



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

RURAL AFFAIRS, CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Jo O'Hara
Head of Forestry Commission Scotland
Silvian House
231 Corstorphine Road
Edinburgh
EH12 7AT

c/o Clerk to the Committee
Room T3.40
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

Tel: (0131) 348 5240

e-mail:

racce.committee@scottish.parliament.uk

11 May 2015

Dear Jo

Progress update on production and publication of Deer Management Plans

The Rural Affairs, Climate Change and Environment Committee took evidence from stakeholders on deer management issues in November 2013 and reported the key issues raised and recommendations on the future of deer management to the Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Food and the Environment in a letter dated 5 February 2014. In responding to the Committee the Cabinet Secretary confirmed that an additional £100,000 per annum over two years would be made available to support the production of deer management plans.

We are now over one year on from the Committee's consideration of deer management in Scotland and the Committee would welcome your view on progress in the operation and effectiveness of deer management groups and on the timescales for the adoption and publication of deer management plans by all deer management groups.

Specifically, the Committee would be interested to hear your views on the developing role of Forestry Commission Scotland in the deer management groups and your experience in the way the groups are currently working.

As you will be aware, the Committee considered that a reasonable timeframe for all deer management groups to have adopted deer management plans is by the end of 2016. The Committee undertook to monitor progress in this respect and consider what further action may be required, should the voluntary approach fail, to ensure that deer management plans are adopted and implemented by all deer management

groups by the end of 2016. Those plans should be environmentally responsible, demonstrate how they are delivering positive outcomes for deer populations and for the natural heritage and they should be publically available.

We would welcome a response from you by 12 June 2015.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Rob Gibson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line at the end.

Rob Gibson MSP
Convener