

Minutes for Wildlife Crime Subgroup meeting

Tuesday 14 January 2020, 11am-1pm, LINK Offices Perth



Attendees: Liz Ferrell (BCT; chairperson), Dilraj Sokhi Watson (LINK Staff; minute taker), Beryl Leatherland (SWLG), Ian Thomson (RSPB), Logan Steele (SRSG)

By phone: Deborah Long (LINK Chief exec; for agenda item 2 only), Eddie Palmer (Scottish Badgers; for agenda items 1-2), Dougie Peedle (SWT; agenda items 1-2)

Apologies from Pete Charleston (BCT), Sarah Dolman (WDS) and Vhairi Tollan (LINK staff)

Subgroup forward plan

Attendees worked through the document produced at the 12 December LINK Strategy day, outlining all activities and tasks the subgroup wish to undertake in 2020. A lead person was assigned to each task and our wished outcome from each task stated. See appendix 1 for Actions table with deadlines for each. See Appendix 2 for completed forward plan with deadline dates.

Animal and Wildlife Bill: activities and tasks

Scottish Government and ECCLR committee have timetables for progressing the Animal and Wildlife Bill through parliament. Not confirmed but the subgroup can, for now, rely on the Scottish Governments usual outline timetable used for progressing new bills through Parliament.

Werritty Report: activities and tasks

Scottish Government response to Werritty Report due in Spring, possibly April.

Ian has agreed to take the lead on the production of a LINK response to the Werritty Report and ask subgroup members for input as part of this.

To further the reach of our Werritty report response it was discussed that we could submit a Scotsman article. The Friends of the Scotsman dates for publication are: 21 Feb, 3 April (this slot already taken for another LINK article) and 15 May. Possible that subgroup could submit in February, but timing might be too soon. Alternative could be pulling together a Press Release in April.

Annual Wildlife Crime Report: activities and tasks

Subgroup to write letter to ECCLR committee on our concerns about the annual report.

In letter to ECCLR committee we could mention the wider landscape funding. The Scottish Government are likely to release their budget statement in February. We would seek to highlight that SNH's budget has been eroded as well as wider biodiversity funding.

The Wildlife Crime subgroup feel that the PAW groups are not progressing our calls for better wildlife crime recording and reporting. Perhaps speaking to Police Scotland and SNH separately may be the way forward.

Police Scotland Training:

Robert More has set up a week's structured training for new Police recruits starting on Monday 20th January. RSPB are involved in delivering some of this training.

Follow up actions from October Parliamentary roundtable event on wildlife crime

Updates noted in Appendix 2.

Deputy Convenor role

In her email Liz should highlight the role of the deputy convenor and if no one comes forward then highlight the opportunity around the wider LINK network.

Werritty Report

There are many concerns with the content of the report. There is a lack of references and some recommendations we do not agree should be implemented. For instance, the delay of licence reform by 5 years.

Annual Wildlife Crime Report

The subgroup members feel that the same issues are still present within this year's report compared to the previous year. NGO figures and opinions are not sought before the production of the report.

LINK DPF Fund Report

Members at the meeting signed off on the draft report. The subgroup thanks LINK again for their financial support for our parliamentary roundtable event on wildlife crime.

Date of next meeting

Agreed that March would be most appropriate timing for next meeting, taking into account our February deadlines. Meeting will take place at RSPB Scotland HQ, Edinburgh.

AOB

Thank you to all LINK staff and subgroup members for their input and support ahead of the Animal and Wildlife bill consultation in December. It was agreed that this went down very well with Eddie Palmer, Ian Thomson and Liz Ferrell doing a great job of putting forward NGO and LINK positions clearly - many thanks.

APPENDIX 1



No.	FOR	ACTION	BY(date)	RESULT
1	Subgroup Members	Input and sign off Subgroup workplan	4th Feb	
2	Liz	Approach new LINK Media Group and ask if they have capacity to help with media coverage around our Press release and other LINK responses to Werritty, Annual Wildlife Crime report and Animal and Wildlife Bill.	4 th Feb	30.01.20 emailed Lisa and Vhairi at link to ask for the group contact. Not on website as far as I can see
3	Dilraj	Share report highlighting the decrease in funding for biodiversity.	4 th Feb	DONE: 22.01.20 Dilraj sent link to articles: https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/dec/09/scottish-wildlife-government-funding-aoe https://www.scotlink.org/funding-the-nature-and-climate-emergency-reversing-a-decade-of-austerity-for-the-environment/
4	Dilraj	Ask Deborah about the possibility of having a working meeting with SNH where wildlife crime could be discussed. Perhaps with a few members from the Wildlife Crime subgroup present.	Immediate	DONE: 22.01.20 LINK have a designated SNH contact for each group. For the WLC Subgroup it is Andy Turner: email andy.turner@nature.scot Under our grant agreement with SNH, each work area should have an exchange with the named SNH person to discuss plans ahead, before the end of February. Alice indicated she is not sure how much success Eddie has had previously. Would



No.	FOR	ACTION	BY(date)	RESULT
				recommend you contact Andy Turner as the Subgroup Chair, seek an introductory meeting and that would give you an opportunity to draw some of the other members in as well.
5	Dilraj	Check ECCLR timetable for Annual Wildlife Crime report review	Immediate	
6	Ian	Check if Craig and Paul could input some sentences around the SG budget / funding for inclusion in our Annual Wildlife Crime Report LINK letter.	15 th Feb	
7	BCT	Approach Police Scotland separately about possibility of delivering training to police recruits in future.	Ongoing	
8	Ian	Approach Robert More about the possibility of an annual 'catch-up meeting' with subgroup members. Perhaps scheduled for late summer.	Ongoing	
9	Liz	Email subgroup asking if anyone would like to put themselves forward or would like to nominate someone from the subgroup for the deputy convenor role.	Immediate	DONE: 22.01.20 Liz sent a request in an email along with the minutes from the January meeting to all subgroup members.
10	Liz	Send Karen final DPF Fund Report document	Immediate	DONE: 14.01.20 Liz sent document in an email to Karen
11	Liz	Create a doodle poll for the first 2 weeks in March and send round subgroup	Immediate	DONE: 22.01.20 Liz sent a doodle poll in an email along with the minutes from the January meeting to all subgroup members.

APPENDIX 2



Activity / tasks	Timetable	Task leadership	Outcome	Other relevant LINK activities	Partners to work with
Strategic headline target:					
Wildlife crime penalties effectively deter and limit crime to near zero levels					
Convenor: Liz Ferrell BCT; vice convenor: TBC					
Animal and wildlife bill:					
Continue engagement at all stages through SP incl. supporting/lobbying ECCLR MSPs who are sympathetic to submit amendments	Ongoing	Subgroup and Advocacy Team	LINK amendments are included in the bill.	Social media activity highlighting LINK position ahead of key ECCLR deadlines.	ECCLR MSPs, Parliament legislative team
LINK Stage 1 briefing and public affairs engagement - Stage 1 report scheduled between mid-end Feb. - Stage 1 debate approximately 6 th March	14-Feb	- Dilraj: Compile LINK amendments from all contributing subgroup members send reminder. - Vhairi: Coordinate LINK position with parliament team and MSPs ahead of the Stage 1 debate.	Concerned Species Champions and ECCLR members briefed on LINK position and they raise relevant issues	Social media activity when report published.	
LINK Stage 2 briefing and public affairs engagement -Stage 2 starts approximately on 24 th March	10-Mar	- Dilraj: Update Stage 1 briefing for Stage 2, get member input and sign off.		Social media activity ahead of Stage 2. Species Champion social media ahead of Stage 2.	

		<p>- Subgroup: to brief Vhairi ahead of lodging amendments.</p> <p>-Vhairi coordinate amendments lodging with parliamentary team, ahead of and during Stage 2.</p>			
<p>LINK amendment Stage 3 briefing and public affairs engagement.</p> <p>-Stage 3 takes place approximately on 2nd April.</p>	<p>24th March</p>	<p>-Dilraj: Update Stage 2 briefing for Stage 3, get member input and sign off.</p> <p>-Vhairi coordinate amendments lodging with parliamentary team, ahead of Stage 3.</p>			
Werritty Review:					
<p>2-page LINK letter to Cab Sec</p>	<p>Draft by end of Feb; final by 24 Mar; submit 31 Mar</p>	<p>Ian</p>	<p>Werritty recommendations that adequately regulate grouse shooting industry are implemented asap implemented in full. 5 year grace period abolished.</p>	<p>With Hill tracks group and Land use group</p>	
<p>Issue press release on briefing – ferret?</p>	<p>End Mar</p>	<p>Ian</p>			
<p>Enforcement: update joint briefing with SSPCA</p>		<p>Ian?</p>			<p>SSPCA</p>

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Find out when ECCLR will review Werritty and ask for evidence	TBC	Dilraj			
Draft Parliamentary Briefing	TBC	Dilraj to compile text from all contributing subgroup members; DW to remind of deadlines			
Share current briefings with Species Champions to focus impact		Members with relevent Sp Champs		Species Champion Co-ordinator	
Respond as part of wider LINK response	Mar-20	Ian	(Ian to provide text here)	with Hill tracks group & Land use group	
LINK response to Wildlife Crime Report:					
LINK can review published version.					RSPB & PAWS Science Group
Budget bill: a few sentences about funding incorporated into LINK response letter				Wildlife group	
Contribute to wider LINK response: highlighting issue of wildlife crime funding; also with Brexit, loss of LIFE funding [?]	Feb-20		Crime reporting is regular and comprehensive producing realistic reporting data. Police consult with NGOs on figures	Governance Group	

Activity / tasks	Timetable	Task leadership	Outcome	Other relevant LINK activities	Partners to work with
Other					
Review of natural Injustice report.	Revisit end of 2020				onekind campaign
Another roundtable event on review of Natural Injustice	Revisit end of 2020				
<p>Complete actions from wildlife crime parli event Oct 2019</p> <p>1. MSPs to seek statement from Scottish Government on the Werritty Report. <i>This action is in many ways completed as we are expecting a response in the Spring.</i></p> <p>2. Recommendations to be made to Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform (ECCLR) Committee to review the Werritty Report. <i>This action has now been captured in the subgroup forward plan excel sheet.</i></p> <p>3. Scottish Environment LINK to raise further awareness</p>	<p>Most completed, parliamentary working group task dropped as above actions prioritized.</p>	<p>Subgroup</p>			

<p>with organisational members on wildlife crime <i>This has been incorporated into the subgroup forward plan where plans have been made to work with other link groups.</i></p> <p>4. Seek improved legislation in relation to relevant upcoming consultations and bills. <i>This is an ongoing action which has been captured in our forward plan document.</i></p> <p>5. More collaborative work between different NGOs. <i>We consider this action closed, with subgroup members aware that we can all do better with our communications. This has been captured in the forward plan document.</i></p> <p>6. MSPs to seek better training for police officers on wildlife crime. <i>This action is to remain open for now. Not an</i></p>					
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<p><i>immediate priority but one which will be reviewed.</i></p>					
<p>7. Recommendation of setting up a cross party group on wildlife crime. <i>After some discussion, it was decided that as a subgroup we did not have capacity to follow up on this action. We think that putting our energy and time into communicating with the ECCLR committee would be more time effective with better chances of a successful outcome in terms of changes to legislation and increases in funding for wildlife crime prevention.</i></p>					



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