

**Minutes of Board Meeting for
North West Mull Community Woodland Company Ltd
Meeting held in Dervaig Church Hall on
Monday 11th November 2013**

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

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

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

2. There were no **apologies**.

3. The **Minutes** of the Board Meeting held on Monday 30th September were **signed** by CM as a true record of the proceedings.

4. **Matters Arising.** NM may be able to get some pallets so the temporary shelter can proceed.
Action NM.

The fixed pier at Fishnish is still not ready for use but NWMCWC are continuing to export harvested timber via the floating pier.

Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS) has not yet carried out the tests on the Langamull larch trees, but it is now known that phytophthora ramorum has been found in trees at Crannich. It was agreed that issuing the Scavenger Licences should remain on hold until the situation is clearer.

The Scottish Hydro work party has made a big difference to the path in West Ardhu with their clearance work. JM has sent them a letter of thanks.

5. There was one **item declared** not on the Agenda: IAH retirement.

6. AM had previously circulated his **Finance Report**. Two of the agreed payments from Tilhill are overdue. IAH has chased them and they should be in our account very shortly. IAH has applied to Triodos Bank for an account that will support a loan facility for the purchase of the Crannich Woodfuels business.

7. IAH had previously circulated the **Development Manager's Report**. The harvesting contractors are continuing to tidy up in Langamull North. The remapping of the retention areas will take place shortly. This is necessary so the information is correct when SRDP grants are applied for.

Draft agreements are in place for the purchase of Crannich Woodfuels and it is hoped that contracts may be signed by the end of this week. The insurance with NFU is due for renewal at the beginning of December. JM and AM will meet with them to discuss the need for increased cover in view of the possibility of additional assets and working at Crannich. It was agreed that big savings can be made if TSL transport can be replaced with our own. This includes bulk fuel deliveries and movement of fuel wood within our woodlands. Savings of more than 50% could be made if a tractor, trailer and tele-handler are purchased and they will also be used for wood chip and domestic firewood deliveries. It was agreed that it makes good business sense with value added to each tonne of timber and increased flexibility.

CM **proposed:** a) NWMCWC Ltd should purchase Crannich Woodfuels in line with the draft contract. b) A further two contracts covering Robin Sedgwick serving as trainer and consultant, and the short term lease of the facilities at Crannich. c) To continue with negotiations to purchase a Botex 1100 trailer and crane, a Valta tractor and front loader and a JCB Loadall tele-handler for a maximum price of £59,900.00 including delivery, by hire purchase over five years. The

proposals were **seconded** by JA and **carried unanimously** by the Directors.

James MacPhail has indicated that the construction of the new path from the haul road to Kildavie will be finished by Christmas. It has been agreed with SNH/RSPB that the trees at Kildavie will be left as they are for the time being, until there is a clearer idea of what the young white tailed eagles are doing.

SEPA have requested a specialist design for the fish pass for the Micro Hydro, and it is hoped that once they are satisfied with this planning can proceed. The plans for access at West Ardu have still not been received.

8. It was agreed that due to the high level of commitments for Directors and staff at the moment, the visit to the Sawmill will be postponed until Spring 2014.

9. Woodfuel. An advertisement and press release needs to be drawn up to promote the purchase of Crannich and highlight the name Island Woodfuels. A job advertisement is also required for the vacancy created by the new business. All ideas and suggestions for the general advertisement to be sent to BH who will pull them together and circulate a draft. It was agreed that the new employee will be included on the Charity payroll. It is important that applicants are aware that 'people skills' will be required as well as practical ones. The advertised pay will be 'from' to allow the selection panel discretion to take experience into account. The press release will be sent to Round and About, Oban Times, Community Woodlands Association, Community Land Scotland, UPM Tilhill and FCS. The advertisements will appear in Round and About.

It was agreed that a shed is essential now that more machinery has been purchased. At least one concrete floor will be necessary for the woodchip, a secure area, place to dry logs and store kindling and a work space for the Woodmizer. **Action IAH** to research options and prices. In the meantime the temporary shelter will be built as soon as NM brings the pallets.

10. Websites. A new website will be required for Island Woodfuels and it was suggested that a young local person be asked to set one up. Eventually it will be necessary to transfer the Charity website to the new host. Both websites will be set up so that changes and updates can be made by people within the Company. **Action AM** to progress this. An additional telephone line has been ordered for Island Woodfuels. **Action AM** to source a phone with answerphone facility.

11. Correspondence. MICT have requested that we circulate our Members re their share issue for the Micro Hydro. It was agreed that a reciprocal arrangement should be sought so our debenture scheme can be circulated to their members when the time is right. **Action BH** to contact MICT about this.

12. Any Other Competent Business. IAH Retirement. The Directors would like to express their gratitude to IAH for his very generous offer to continue working unpaid for the Company for up to one year to train a replacement when he retires next March. They are very happy to accept the offer. It was agreed that when the time comes it would be sensible to co-opt IAH onto the Board. It was agreed that it would be appropriate to wait a couple of months to see how the woodfuel business is progressing before actively advertising for a replacement as this will give a clearer idea of the job specification.

JM will be off Island from 19th – 29th November.

13. The **next Board Meeting** will be held on **Tuesday 17th December 2013**. The one after is likely to be held on Monday 20th January 2014.

The Meeting closed at 9.20pm.

Development Managers Report October 2013

1. **Timber Haul Road** –
 - a. No current issues.
2. **Phytophthora Ramorum** – As previously advised we have been notified of suspected infection in Langamull. We are now awaiting sampling by FCS. In case the infection is confirmed notices requesting visitors to apply hygiene processes both to their footwear and animals have been erected.
3. **Fishnish Fixed Pier** –
 - a. Completion expected November due to delivery delays on Fenders.
 - b. The 3rd Pier user group meeting confirmed completion still due 2nd week October, we will face a 2 week period when we can't export but the in forest stocking areas are large enough to accommodate this.
4. **Timber Harvesting** –The tidy up/ completion of Langamull North is in Progress all felling in the eastern area is complete the western section will take approx at least another 3 weeks
5. **Possible Woodchip Business Purchase**

Agreement reached with Crannich draft contracts have been compiled and a meeting requested for Thursday the 7th November to finalise outstanding matters.
6. **Forest Crofts** – The tenant for the vacant croft has been chosen and the registration process started.
7. **Access Feasibility Study** – An order for the construction of the new path to Kildavie has been issued to James MacPhail.
8. **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. Feedback from the BIG lottery also suggests that Investing in Ideas and Awards for All may not be possibilities
9. **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 - Design and details of the Nappe i.e. fish pass have been submitted to SEPA and rejected, need to commission professional drawings.
 - c. Further drawings have been requested by A&BC these are on hold until the SEPA issue is resolved.
10. **Kildavie** –An order has been placed for the interpretive signs and funding applications made. The first funding for £1500 has been applied for and £275 received from the Sea Eagle fund.
11. **Rural Housing Association - Our Island Home** – Project launched at Holyrood in September, the short list of entries will be judged on Mull in late November.

North West Mull Community Woodland Company Limited
Finance Report to 31st October 2013

Current Balance

Petty : £6.17

Bank : £5,815.20

Significant movements since last report

Debits

1. PAYE Quarterly payment - £1,093.35
2. Tillhill annual management fee - £2,400

Credits

1. Approx £750 from croft rent
2. Note: awaiting £3,000 credit from Tillhill

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

Haul Route

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

Upcoming Significant Movements

(excluding regular staff and office costs)

1. Crannich Purchase

Trading Company

Current Balance: £3,569.29

Significant Movements:

Transportation: debit £840

Andy Mayo