

**Minutes of Board Meeting for
North West Mull Community Woodland Company Ltd
Meeting held in Dervaig Church Hall on
Monday 22nd July 2013**

Present: John Morrison, Andy Mayo, Neil Munro, Colin Morrison and Iain Thomson

Also Present: Ian Hepburn (Development Manager) and Belinda Hale (Administrator and Company Secretary).

1. JM as Acting Chairman **welcomed** everyone to the Meeting
2. There were **apologies** from: John Addy,
3. The **Minutes** of the Board Meeting held on 24th June 2013 were **signed** by JM as a true record of the proceedings.
4. **Matters Arising.** It has been confirmed that the trees Steve Maker would like to retain are likely to blow down if left unharvested. **Action IAH** to contact Steve to see if he still wants to take on the liability if the trees are left standing.
Tilhill have agreed to leave the fuel wood we require and will stack it for us by size and species.
5. One **item** was **declared** that was not on the **Agenda**: Response to letters from a local resident.
6. The **Finance Report** had been circulated by AM prior to the Meeting. It may soon be necessary to start drawing down a monthly sum from Tilhill as previously agreed. This will allow money for fuel wood sales to remain in the Trading Company account to purchase the equipment necessary to increase the operation. It was agreed that internet banking transactions should have the emailed agreement of two out of the three Directors who are currently cheque signatories. It was also agreed in principle that payments of normal amounts for wages could be transferred without seeking authorisation each month as long as Clements are happy that this is good practice. **Action AM** to investigate options around streamlining the processing of small and regular payments.
7. The **Development Manager's Report** had previously been circulated by IAH. SEPA are continuing to make difficulties about the Micro Hydro but a small amount of progress has been made.
IAH is to meet a representative of the Dervaig Primary School Parents Association to try to move forward with an agreement about the car park area. It has been suggested that the area could be gifted to the school with restrictions applying if the school closed in the future. It has also been suggested that Argyll and Bute Council might be prepared to exchange the land for the Dervaig toilets area. **Action IAH** to follow up on these ideas.
8. **Allocation of Croft Seven.** Nine applications had been received by the closing date of 19th July. It was agreed that an initial review of all the applications would be carried out by the whole Board. **Action IAH/BH** to circulate the applications by email with a summary spreadsheet. Once all the applications have been studied a meeting will be held on Thursday 8th August to allocate the scores using the process that has been approved by the Crofting Commission and circulated in all the application packs. Those applicants with the highest scores will be invited to attend an interview with a smaller panel consisting of three Directors of NWMCWC and an independent person from off Island. **Action IAH** to contact Susan Walker, Chair of the Crofting Commission for suggestions. It was agreed that although the expertise of existing crofters would be useful for the initial sift, those Directors who are also crofters will not be on the interview panel. **Action BH** to contact applicants to let them know their applications are being fully considered.
9. **Kildavie Management.** The small management subcommittee has had a very constructive meeting at which it was agreed that the focus for the time being should be on preserving/promoting the Kildavie site as it is. This will include signage, bracken clearance, maintenance of the existing path and creation of a new path from the haul road hammerhead which will allow Kildavie to be visited as part of a circular walk. Primary schools will be encouraged to use the site as an educational resource. Applications for funding for signage are being made and James MacPhail has been asked to quote for making the new path. It has

been suggested that a shed previously intended to store tools at Kildavie could be converted to a shelter and information point sited at the hammerhead. **Action IAH** to negotiate a way for finds to be stored by ourselves or Mull Museum. **Action BH** to circulate a statement of the management subcommittee's current intentions to our Members and a wider circulation list of those interested in archaeology, with a view to stopping the misinformation that has caused problems in the past.

10. Firewood. A subcommittee met recently to discuss all aspects of the fuel wood operation. There is a secure supply of two year old fuel wood for at least five years. After this there is potential to hand fell the timber in the Bellart bog once West Ardhu has been cleared. This would enable the Bellart area to be returned to blanket bog which is a desirable environment for wildlife. There is interest locally in all types of fuel wood from kindling and bagged logs to bulk fuel and wood chip so now is a good time to be increasing our ability to supply this market. The subcommittee would like to work towards increasing turnover of fuel wood to the point where a full time job could be created with the employee also being trained in the use of the Woodmizer. It would still be necessary to have trained volunteers available for sickness and holiday cover. It could be possible to streamline the operation to include all deliveries including bulk loads which would reduce costs. **Action JM** to look at some wood processors while he is away in England and report back. JM highlighted the need for a place to store cut and split/bagged firewood until the secure compound has been completed. It makes sense for a large amount of timber to be processed by volunteers and stored somewhere dry before the bad weather sets in so that it can be delivered quickly on receipt of an order. JM and AM have made a preliminary recce and believe a volunteer work party could erect a reasonable shelter from donated materials already available. **Action JM/AM** to proceed with the arrangements for this.

11. Scavenger Licences. Langamull North should be cleared and finalised in the next four weeks making it possible that the scavenging area will be available from the beginning of September. The licence will specifically exclude the right to scavenge stacked timber. **Action BH** to circulate an email round Members with the draft licence attached. The Directors will agree the specific zones for scavenging and maximum number of licences to be issued once it is known how popular the idea is.

12. Correspondence. The DTAS Annual Conference and AGM will take place on 1st September 2013 in Cumbernauld. None of the Directors will be free to attend this.

13. Any Other Competent Business. Two letters have been received from a local resident concerning timber transport. A response addressing each item raised was agreed by the Board and will be sent to the correspondent signed by JM as Acting Chairman. It was agreed that any further letters from this resident in a similar vein might be considered vexatious.

The Acting Chairman JM will be away from 24th July until 2nd August but can be contacted by phone or email. John Addy has agreed to take the lead on the visit by Foundation Scotland (formerly Scottish Community Foundation) on 30th August as IAH and BH will be away. **Action IAH** to prepare a presentation for JA. AM and CM will try to attend as well.

14. The next Meeting will be held on Monday 19th August 2013 at 7.30pm in Dervaig Church Hall. The one after is likely to be on 23rd September.

The Meeting closed at 9.40pm.

1. **Timber Haul Road** –
 - a. No current issues.
2. **Fishnish Fixed Pier** –
 - a. Completion has gone back to early October no reason notified as yet but I'm checking.
 - b. The 3rd Pier user group meeting that was to be held on the 16th July has now been deferred until early September.
 - c. Volumes are tending to work against shared vessels with the Pennyghael operation but we could probably accommodate 2600 tonne vessels for our own pulp so we should be able to cut the double handling on pulp. In addition negotiations with Boyds should yield savings but alternative shippers are difficult to source as Boyds own the Corpach pier.
3. **Timber Harvesting** – Harvesting is continuing in Langamull and the tidy up/ completion of Langamull North is now due to start in the 1st week of August and will take approx 4 weeks, this ties in with an agreed SSE shut down at the end of August.
4. **Timber Sales** – A further 3 bulk deliveries of road line 2 year + timber have been scheduled, there are no accounts overdue. I have agreed with UPM Tilhill that we will retain enough fuel wood during each year's harvesting to ensure that we have a constant reserve of at least 1000 tonnes of 2 year plus timber for the next 5 years as a minimum, if we can continue or expand our fuel wood operation we should be able to avoid either exporting fuel wood for Biomass at a loss or wasting fuel wood through ageing.
5. **Woodfuel** – A sub-committee met on the 16th of July to discuss the development of woodfuel sales and in principle it was agreed that the Acquisition of a log processor and a kindling machine should be researched, costing were presented showing the viability of hiring or purchasing a log processor and associated equipment and it was agreed that if we could increase our sales volumes significantly purchase was the route to follow.
6. **Forest Crofts** – The vacant croft has been advertised and nine completed valid applications have been received
7. **Access Feasibility Study** – The Kildavie subcommittee is looking to obtain funding for an additional access via the Haul Route hammerhead, a route has been marked out and an estimate of cost is awaited from James MacPhail
8. **HIE/FCS 5 year Review meeting** – Project for Woodland Burials submitted to HIE but they are unable to assist – will pursue via BIG lottery Investing in Ideas or Growing Community Assets. HIE would still like to look at a wood fuel project with us.
9. **Medium Term Income** - Woodland Burials – The final clearance of and management of the retention in 915 is now virtually complete. Site walked and preliminary location agreed but a survey to establish soil depth and condition is required preliminary costing for site surveys have been received.
10. **Micro Generation – Hydro West Ardhu** - The connection offer has been received :-
 - a. Now confirmed that we will not have any restrictions on export of power generated.
 - b. CAR licence - SEPA - No further progress but IAH chasing.
 - c. Further drawings have been requested by A&BC these are on hold until the SEPA issue is resolved.
11. **Kildavie** – 2 meetings with the group of volunteers have now been held and the project is proceeding Separate minutes of the meetings will be provided during the board meeting.
12. **Rural Housing Association - Our Island Home** – Project to run a Housing design competition leading on to a build project. IAH met with the new co-ordinator for the project who is based on Mull. No further progress this month.
13. **Steve Maker Croft 4** - Steve wants to retain some of the Larch and Sitka to the west of Langamull entrance as protection for the planting on the east side. Tilhill advise that Steve's proposed retention will probably be unstable. Therefore as agreed at the last Board meeting we should write to Steve and request a letter accepting that any clear up of the retention will be either carried out by Steve or at Steve's cost. IAH 19/07/13

North West Mull Community Woodland Company Limited
Finance Report to 22nd July 2013

Current Balance

Petty : £6.17

Bank : £14,545.76

Significant movements since last report

Debits

1. £1,083.03 PAYE - HM Revenue and customs

Credits

No significant credits

Upcoming Significant Movements

(excluding regular staff and office costs)

1. Debit £700 (approx) Micro Hydro Planning

2. Micro Hydro legal fees

3. Access works at West Ardhu for Micro Hydro

It is worth noting that all costs associated with the Hydro can be paid for using the CARES loan

Haul Route

In the coming months, there will be one further bill related to Servitude final payment to be paid to FCS (£15,000).

Trading Company

Current Balance: £2,069.50

Significant Movements:

1. Firewood sales totaling £1,339.50

Andy Mayo