharing options will be the first to explore once the need to carry out the site visit etc has been confirmed and likewise it has been confirmed that nobody else is able to carry out this visit.

DCS Travel (responsibilities at the individual level)

At the individual level all staff have a responsibility to ensure they take the most appropriate form of travel which has explicitly considered the carbon implications. This will be achieved through asking the questions as laid out above.

Scottish Land Use Study and Strategy

Prepared by: **Katy McNeil (Director of Deer Policy, Projects and Research),
Fiona Newcombe (Research and Data Manager)**

1 Purpose

To update the Board about the Scottish land use study and strategy and set out the next steps for DCS' engagement in the process.

2 Action

- To note the key results stated in the summary of the Scottish land use study and the proposals for a response from DCS.
- To note the development of a Scottish land use strategy and the engagement of DCS in the process.

3 Background

The Scottish Government announced its intention to develop a new approach to land use in September 2008. It wished to understand better the links between land uses and how to make the best use of land in Scotland. Three studies were undertaken to inform the debate on the topic. DCS was involved in the studies through interviews with researchers.

The Climate Change (Scotland) Act set a requirement for a land use strategy to be laid before Parliament by March 2011, and to then be reviewed at least every five years. The strategy must set out:

- The Scottish Government's objectives for sustainable land use; and
- a timescale for the Scottish Government's proposals and policies for delivering those objectives.

4. Results of the Three Research Projects

The summaries of the three research projects were launched by the Rural Affairs Cabinet Secretary Richard Lochhead at a land use summit on Monday 9th November 2009. Several DCS staff and Board members attended the summit. The key results are summarised in Annex 1. The summaries are available at:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Research/About/EBAR/RLUS>

In his speech, the Cabinet Secretary made several references to game management and deer. The full reports are expected to be published within a month and a copy has been requested as soon as they are available.

The summaries of the three research projects were used as a basis for round table discussions with the many stakeholders present at the land use summit. The questions posed are set out in Annex 2. Further comments on the questions have been invited by the Scottish Government. It is suggested that DCS staff respond to the questions and to the research once the full reports have been published.

5. Development of a Land Use Strategy

The land use summit was the platform for the Cabinet Secretary to publically launch the development of the Scottish Government's land use strategy for Scotland. The development of the strategy is being led by Sally Thomas and overseen by Ian Hooper. A high level steering group has been appointed that includes Ian Jardine and Maggie Gill. It is expected that there will be three or four separate workstreams.

DCS has been invited to work with SNH in advising the Scottish Government on the development of the strategy. Staff attended a first meeting to discuss principles that SNH and DCS would like to see reflected in the strategy. It is expected that a draft strategy will be consulted upon during the next 18 months, prior to the final version agreed by Parliament by March 2011.

The strategy is likely to be a national framework that covers all land, both urban and rural, covering both sustainable use and sustainable development. The emphasis is likely to be on rural land as Scotland's second National Planning Framework, published in June 2009, provides the foundation for the urban and built environment component of the strategy. It seems likely that the land use strategy will not be spatial in nature, and is more likely to be a voluntary approach, which may include approaches to resolving local land use conflicts.

Key Results from the Findings from the Land Use Study

Summaries have been published from the three research projects. The following are, in brief, the key results from the projects.

Research Project 1: Realising the potential contributions of Scotland's rural land to delivering sustainable economic growth

- The main land uses are:
 1. Agriculture is 55-60% of the land area of Scotland.
 2. Forestry is 17% of the land area of Scotland.
 3. Game management is 20% of the land area of Scotland.
 4. Conservation is 2% of the land area of Scotland.
- 17% of all employment in Scotland is attributed to the natural environment.
- Three scenarios were presented: lowland good quality productive land; intermediate quality land; and poorer quality hill and upland.
- Conflict between land uses occurs as production has impacts on other values, such as biodiversity and water quality, and of inadequately competitive markets.
- Conflict is likely to be greatest in the intermediate category. Uplands were seen as largely unproductive and were perceived to be where the greatest element of public services such as biodiversity and recreation and access would be focussed.

Research Project 2: Changing land use in rural Scotland – drivers and decision-making¹

- The main drivers that direct, enable, constrain or lead to land use change were identified as: climate change and associated adaptation and mitigation strategies; population growth and migration; input and output prices; technological changes; energy and food security; policy targets; regulations; and public and land manager attitudes.
- Communities are increasingly involved in land use in many ways.
- Land managers make decisions based on their objectives. They can be categorised as ecological land stewards, economic land stewards, multifunctionalists, community stewards and notionally passive land managers.

¹ The first two research projects were numbered the opposite way around at the launch of the study.

Research Project 3: the role of the public sector in realising the benefits of Scotland's rural land

- The summary discusses the framework for the role of the public sector in realising the benefits of Scotland's rural land. There is little analysis of what the role could actually be for the future; nor of what has worked and not worked in the past.
- The case is made for public sector intervention to support the delivery of benefits that are not delivered through the markets. The benefits are not explicitly defined.
- A range of public sector instruments are identified: information provision; capacity building; market incentives; creating markets; classic regulation; and State control.
- The study identifies information provision and capacity building as key to equipping land managers, rural communities and public bodies to meet the future challenges of land use.

Annex 2

The questions posed in the consultation session at the rural land use summit in November 2009.

Session 1: realising the benefits of Scotland's rural land

- Do these three categories [prime, intermediate and upland] make sense as a framework for better understanding the links between land quality and delivery of specific benefits in Scotland? Does this framework make it easier to see how decisions made at a local level might contribute to national expectations?
- What actions can different sectors (public, private, third sector) take individually and collectively in order to address the tensions between pursuing production and environmental goals? How can we build on complementarities?
- What specific technical knowledge or improved management practices could help deliver multiple benefits from Scotland's rural land? Which have the most potential to deliver improvements?

Session 2: decision-making

- Do these categories of decision-maker [ecological land steward; economic land steward; multi-functionalists; community stewards; other] reflect your experience of the way in which different land managers approach decision-making? What does this greater awareness of different motivations imply for land use policy and practice? How might it inform partnership working?
- At what scale (individual/household, community, local, regional, national) are decisions about how land is used and managed best made?
- How can positive involvement of communities in land use decision-making best be harnessed? What challenges and benefits does involving communities in land use decisions bring?

Session 3 the role of the public sector

- What balance of policy instruments is needed to deliver greater benefits from Scotland's rural land? How best can the land use strategy engage with existing processes such as local and national planning?
- In addition to tackling climate change, what do you see as the three most important goals the land use strategy should address?
- How can we best ensure that land managers have the information and skills required to make best use of Scotland's land? What role should government have in building capacity and providing information, and what are the roles of other sectors? How can we best deliver the required training and support through partnership working?

DCS/SNH Proposed Merger: Update on Progress

Prepared by: Nick Halfhide, (Chief Executive)

1. Purpose

To provide Members with an update on the proposed DCS/SNH merger.

2. Action

To note progress on the proposed merger.

3. Public Sector Reform (Scotland) Bill

The Rural Affairs and Environment Committee published its Stage 1 report to the lead Finance Committee on 12th October. It was supportive of the merger proposal, noting that the key risks had been recognised and that, on the evidence provided, they appeared to be being adequately addressed. It made one specific recommendation – that a duty be placed on the Scottish Government to lay a report before the Parliament evaluating the success of the merger.

The Stage 1 debate has been delayed from 16th December to 7th January. However, it is not anticipated that this will affect the start date for Stage 2 or the Stage 3 debate, which is still expected to take place before the Easter Recess at the end of March.

4. Merger Programme

The merger programme continues to make good progress in preparing for the proposed merger. Principle activities in recent months include:

- The staff assignment process is now complete and SNH has started to recruit for vacant posts within the new structure. Appointment of DCS staff to these posts will be subject to the merger proceeding. At the same time, SNH has opened up all internal vacancies to DCS staff.
- SNH and DCS staff continue to explore options around Crown Exemption issues.
- SNH are actively pursuing an opportunity to co-locate DCS and SNH offices in Stirling.
- SNH and DCS staff are working closely to develop the SNH's new Wildlife Management Programme.
- DCS staff are making good progress on cleansing DCS' data and preparing to transfer to SNH's systems.
- New space plans are being finalised for Great Glen House. The majority of DCS staff will move to seats in their new Units in February as part of the co-location of the Crofters Commission to the building. DCS will retain a transitional core of administrative and IT support until July 2010.

Slower progress has been made on the new Deer Advisory Panel and this will now be the focus of detailed consideration in the coming months.

5. Next Steps

Due to the steady progress of the various projects and workstreams, the next meeting of the Programme Merger Board has been postponed until March. At that stage, it will take stock of the progress of the Public Sector Reform (Scotland) Bill and on-going work in SNH and DCS to prepare for merger.

External Meetings Attended/ To Be Attended by Chairman and Chief Executive

External Meetings Attended			
Date	Staff	Meeting	Location
6-Oct-09	Chairman/Chief Executive	SNH Board	Inverness
6-Oct-09	Chief Executive	SNH Wildlife Management Programme	Battleby
22-Oct-09	Chief Executive	Outcomes Workshop	Inverness
26-Oct-09	Chief Executive	Merger Staff User Group	Inverness
28-Oct-09	Chairman	Morvern DMG	Ardtornish
29-Oct-09	Chief Executive	Merger Project Board	Inverness
29-Oct-09	Chairman	Best Practice Event	Strathconon
30-Oct-09	Chief Executive	Best Practice Event	Strathconon
30-Oct-09	Chairman	East Sutherland DMG	Dunrobin
4-Nov-09	Chairman	ADMG Regional Meeting	Lairg
9-Nov-09	Chairman, Chief Executive	Land Use Summit	Inverness
12-Nov-09	Chairman	Caenlochan Section 7 Meeting	Braemar
16-Nov-09	Chairman/Chief Executive	SGA Meeting	Birnam
20-Nov-09	Chief Executive	SG HR	Edinburgh
20-Nov-09	Chairman, Chief Executive	Meeting with Sponsor Team, Scottish Government	Edinburgh
24-Nov-09	Chief Executive	MLURI Workshop	Battleby
24-Nov-09	Chairman/Chief Executive	FCS Meeting	Perth
25-Nov-09	Chairman/ Chief Executive	DMRT	Bridge of Allan
26-Nov-09	Chief Executive	SNH Wildlife Management Programme	Pitlochry
26-Nov-09	Chairman	OCPAS Meeting	Inverness
27-Nov-09	Chief Executive	Public and NGO owners of designated sites	Perth

External Meetings To Be Attended			
Date	Staff	Meeting	Location
4-Dec-09	Chief Executive	NDPB CEO Forum	Edinburgh
	Chief Executive	SEARs Programme Board	Edinburgh
9-Dec-09	Chairman	SNH Board Meeting	Battleby
9-Dec-09	Chairman	RSPB Reception	Edinburgh
10-Dec-09	Chief Executive	SUG	Inverness
14-Dec-09	Chief Executive	OM Project Board	Inverness
13-Jan-10	Chief Executive	CAMERA Board Meeting	Edinburgh
20-Jan-10	Chief Executive	Environment Family Meeting	Edinburgh
29-Jan-10	Chairman/Chief Executive	SNH/DCS Liaison	Inverness

1-Feb-10	Chairman/Chief Executive	Merger Strategic Integration Project Board	Inverness
12-Feb-10	Chief Executive	SEARs Programme Board	Edinburgh
16-Feb-10	Chief Executive	Merger Project Board	Inverness
19-Feb-10	Chairman	ADMG AGM	Kingussie
3-Mar-10	Chairman, Chief Executive	LINK/DCS Meeting	Birnam

Draft Minutes of Meeting of Deer Management Committee held on 2nd November 2009

Attending: Earl of Dalhousie (Convenor)
Prof J Milne
Dr C Shedden (Items 1 – 5)
Dr P Mayhew
Dr A Barbour
Sir Michael Strang Steel (Items 4 – 9)

Mr N Halfhide (Chief Executive)
Mr R Kernahan (Director of Deer Management)
Ms K McNeil (Director of Policy, Projects & Research)
Mr R Edwards (Head of Administration)
Mrs M Wall (Head of Administration from 2/12/09)
Mr I Hope (Deer Officer)
Mr D Fraser (Deer Officer)
Mr J Hammond (Deer Officer)
Mr J Irvine (Deer Support Officer)
Mr R Rose (Collaborative Project Officer)
Mr J Scott (Deer Officer)
Ms F Newcombe (Research & Data Manager)
Dr L Seivwright (Best Practice Officer)

Observers

Mr R Burton (SNH)

1. APOLOGIES

1.1 There were apologies from Niall Rowantree and Sir Patrick Hunter Blair (SNH). The Convenor welcomed Melissa Wall to her first meeting of the Committee.

2. DRAFT MINUTES OF DEER MANAGEMENT COMMITTEEMEETING HELD ON 25TH AUGUST 2009 Paper: DMC 27/2009

2.1 The draft Minutes were approved.

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM DEER MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 25TH AUGUST 2009 Paper: DMC 28/2009

3.1 Members noted the contents of the paper.

4. DEER COUNTING PROTOCOL Paper: DMC 29/2009

4.1 Robbie Kernahan introduced the paper seeking the Committee's approval to a revised DCS Deer Counting Policy.

4.2 Members discussed and agreed the revised policy subject to the inclusion of a reference to the frequency of deer counts and further information on the area to be counted; and replacing 'high quality' with 'robust' in the last sentence.

Action: Robbie Kernahan

5 DILG UPDATE

Paper: DMC 30/2009

5.1 Robbie Kernahan introduced the paper, outlining progress on the Joint Working programme and reporting a number of on-going challenges:

- Agency perspectives on the fencing guidance continue to differ which has resulted in some delays in progress on some sites.
- Some differences between RPACs' interpretation have been highlighted and guidance is due to be updated to help clarify scoring.
- The financial incentives are time-limited and may not lead to the long term changes in management needed to secure the condition of features in the long term.
- There is a balance to be struck between putting in place agreements in time to meet the March 2010 target, and spending sufficient time to ensure the correct prescriptions are secured.
- It is proving difficult to get a progress update from FCS on those seventy-six woodland features that are in unfavourable condition and not recovering which are being progressed by FCS through their Protected Forest Areas programme.

5.2 During the general discussion, the following points were made:

- SNH anticipate that the target within the National Performance Indicator 37 was likely to role forward for a further year to 2011;
- Prof Milne and Nick Halfhide will seek more information from FCS on woodland features from Bob Macintosh at a meeting on 24th November;

5.3 Members **agreed** that DCS staff would continue:

- to update and implement project plans for individual sites; and
- to negotiate and pursue options aimed at reducing impacts on Joint Working sites thereby helping deliver 'favourable' or 'recovering' condition.

MONADHLIATH SAC

5.4 Iain Hope delivered a presentation seeking guidance from Members on the best way forward for the Monadhliath SAC.

5.5 During discussion, the following points were made:

- The draft Habitat Impact Assessment for 2009 appeared to show that damage is still occurring to the features on the designated site, in particular impacts on vegetation appear to have increased;
- There are examples of blanket bog recovering from unfavourable condition elsewhere though conditions between sites vary significantly;

- It is not clear at this stage what density of herbivore impacts would allow the site to recover;
- The on-going research by the Macaulay Institute (RP 54) into the impact of deer on blanket bog should provide more information on the role of deer on the site;
- It would be helpful to have more information on the dynamics of bare peat within the site, perhaps through the comparison of aerial photos from 1947, 1988 and 2000; and
- The Moorland Forum has agreed to set up a case study in the upper Findhorn catchment.

5.6 Following discussion, Members **agreed** the following:

- The meeting with owners on the site should be delayed until early in 2010;
- A sub-group of Prof Milne, Dr Barbour, Robbie Kernahan and Iain Hope would meet to discuss how best to proceed with the site;
- Iain Hope would develop proposals for research into the dynamics of bare peat on the site; and
- Iain Hope would circulate the findings of RP 54 to the DMC in due course.

Action: Iain Hope

BREADALBANE

5.7 James Scott introduced a paper seeking guidance from Members on the best way forward for the Breadalbane Hills cluster of designated sites.

5.8 Following discussion, Members **agreed**

- The Risk Assessment and the principle that DCS should continue to pursue a Section 7 Agreement with all estates in the cluster; and **agreed that:**
- Prof John Milne and Nick Halfhide would discuss the involvement of the Scottish Government's Estates at Kirkton and Auchertyre with the Sponsor Team;

Action: James Scott

6 CROWN EXEMPTION

Paper: DMC 31/2009

6.1 Robbie Kernahan introduced the paper providing Members with an update on issues associated with the merger with Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH), Crown Exemption, and the implications for the merged body to effectively undertake its statutory functions in relation to wild deer.

6.2 Members discussed the paper and **supported** the approach that SNH should continue to seek ways to secure Crown Status for all of its functions relating to the Deer Scotland Act following the merger with the DCS. As this is not a devolved matter, the decision of this matter lies with the Home Office.

7 SCOTTISH RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (SRDP) UPDATE

Paper: DMC 32/2009

7.1 Robbie Kernahan introduced the paper, providing Members with an update on problems encountered with the proposed new collaborative upland habitat (herbivore) management measure under SRDP. In particular, the European Commission currently consider that:

- it does not deliver a concrete/tangible benefit (despite the requirement to implement Plans) and
- if the cost of employing a consultant to prepare a Plan is defined as an 'additional cost', the ultimate beneficiary is a consultant, not the land manager;

7.2 Members discussed the information, noting that what was being proposed was similar to Long term Forest Plans.

8 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

8.1 There was no other business

9

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

9.1 The next meeting of the Committee will be held if required in Pitlochry on 8th February 2010.

Draft Minutes of Meeting of Strategy Committee held on 2nd November 2009

Attending: Mr S Pepper (Convenor)
Prof J Milne
Dr A Barbour
Mr A Hamilton
Prof J Pemberton
Dr S Walker

Mr N Halfhide (Chief Executive)
Mr R Kernahan (Director of Deer Management)
Ms K McNeil (Director of Policy, Projects and Research)
Mr R Edwards (Head of Administration)
Mr A MacGugan (Director of Stakeholder Relations)
Mrs J Findlay (Policy Officer)
Dr L Seivwright (Best Practice Officer)
Ms F Newcombe (Research & Data Manager)
Mrs M Wall (Head of Administration from 2nd December 2009)

Observers

Dr P Mayhew
Mr R Burton (SNH)

1. APOLOGIES

1.1 There were apologies from Sir Patrick Hunter Blair (SNH). The Convenor welcomed Melissa Wall and Fiona Newcombe to their first meeting of the Committee.

2. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING HELD ON 26TH AUGUST 2009 Paper: S27/2009

2.1 The draft Minutes were approved.

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM MEETING HELD ON 26TH AUGUST 2009 Paper: S28/2009

3.1 Members noted the contents of the paper.

4. DEER WATCHING PROJECT Paper: S29/2009

4.1 Linzi Seivwright introduced the paper providing Members with an update on progress to date and seeking the Committee's approval on a proposed project plan.

4.2 During discussions, Members offered the following comments:

- More than one workshop was required and these should be at different locations around the country. These could be tied into Best Practice Demonstration Events.
- DCS' role in this project should be to facilitate activity by private businesses, and to co-ordinate the work of public agencies;

- The project also needed to involve tour operators, eg coaching holidays, to provide them with information about deer and deer management;
- Wild Scotland should be involved in developing the code of good practice for watching wildlife; and
- Landowning NGOs should be involved in the project.

4.3 Following discussion, Members **agreed** the project plan, subject to these comments, with the following deliverables:

- Acquire an understanding of the challenges and opportunities relating to deer watching activities in Scotland and wider dissemination of information by Quarter 3 2009/2010.
- Implementation of events to provide guidance, advice and feedback, and to facilitate professional networks between landowners, deer managers and activity providers by Quarter 4 2009/2010.
- Provision of information for landowners, operators and the public to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of deer watching activities by Quarter 2 2010/2011.

Action: Linzi Seivwright

5 VALUE OF DEER DAMAGE TO FORESTRY

Paper: S30/2009

5.1 Fiona Newcombe introduced the paper setting out what DCS currently knew about deer damage on the economics of forestry.

5.2 During the discussion, Members made the following comments:

- The paper should be wider to cover all aspects of the impact of deer on the economics of forestry, including the provision of fencing;
- Deer have a major impact on the economics of forestry in Scotland and on decisions by forestry on which species to plant;
- FCS are one of the main sources of data on deer damage and the costs of management to minimise this damage;
- There was a need for more information on forestry costs associated with managing woodlands to minimise deer damage; and

Information on deer-related costs to forestry, agriculture and the natural heritage would be required as background information for the proposed Wildlife and Natural Environment Bill.

Members **agreed** that staff should:

- Revise the paper to include the wider costs of managing forestry to reduce deer damage; and ascertain the costs of defending forests from deer; and
- Produce a short briefing paper comparing the deer-related costs to forestry, agriculture and the natural heritage.

Action: Fiona Newcombe

6. WILDLIFE AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT BILL: CONSULTATION UPDATE

6.1 Katy McNeil provided the meeting with an update on progress of the Wildlife and Natural Environmental Bill.

6.2 She reported that:

- There had been nearly 500 responses to the consultation, many of which made reference to deer. Responses had been received from 21 DMGs, 7 animal welfare groups, 50 land owners/estates, 250 members of the public, and a number of local authorities;
- An analysis of the responses had been contracted out by Scottish Government and this was due to be completed by 17th November 2009 following which it would be placed on the Scottish Government web site and presented to the Stakeholder Group;
- The Cabinet would consider the proposed Bill later in the year, aiming to introduce it to the Scottish Parliament in Spring 2010; and
- DCS staff may be asked by Scottish Government officials to give technical advice as proposals within the Bill are developed.

6.3 During discussion, she explained that stakeholders would have a further opportunity to influence the Bill once it had been introduced to the Scottish Parliament; and the draft Bill was currently being prepared by Scottish Government officials.

7. SUPPORTING LOCAL DEER MANAGEMENT: QUARTERLY UPDATE

7.1 Robbie Kernahan provided the meeting with an update on continuing work to support local deer management.

7.2 He **noted** that:

- DCS had started the process of scoping a draft code of practice for local sustainable deer management;
- Through the Case Study project, a contract had been let to develop a tool for decision making to assist local deer managers;
- The new Wildlife Operations Unit within SNH contained a new post to support collaborative deer management;
- Staff had attending a number of DMG meetings recently and had taken the opportunity to provide them with an update of the proposed Wildlife and Natural Environment Bill, and the proposed merger of DCS into SNH; and
- DCS had submitted a proposal for a new herbivore management plan measure under SRDP. As this may be rejected by the European Commission, Scottish Government and SNH were investigating possible alternatives.

8. COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE

Paper: S31/2009

- 8.1 Alastair MacGugan introduced the paper providing Members with an update on PR/Media activity from August to October, and outlining proposed media activity for the next 3 months.
- 8.2 Members discussed the paper **noting** that stakeholder interaction had again been dominated by the Scottish Government consultation on the Environment and Wildlife Bill. In addition, there had been steady, mainly positive press coverage on venison, deer management, and measures to reduce deer vehicle collisions. The coverage of the deer legislation consultation had also become more balanced after continued work with all stakeholder groups and greater contact with the media.
- 8.3 Looking forward, Members **agreed** that there was a need to:
- broaden DCS' exposure to the general public;
 - issue more press releases looking to use localised media;
 - facilitate the development of educational material for wildlife watching; and
 - include information on RTAs in the work programme for Spring 2010.

Action: Alastair MacGugan

- 8.4 Prof. Pemberton advised Members that Helen Senn would soon be publishing a paper comparing the weight of red/sika hybrids with red and sika deer and that this would likely generate press interest.

9. RESEARCH SUB-COMMITTEE UPDATE

Paper: S32/2009

- 9.1 Members noted the draft Minutes of the Research Sub Committee meeting held on 9th October 2009.

10. DCS/SNH MERGER UPDATE

- 10.1 Nick Halfhide and Roger Burton provided Members with an update on progress regarding the proposed merger of DCS and SNH.
- 10.2 They **noted** that:
- the timescale for next stages of the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Bill had altered slightly, and that the Stage 2 debate would now take place on 7th January 2009;
 - the assignment process for staff had now been completed and recruitment for new posts within the merged organisation would start soon;
 - staff were developing a programme of training for SNH staff on the functions in the Deer (Scotland) Act 1996;
 - work had started to develop SNH's new wildlife management; and

- work on the various options for the Advisory panel was continuing.

11. RESPONSES TO EXTERNAL CONSULTATIONS

Paper: 33/2009

11.1 Members noted the contents of the paper.

12.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

12.1 Mrs Findlay circulated a Q2 report on the implementation of WDNA.

12.2 There was no other business.

13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

13.1 No further meeting is planned at this stage.

13.2 Members thanked Simon Pepper for chairing the Committee and staff for the quality of the papers they produced.

Draft Minutes of Meeting of Resources and Audit Committee held on 2nd November 2009

Attending: Mr A Hamilton (Convenor)
Prof J Milne
Mr S Pepper
Dr P Mayhew
Dr S Walker

Mr N Halfhide (Chief Executive)
Mr R Kernahan (Director of Deer Management)
Ms K McNeil (Director of Policy, Projects & Research)
Mr A MacGugan (Director of Stakeholder Relations)
Mr R Edwards (Head of Administration)
Mrs J Findlay (Policy Officer)
Ms F Newcombe (Research & Data Manager)
Mrs M Wall (Head of Administration from 2/12/09)

Observer

Mr R Burton (SNH)

1 APOLOGIES

1.1 There were apologies from Sir Patrick Hunter Blair (SNH). The Convenor welcomed Melissa Wall, who would be taking up post as Head of Administration from 2nd December 2009, to her first meeting of the Committee.

2 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING HELD ON 26TH AUGUST 2009

Paper: R 21/2009

2.1 Members approved the draft minutes.

3 MATTERS ARISING FROM MEETING HELD ON 26TH AUGUST 2009

Paper: R 22/2009

3.1 Members were advised that the next meeting of the carbon footprint sub group would be held on 11th November 2009.

3.2 Members noted the contents of the paper.

4 CORPORATE PLAN TARGETS REVIEW – Q2 2009/2010

Paper: R 23/2009

4.1 Nick Halfhide introduced the paper, providing Members with an assessment of progress in Quarter 2 of 2009-2010 against the targets in the Corporate Plan for submission to the Scottish Government.

4.2 He reported that activity in Quarter 2 had focused on progressing a number of Joint Working sites; scoping the new Code of Sustainable Deer Management; providing technical support to the SG team managing the consultation on the proposed Wildlife and Natural Environment Bill; a variety of events such as the Scone and Moy Game Fairs and venison promotion; and the staff assignment process as part of the preparations for the merger.

- 4.3 The report highlighted that DCS and its partners continued to make good progress towards achieving the 95% target for features on designated sites and currently estimated that 93% would be in favourable or unfavourable recovering by April 2010. This was dependent on progressing a number of complex sites simultaneously over the coming months. At the same time, staff were continuing to seek improvements in the support mechanisms which would secure the favourable condition of features in the longer term.
- 4.4 On the carbon target, whilst the Board had agreed in September a number of steps to reduce carbon production, it is still too early to report progress; and the Board would face difficult decisions when considering the Annual Business Plan for 2010/2011.
- 4.5 Staff reported that DCS had reduced the number of desks allocated to them within Great Glen House, and that a foot count for Scarba and surrounding islands was planned for later in the month. Discussions are on-going with the Steering Groups for Ardvair and Inverpolly on the need for helicopter counts this winter.
- 4.6 Following discussion, Members **agreed** that staff should submit the progress report for Quarter 2 against the ten strategic targets in the Corporate Plan to the Scottish Government.

Action: Nick Halfhide

5 QUARTER 2 REVIEW OF ANNUAL BUSINESS PLAN AND BUDGET

Paper: R 24/2009

- 5.1 Nick Halfhide presented the paper, providing an overview of DCS' performance in Quarter 2 of the Annual Business Plan for 2009-2010.
- 5.2 Members **noted** that most activities were on track, with a small number marked as 'amber', with none at red.
- 5.3 The main areas of concerns were around delays in projects caused by prioritising other areas of work. However, it should be possible to recover these provided DCS maintained current staff levels.

Revision to Annual Plan Targets

- 5.4 Members discussed and **agreed** to recommend to the Board the following changes (numbers refer to activity codes in the Plan) subject to further input from the Strategy Committee:
- 4.2 Replace the existing activities with 'acquire an understanding of the challenges and opportunities relating to deer watching activities in Scotland and wider dissemination of information by Q3; and implementation of events to provide guidance, advice and feedback, and to facilitate professional networks between landowners, deer managers and activity providers by Q4'.
- 8.2 Replace final activity with 'agree with agency partners the scope of a code of sustainable deer management by the end of Q4'; and
- 9.3 include a new activity – 'contribute funding to a research project by Strathclyde University into analysing human DNA samples from poached deer'.

Action: Nick Halfhide

Spend in Quarter 2

- 5.5 Members **noted** that profiled expenditure for the period was £742,922 with actual expenditure amounting to £659,441, an under spend of £83,481 or 11%. This was similar to the position at the end of Q2 last year. Income for the period amounted to £4,935.
- 5.6 A significant proportion of this underspend was due to the late arrival of invoices for costs relating to Great Glen House, seconded staff, and the Game Fairs; and the fact that Ttravel and Subsistence receipts for September would not be debited from the DCS account until the end of October/early November.

Revised Budget for 2009/2010

- 5.7 Nick Halfhide explained proposed revisions to the budget for 2009/2010. The most significant change was to use c. £40k saved from Habitat Impact Assessments (which were cheaper than expected) on additional temporary staff; and to use this year's capital allocation to buy a thermal imaging camera (c. £43,000).
- 5.8 Nick Halfhide advised the meeting that additional temporary staff were required to increase capacity to allow staff to prepare for the merger, particularly to reconfigure DCS' IT systems and electronic data to make it compatible with SNH's.
- 5.9 Following discussion, Members **agreed** that to recommend the revised budget to the Board subject to deleting the proposed activity on knowledge transfer project (12.3) and adding £10,000 for research into bare peat in the Monadhliath SAC.
- Action: Nick Halfhide**
- 5.10 Members **supported** the business case for purchasing a thermal imaging camera to support deer census work in and around Scotland's towns and cities.

Additional Items

- 5.11 Members discussed and **agreed** the following items should there be any slippage in the budget later in the year:
- 10K for Visual Impact Assessments for fencing proposals on DCS-led sites within the Joint Working process
 - 10K for new navigation hardware for Census operations (Nav Tablet upgrades)
 - 19K for replacement of four digital cameras (5 years old and due for replacement with improved specification)

6 RISK REGISTER: QUARTERLY REVIEW

Paper: R 25/2009

- 6.1 Nick Halfhide introduced the quarterly review of the risk register.
- 6.2 Members **agreed** the review without any changes.

7 STAFFING UPDATE

7.1 Nick Halfhide provided the meeting with an oral update on staffing issues noting that:

- Ms Melissa Wall had taken up appointment as Head of Administration on secondment from Scottish Natural Heritage;
- Fiona Newcombe had taken up post as Research and Data Manager;
- Julie Methven had taken up post as IS Support Officer;
- Tessa Lowe had taken up post as Events Officer; and
- Kelly Matheson would be returning from maternity leave in mid January.

8 DCS ACCIDENT AND NEAR MISS REPORT: Q2 2009/2010

8.1 Nick Halfhide introduced the paper providing details of one incident submitted by staff for the period 1st July 2009 to 30th September 2009.

8.2 Members **noted** the details of the incident, action taken at the time to minimise danger, and lessons learnt. Members **agreed** that SNH should be contacted about the incident as it had occurred on their land to ascertain what steps they had taken to ensure that a similar incident would not occur in the future.

Action: Melissa Wall

9 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

9.1 There was no other business.

10 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

10.1 The next meeting of the Committee will be held on 8th February 2010 in Pitlochry.