

**Minutes of Board Meeting for
North West Mull Community Woodland Company Limited
Meeting held at Dervaig Church Hall on Tuesday 25th October 2011**

Present: Colin Morrison, John Morrison, Ailsa Morgan, Matthew Reade, John Addy, Alex Duncan, Chris Baker, Iain Thomson and Ann Evans (Company Secretary).

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

1. CM **welcomed** everyone to the Meeting.
2. There were **apologies** from Andy Mayo, James MacPhail and Catriona Duncan (now Laurie: CL).
3. The **Minutes** of the Meeting held on 19th September 2011 were **signed** by CM as a true record of the proceedings.
4. **Matters Arising. Sitka:** IAH is awaiting proposals due at the end of November.

Community Consultation: The questionnaire on our website attracted a further 15 replies that have been added to the totals by Community Links Scotland.

Bonfire Night: A good start has been made at the bonfire site. The donation boxes have been distributed but are not very full yet. Buckets for donations will be needed on the night. The fireworks have arrived. The food, polystyrene mugs and someone to make punch have yet to be arranged. **Action MR.** Rolls leftover from the Rally Cafe have been donated.

5. **Six items** were **declared** that were not on the **Agenda**. a. Tender Panel. b. Way forward. c. Graham Dale. d. Dervaig toilets. e. Chainsaw course. f. Community housing.

6. JM had previously circulated the **Finance Report**. There is still the potential for two further interest free loans, but these will not be necessary if we can get the cash for the road line timber. IAH should have an answer from Tilhill in the next two weeks. The final 100 Club Draw for this year has been made and prizes paid. The fireworks have been paid for and the supplier thanked for giving us a good deal.

A simple interim contract has been drawn up for IAH and BH to continue paying them on a four weekly basis on the terms agreed in their original contracts.

JA asked about the £1700.00 paid for tax advice related to the Housing Project. It was explained that the outlay had been well worth it as there will be big savings on tax on the profits now that HMRC have confirmed the situation. CB asked JM to provide a six months cash flow forecast. **Action JM.**

7. IAH had previously circulated the **Development Manager's Report**. Argyll and Bute Council have finally confirmed in writing that the planning application for the **Micro Hydro** will cost £319.00 and not the £15,950.00 as appeared likely based on the development area shown on the planning drawings. IAH had communicated with them several times over a period of weeks. The feasibility study is due next week. **Action IAH** to circulate when it arrives.

A local person has made an approach about using the all purpose building in West Ardhru for dog training once it is built. This will be considered nearer the time. Concern has been expressed about a blocked culvert at Langamull North. It is likely that a culvert needs unblocking/replacing. **Action CM/MR** to take a look, see what is required and organise the work.

IAH suggested that an up to date Housing Need Survey is required now that the Project is ready to move forward. After much discussion the Board decided to delay a decision about the Survey until after the Way Forward meeting.

8. Graham Thomas had been to the Office and complained that he is not being personally notified about ideas for projects that may affect him. He thinks he should be told before it has been decided whether the project is to be explored further. He refused to supply an email address insisting on a personal visit. IAH suggested the Board should have a policy about when to tell individuals and/or the local community so that employees have something concrete to refer to if this sort of thing happens again. It was generally agreed that there is no need to consult with the wider community until there is positive evidence that a project is feasible, but that informing immediate neighbours should be decided on a case by case basis. It was agreed that a full policy will be discussed and adopted at the Way Forward meeting.

9. There were no **Sub Committee Reports**.

10. **Fundraising** will be discussed when CL returns from maternity leave.

11. **Correspondence.** Several Annual Reports and invitations to AGMs had been received including: Development Trusts Association, Community Woodlands Association, British Association of Settlements and Social Action Centres and Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator. Clydesdale Bank sent a letter about changes to Telephone and Online Banking. All these items are to be made available in the Office for Directors to read in their own time.

A letter had been received concerning the road surface at the top of the Kengharair road. It was agreed that as the surface is settling and improving quite quickly that no action is necessary and that a letter of acknowledgement should be sent. **Action CM**.

Community Land Scotland is hosting a reception at the Scottish Parliament and has invited NWMCWC to attend. **Action IAH** to forward details to AM who may be able to attend.

An email had been received from a local resident requesting the names of the 6 crofters yet to have their crofts signed over. **Action CM** to send the list of names.

12. **Any Other Competent Business.** a. The **tenders** for the first transport contract are due to be opened on 1st November. It was agreed that IAH and JA will represent NWMCWC on the panel.

b. It was agreed that the **Way Forward** meeting should be held before the next Board Meeting and after JM returns from holiday. The date was set for **Monday 14th November 2011** at 7.30pm in Dervaig Church Hall.

c. There has been no response from **Graham Dale** to the email and letter sent by JM as agreed at the last Meeting. **Action CM** to insist TWIG take his defamatory letter off their webpage.

d. JM reported that the **Dervaig Toilets** are in need of significant repairs and if A&B or a sponsor won't fund the renovations they may have to be closed permanently. The toilets have been closed during the last two winters but can only reopen next spring if they are no longer a drain on NWMCWC finances. **Action JM** to ask A&B one more time for money for the repairs. CB volunteered to assist with the repairs if money is found to fund them. Thanks were given to JM and Jan for all their work on such an unglamorous but essential and well used building.

e. CB complained that he had not been contacted about the **Chainsaw Course** despite asking to be put on the list in 2006. It was explained that such a list was prior to both IAH and BH taking posts and had not been passed on. **Action BH** to put CB on the list for the next course.

f. It was clarified that supporting the Ulvaferry School Community Association with their housing project would not cost us anything in money or time but would help them move forward until they get their own Rural Housing Body status. It was agreed to discuss the matter further at the Way Forward meeting.

IAH requested it be recorded that the work voluntarily carried out at West Ardhu Dun has gained NWMCWC a payment of > £500.00 from SRDP. Venison sales from deer management have added a further £600.00. These are both big contributions to the Company finances and the people involved were thanked.

13. The **next** ordinary **Board Meeting** will be held on Tuesday 29th November 2011 at 7.30pm in Dervaig Church Hall.

The Meeting closed at 9.25pm.

North West Mull Community Woodland Company Limited

Finance Report to 21st October 2011

General

Petty cash stands at £53.89.

Cash available is £8,276.82. This balance is after payment of salaries (excluding Mr Hepburn's latest where he has asked that payment be deferred), and all other invoices up to 21st October.

Significant movements during the past month were

- 1) Payment of the Chainsaw Course Trainer and Assessor fees and receipt of Course Payments for the 8 candidates who will undergo training from 24th October.
- 2) The latest 3 month NI & Tax payment of £2,386.01.
- 3) A payment for Financial advice on Housing and other projects, totalling £1,740.
- 4) A credit of £601.60 from Highland Game for proceeds of Venison sales.

Haul Route

In the coming months there will be two further bills related to Servitude final payments to be paid, one to FCS and the other to HBP.

As works are virtually complete, there will shortly be final measures of the work on the Haul Route, and a reconciliation of costs versus budget.

Fundraising

The Directors must continue to focus on future/innovative fundraising activities to help meet upcoming costs.

This is important in that there will continue to be a significant call on funds to support our activities which cannot entirely be met from Grant Funding. The GCA Grant has now almost finished with a final submission for repayments likely in November. We currently have an under-spend of approximately £2,000 on the BLF part of the GCA Grant for which we will be allowed to make claims.

Upcoming Costs

Further significant costs will be incurred in the coming months re the Haul Route (as noted above), Mini Hydro, and Paths and Access projects.

There will also be a bill for £400 for the Village Fireworks Party. Approx £200 is already available and the balance should be raised via the Donation boxes and donations received on the night.

Short Term Future Financial Position

Cash, as previously advised, is tight and will remain so for some months to come until income starts to come in from the harvesting operations.

The Treasurer and the Development Manager will continue to explore options for future short term funding.

A trial run of 4 trailers of saw logs from the Haul Route timber has been made to the mill at Kilmallie and we expect a final figure for sales value any day which, once agreed, will trigger further deliveries and, in several weeks, cash income for the Company.

Additionally there are still options for several interest free loans.

Accounts for year ending 31/07/11

It is planned to submit our accounts data plus necessary support and report information to R.A.Clements during November.

Trading Company Balance

Balance stands at approximately £600.

J.N.Morrison - Treasurer

Development Managers Report October 2011

1. Timber Haul Road

Surfacing and Cattle and Deer grid installation are complete, all fencing materials and gates are delivered. Fencing starts w/c 24th October.

2. Fishnish timber export

Planning permission has been granted for the jetty at Fishnish. TSL have now agreed that a 60 metre berthing face to allow the use of 3000 tonne vessels should be incorporated. The Forestry Commission discussed the project in their August board meeting. No contracts have yet been signed. No Change

3. Timber Harvesting

May now start in November

4. Timber Haulage

The tenders for timber haulage from Woodland to mill have been issued to all contractors on the agreed list and responses are due in by the end of October. The tender covers a period up to the fixed jetty becoming available. 4 trial loads of road line timber have been sent to Kilmallie via TSL. **Forest Crofts** – The memoranda of agreement for the first three crofts have been signed off and are now with the Crofters Commission and the land court.

5. **Access Feasibility Study** – The response to surveys has been analysed and presented to community meeting on the 16th and 17th of September – the feedback from the consultations will be incorporated in the Final report – further consultation via Survey Monkey and our Website was undertaken in late September.

6. Management Sub committees

No minutes received

7. Housing

Joint Venture – HM Revenue and Customs clearance of the financial model has been received.

No change

8. Sale of Proposed Building Plots

As before

9. Use of Sitka.

Meeting with FCs in Edinburgh, they are now part funding a major project with Napier University and wish to work with us, they will make proposal in November which could well result in substantial funding being available to progress this project. No change

10. Medium Term Income

- a. Woodland Burials –as before
- b. Leasing Birch Woodlands – Not progressed this month.

11. Micro Generation – Hydro West Ardhu

- a. The full consultants report is expected w/c 24/10/2011
- b. Have now received a positive response from Torloisk which leaves us clear to submit a planning application when the final report is received.
- c. After some delay I have been able to agree a definition of site area with A&BC which is considerably less than first thought.

12. Mr D Thomas Dervaig Motors Site

No progress this month