

**Minutes of Board Meeting for
North West Mull Community Woodland Company Limited
Meeting held at Dervaig Church Hall on Tuesday 29th November 2011**

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

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

1. CM **welcomed** everyone to the meeting.
2. There were **apologies** from Catriona Laurie and Andy Mayo.
3. The **Minutes** of the Meeting held on 25th October 2011 were **signed** by CM as a true record of the proceedings. Two minor alterations were initialled and will be amended on the computer file.
4. **Matters Arising.** The culvert at Langamull is running but gets blocked easily **Action CM/MR** to check what action is required.

CM had telephoned Val Thomas and she is now happier about the road surface. J.Mac thinks some of the surface dressing is too large and not thick enough. **Action IAH** to discuss with MacNaughtons. The removal of the roadline timber will show up any problems which can then be rectified by them within the 6 months retention period.

IAH and AM attended the Community Land Scotland reception in Edinburgh. It was well supported by MSPs and interested groups. CLS will lobby the Scottish Government about the policies on community land ownership, Crown estates etc.

In brief: CM has sent Margaret Lovell the names of the crofters. TWIG has been removed from Facebook. JM has made some progress re the toilets and will contact Argyll and Bute Council shortly.

5. Three **items** not on the **Agenda** were **declared**; i. Community Forum, ii. land for sale at Druimghigha and iii. Graham Dale.
6. JM had previously circulated his **Finance Report**. Donations for Fireworks Night had broken even with the costs. All the food and drink was donated. Many compliments were received that it was the best ever. IAH explained how the final claims for HIE and Big Lottery grants would be managed with the possibility of some unclaimed money going towards the Micro Hydro or Access Projects. There is also the chance of some money from Community Energy Scotland towards the Micro Hydro start up costs. IAH should hear from Felix White this week. There is also a Climate Challenge Fund that may support the preliminary processes for the Micro Hydro Project but not actual construction costs.

JM gave a brief presentation about the overheads budget. Tilhill have agreed to pay the receipts for the roadline timber straight to the Company. As most of the timber is attracting full market value this should give us in excess of £50,000.00 which will enable the payment of servitudes due and cover overhead costs of c£3500.00 per month for a while. The total expenditure over the next 6 months is estimated at £49,000.00 so it may be possible to pay off the interest free loan as well. Harvesting in Langamull is due to start in January and payments to Tilhill for the road will commence from the proceeds. IAH would like to reduce his hours to 3 days a week sometime next Spring or Summer so this will lower the monthly overheads on salaries.

7. IAH had previously circulated his **Development Manager's Report**. He and JA have studied the first draft of the Access Report and asked for a slight redesign of the multi-purpose building to allow for use of our own sitka. The report is laid out in a 'menu' format with each item costed and scored for the criteria it meets that may help with funding. The final draft should be received this week **Action IAH** to circulate.

The revised tenders for the timber transport should be finalised in the next couple of weeks and it is hoped that a contract will be awarded in early January. **Action IAH** to keep things moving as quickly as possible.

8. The **date** for the next **AGM** was set for Thursday 1st March 2012. This will allow time for the 2011

Annual Accounts to be sent to Clements, returned and ratified by the Board prior to the AGM.

9. The Company Benefits Policy, unanimously ratified by the Board, states that all benefits, whether in cash or kind, should be declared on a form and kept on file. **Action BH** to create suitable form. It was unanimously agreed that the **Communication Policy** for the Company is that each project will be individually assessed at an early stage to agree what and when to communicate with individuals or the wider public.

10. Finance Training. It was agreed that the basic accounts and accounts strategy presentations should be deferred until after the AGM so that new Directors can benefit.

11. Discussion of the **Housing Project** was deferred until the next Board Meeting when IAH will present the suggested model and funding plan.

12. The updating of the **Business Plan** is in progress. **Action CM/JA** to continue work and present the suggested changes when they are ready.

13. There were no **subcommittee reports**.

14. Fundraising. Posters advertising the Christmas Trees have been put up locally and there is an advertisement in the December issue of Round and About. JM has recruited a band of volunteers to help with cutting, dragging, bagging and delivering.

15. There was no **Correspondence** that has not been dealt with under other headings.

16. Any other Competent Business. i. It was suggested that a date should be set for a Community Information session as discussed at the final TWIG meeting. It was agreed that time would be set aside for this after the AGM on March 1st 2012. **Action BH** to include information about this in the Winter Newsletter.

ii. It has been noted that land owned by Hugh Balfour Paul at Druimghigha has been put up for sale and that the information given about the Haul Road servitude might be misleading. After discussion it was agreed that for the time being the Board would keep a watching brief but be ready to take action if necessary to protect the Community's assets and sensibilities.

iii. While the Company was awaiting the draft letter from our solicitors Graham Dale has written to our trading partner Tilhill referring to NWMCWC in a defamatory way. The draft solicitor's letter refers to this latest communication as well as the previous ones. It was agreed that Graham Dale would be offered one final chance at mediation before sending the letter. **Action IAH** to ask solicitors to recommend a neutral mediator.

17. The **next Board Meeting** will be held on **Monday 16th January 2012** at 7.30pm in Dervaig Church Hall. A date was also set for the subsequent Meeting which will be held on **Monday 13th February** at the same place and time as above.

The Meeting **closed** at 10.10pm.

Development Managers Report November 2011

1. Timber Haul Road

Fencing started all strainers dug in and concreted, gates positioned and fencing installation started.

2. Fishnish timber export

No contracts have yet been signed but both TSL and FES are now looking at a June 2011 completion.

3. Timber Harvesting

Due to SRDP application complications harvesting will not now start until January 2012. 4 trial loads of road line timber have been sent to Kilmallie via TSL and BSW have confirmed that the saw logs are of 1st quality even though some 15 months old and that the road line saw logs will be purchased at full market value. UPM Tilhill have agreed to pay the proceeds of sale minus the haulage costs direct to the company to provided funding for the balance of the servitude payments and to cover our ongoing overheads. The first payments are expected in mid December.

4. Timber Haulage

The tenders for timber haulage have been received but were not considered to be acceptable, the work is to be re-tendered for the full harvesting period. In the meantime the most competitive tender will be used to deliver the road line timber.

5. 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. All nine crofts are in the final stages of registration.

6. Access Feasibility Study – full draft report is expected w/c 28th November with final publication during w/c 12th December 2011

7. Management Sub committees -

No minutes received

8. Housing

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

No change

9. Sale of Proposed Building Plots

As before

10. 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

11. Medium Term Income

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

12. Micro Generation – Hydro West Ardhu

- a. The full consultants report has been sent out.
- b. Have now received a positive response from Torloisk which leaves us clear to submit a planning application.
- c. I have been able to agree a definition of site area with A&BC which is considerably less than first thought.

13. Mr D Thomas Dervaig Motors Site

No progress this month

North West Mull Community Woodland Company Limited

Finance Report to 26th November 2011

General

Petty cash stands at £25.91.

Cash available is £4,999.57. 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 25th November 2011.

Significant movements during the past month were

- 1) Payment of the DTAS Training fee of £327.55.
- 2) Payment of the Annual Insurances, totalling £1,124.54.
- 3) Payment to Cycletherapy of £1,200 for part of the Amenity and Access Feasibility Study.
- 4) Payment of £400 for the Village Fireworks.
- 5) A credit of £66.80 from Highland Game for proceeds of Venison sales.
- 6) A transfer from the Trading Co Account of £1,000 of proceeds from Firewood and Woodmizer transactions.
- 7) A credit of £392.80, being donations to the Village Fireworks Night.

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.

Final fencing works are underway and road strengthening at the two crossing points will commence imminently, following which there will 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 to be made in December. 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.

Short Term Future Financial Position

Cash, as previously advised, is tight but remains secure.

Monies from net proceeds of the sale of Roadline timber will start to come in during December. This will secure the short to mid term future, covering overhead and other commitments.

Overheads

A short paper will be presented to the Board on 29th November outlining the routine overhead costs for the coming months.

Accounts for year ending 31/07/11

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

Trading Company Balance

Balance stands at approximately £800.

J.N.Morrison - Treasurer