

**Minutes of Board Meeting for
North West Mull Community Woodland Company Limited
Meeting held at Dervaig Church Hall on Monday 16th May 2011**

Present: Colin Morrison, John Morrison, Ailsa Morgan, Catriona Duncan, John Addy, Calum Duffy, Alistair Scarlett, Alex Duncan, James MacPhail, Matthew Reade.

Also Present: Ian Hepburn (Development Manager), Belinda Hale (Administrator).

1. CM **welcomed** everyone to the Meeting.

2. There were **apologies** from Iain Thomson.

3. The **Minutes** of the Meeting held on Monday 18th April 2011 were **signed** by CM as a true record of the proceedings.

4. **Matters Arising.** CD has completed the application process to become a freelance chainsaw instructor and is waiting to be contacted to proceed further.

IAH has a meeting with Sandy Henry from MacPhee on Wednesday re the sale of a building plot to help finance the Housing Project.

IAH has made some progress with enquiries about using the Haul Road for rallying as a source of income. He will continue to liaise with Steve Davis and Forestry Commission to see if this is a viable project.

CM has written to Dervaig Primary School about their Summer Fair on 29th May. **Action Cat.D/JM** to prepare and man the stall.

CM has acknowledged the letter from Val Thomas and Dave Bankes as agreed at the last Meeting.

5. Two **items** were **declared** that were not on the **Agenda**, Official Opening of the Haul Road and questions/comments received from the Community.

6. It was recorded that Pete Pinnington **resigned** as a **Director** a few days after the last Board Meeting. A new Director can be co-opted but will not be able to be elected until the next AGM. It was agreed to publicise the vacancy on the website and in the next Newsletter **Action BH**.

7. JM had previously circulated his **Finance Report**. He will process a Gift Aid claim this month to recoup an extra 25% on donations received. The invoice for repairs to the Woodmizer is £292.76 ex VAT.

Now that UKWAS accreditation has been confirmed our harvested timber will attract full market value. JM thanked IAH for all his hard work in achieving this.

8. The **Development Manager's Report** had been previously circulated by IAH. He requested a Board decision about whether to apply for a Rural Homes for Rent Grant. In light of previous experience it was agreed that there was such a small chance of success that the outlay for the application was not justified.

After much discussion (CD declared an interest) it was agreed that the makeup of the panel and the system for issuing the felling contracts was well designed to protect local employment and the environment. The two representatives from NVMCWC will be JM and IAH.

A decision about the Fishnish jetties is expected in the next few weeks.

9. **Dervaig Motors Site.** AS left the room for this item as his declared interest made it inappropriate that he was present for the ensuing discussion. As no proposals have been received from Dave Thomas as to how he would like to resolve the issues concerning his occupation of a strip of NVMCWC land it was agreed that he should be sent a letter by recorded delivery. This will request him to reinstate our boundary at his own cost and with no further delay.

10. An AAR Sub Committee Report had been circulated. Good progress has been made in assessing the exact needs for signage, seating and other rest 'furniture'. **Action MR** to make picnic benches and way markers. Local businesses will be invited to sponsor a bench costing c£100.00. Brian from KFT will be asked to provide a quotation for signs that can be used to claim a grant. The road contractors will be asked to level the Car Park and put large rocks in position as resting places. It was agreed that the Sub Committee can progress all these matters without the need to bring every detail to the Board for permission.

11. **Fundraising.** It was agreed that the Woodland Gala Day should be postponed to enable the organisation of all the activities to be done properly. 14th August was decided as the likely date (*this has since been changed to Sunday 4th September*). A **Sub Committee comprising Cat.D, CM, MR and CD** was set up to plan and organise the event.

12. **Correspondence.** A letter has been received from the Scottish Government confirming the granting to NWMCWC of the Right to Buy the land by the Bellart if it comes onto the market.

13. **Any other Competent Business.** It was agreed that if Roseanne Cunningham is still Minister for the Environment when the new Scottish Executive is announced, she should be invited to officially open the Haul Road. The alternative is local MP Mike Russell who has also shown support for our project.

AS has received several queries from a local resident about the way the Directors run NWMCWC and the decisions they have made. The first was about the rotation process used to elect Directors. This is clearly described in the Articles of Association and strictly adhered to by the Board. The confusion may have arisen because some of the Directors are co-opted not elected. **Action AS** to clarify this to the resident concerned. He will also explain the time span for repaying the Tilhill loan.

There was also a complaint that some of the more recent Minutes have not been published on the website. It was explained that our website manager had been on extended sick leave making it difficult to update the website as regularly as we would like. **Action BH** to try and get the more recent Minutes uploaded.

AS had also been questioned about the decision to build the Haul Road rather than take the timber off the Island via Croig. IAH explained that this option had been thoroughly explored. It would still have been necessary to build several kilometres of road from West Ardhru, through Langamull and across to Croig. It would have required a new jetty to be built which would only have serviced relatively small barges. The Board was advised that the Forestry Commission had turned down the Croig route some 10 years ago. The grant funding the road option attracted made it far and away the most practical and cheapest way to provide a transport route off the Island. **Action AS** to explain this to the resident concerned, and also to invite him/her to come into the Office for any further clarification they may require.

It was agreed that the queries had again highlighted the problem of communicating with the local community. Despite the Open Days, Newsletter, AGM Presentation and 'open door' policy for the Office, some people are not being reached. JM will put the information boards used last year at the Producer's Markets again. **Action IAH** to explore the possibility of a large board on the Housing Project site describing what is to be built there. The idea of a Community Forum will also be looked at again despite there being no interest at all last time it was publicised.

14. The **next Board Meeting** will be held on **Tuesday 21st June 2011** at 7.30pm in Dervaig Church Hall.

The Meeting **closed** at 10.00pm