

**Minutes of Board Meeting for
North West Mull Community Woodland Company Ltd
Meeting held at Dervaig Church Hall on
Tuesday 25th September 2012**

Present: John Morrison, Colin Morrison, Andy Mayo, Iain Thomson.

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

1. CM **welcomed** everyone to the Meeting and informed them that Ailsa Morgan has resigned as a Director. She will continue to support NWMCWC Ltd as a volunteer and wishes to remain on the Access and Amenity subcommittee. She has been thanked for all her hard work during her 3 years on the Board.

2. There were **apologies** from John Addy and Catriona Laurie. Due to Ailsa Morgan's resignation the Board now has 8 members so the Meeting was quorate having 50% of the elected Directors present.

3. The **Minutes** of the Board Meeting held on 27th August 2012 were **signed** by CM as a true record of the proceedings.

4. **Matters Arising.** Steve Maker has been thanked for his offer to create some amenities at Langamull and will provide plans.

The Deer Management Group meeting is on 14th October. CM will attend and request JMac to go too. At present there is no plan in place for deer management in our woodlands but advice will be taken as felling in Langamull progresses.

CM has a meeting with members of the Dervaig School parents association this week to confirm the site for the fruit trees. **Action CM** to provide BH with an estimate of costs as FCS Seedcorn Fund may be prepared to transfer the balance from the 1st Aid course grant to this project.

5. Three **items** were **declared** that do not appear on the **Agenda**: i. Business Plan, ii. Meeting with Counsellors, iii. Access and Paths.

6. JM had previously circulated the **Finance Report**. An upcoming cost not mentioned is the PAYE due next week. The Office rent is also due shortly and the Kirk will not be increasing it this year. A new agreement on this basis will be signed by CM and BH. The HIE contribution to cost of the 5 Year Review is due soon.

7. The **Development Manager's Report** had previously been circulated by IAH. Some cattle grids require new bolts and this will be carried out this week. TSL are making some small repairs and cleaning the mud from the road near the harvesting site. Timber prices have stabilised.

Only one crofter has paid the ingo and first year's rent to date. **Action IAH** to chase and give final date for payment. The next crofts will be available in around 6 months.

Claire Hannah is to suggest some dates for a meeting to explore what HIE can do to assist with the establishment of the Micro Hydro and Woodland Burials. Ideally some Directors should attend this meeting.

The CARES loan has been approved and all documents signed ready for posting.

8. There were no **Progress Reports**.

9. Secure Compound. JM showed the Directors some plans for discussion. Ideally local Sitka will be used prepared on the Woodmizer. This will be good PR for the use of Sitka in building. **Action JM** to get some prices for roofing materials and metalwork etc.

10. Fundraising. It may be that there are not sufficient, suitable trees for the Company to sell Christmas Trees this year. **Action JM** to have a recce and let BH know. It was agreed that if trees are not being sold this year an advertisement should be taken in Round and About to let people know. It should still be possible to supply Christmas Trees to Ulvaferry and Dervaig Primary Schools.

The Board agreed that a winter fundraiser of some sort in early 2013 is a good idea.

11. Dervaig Toilets. JM has drafted a letter to Counsellor Devon but as CM is in the process of arranging a meeting with all the local counsellors about a number of issues it was agreed that the toilets should be included then. MICT have completed a survey about holidays and tourism which discusses toilet provision. The strategy they suggest for Dervaig does not reflect the care NWMCWC Ltd has provided, and would not commence for several years. It is also very expensive. **Action IAH** to liaise with MICT about the Company being included in alternative plans and strategies.

12. The Board agreed that the Company will not organise a **Fireworks Display** this year.

13. Mull Rally. It was agreed that the haul road gates at West Ardhu and Langamull will be locked for the duration of the Rally. **Action IAH** to notify the Mull Car Club that this action is due to abuse of the road last year. IAH expressed concern that the haul road is regularly being used by local drivers as a short cut in contravention of our servitude conditions. If this continues it puts at risk our ability to use the haul road for its intended purpose. It was agreed that the gates may be locked outside of working hours now that the timber transport vehicles are only running on weekdays.

14. Correspondence. The Member has declined the invitation to a meeting to resolve the issues with NWMCWC Ltd.

15. Any Other Competent Business. i. **Business Plan.** Due to JA's absence it was agreed that this should be put on the next Agenda. **Action BH.**

ii. CM is actively trying to organise a **meeting** with the local Counsellors to discuss various issues.

iii. **Access.** JA would like to map out the Waterfall Path in October. He will liaise with IAH re progress on the Micro Hydro access track. It was suggested that work can start soon on new access to Kildavie from the haul road.

A date for the AGM will be set at the November Board Meeting as there should be a good idea by then as to when the Annual Accounts will be ready.

16. The **next Meeting** will be held on **Monday 22nd October 2012** at 7.30pm in Dervaig Church Hall. The following Meeting will be held on Monday 19th November.

The Meeting closed at 9.30pm

Development Managers Report August – September 2012

1. **Timber Haul Road** – the road is holding up well, some minor repairs have been undertaken including repacking around some cattle grids and re-torquing the set bolts in the Grids. The running surface near the hammerhead in Langamull North is to be scraped to remove the mud and debris carried on by the harvester and forwarder but the road itself is undamaged.
2. **Fishnish Fixed Pier**
 - a. Set back with this as FES are now not predicting completion until July 2013.
3. **Timber Harvesting**
 - a. Harvesting is now continuing in Langamull with the breakout and production rate significantly better than the prediction used for the initial budgeting on the project. So far as at the 31st of July we have repaid £46K.
4. **Timber Haulage and Floating Pier**
 - a. The timber haulage continues with up to 4 vehicles running to meet the shipment programme, currently we have a pulp boat due in at Corpach and the push is on to fulfil the requirement.
5. **Forest Crofts** –No replies or payments have been received from the first three crofters. Given that we have expended over £8k on this project what stance does the Board wish to take on the none payment. In my view we must push very firmly for payment **now** as to do otherwise will set us up as an “easy touch” for the future and we will be forever chasing rents etc.
6. **Access Feasibility Study – As last month** the final report has been received and is available in the office, **we now need to start work to prioritise the possible projects.**
7. **HIE/FCS 5 year Review** – HIE are content with our responses on the matters raised by one Member and Claire Hannah wishes to meet, ideally with the Board to discuss how we can work with HIE to progress the Micro Hydro and the Woodland Burials
8. **Housing - Sale of Proposed Building Plots - Use of Sitka - No change**
9. **Medium Term Income**
 - a. Woodland Burials – The preferred area is within compartment 915 of the Langamull North woodlands, I have asked Tilhill to clear the remaining trees in this area as soon as possible and ideally by the middle of November but I have asked them not to compromise required output merely to fit with this timescale. Once cleared we can start on site selection.
 - b. Leasing Birch Woodlands – Not progressed this month.
10. **Micro Generation – Hydro West Ardhu**
 - a. CARES Loan scheme – our application for a loan of up to £45K has been approved and we expect the formal offer letter within the next few days.
 - b. The connection application lodged with SSE has been accepted and we should have a connection offer by the middle of October.
11. **UK Woodland Assurance Scheme (UKWAS)** – the annual audit is scheduled for 28th November and between now and then I'll be working through the assessment document to ensure that we are fully compliant.

North West Mull Community Woodland Company Limited

Finance Report to 22nd September 2012

General

Petty cash stands at £9.67.

Cash available is £16,056.35. This balance is after payment of salaries and all other invoices due this week.

Significant movements during the past period were

- 1) Payment of £996 for legal costs re forest crofts creation.
- 2) Payment of £3,751.73 to HMRC for VAT owings on roadline timber sales and other items.
- 3) Payment of £1,605 for the final payment to consultants for the 5 year review.
- 4) A credit of £5,214.17 from Leader towards the Paths & Access study costs.

Haul Route

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

Fundraising

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

Upcoming Costs and Receipts

Further significant costs will be incurred in the coming months re the Haul Route (Servitude as noted above), Mini Hydro, Forest Crofts and Paths and Access projects. Specific costs are noted below;

Mini Hydro - Planning and connection fees - approx £1,500

- Access works at West Ardhu - quotes being obtained.

Five Year Review - a claim has been submitted to HIE for approximately £4,400 as their contribution to costs for this review. This money should be credited within the next month.

Initial ingoing payments and first year rents are now overdue for the first three forest crofts and need to be paid ASAP.

There should be a small receipt in due time re chip and firewood proceeds of sale of the roadline timber but that will be not be significant.

There should also be further receipts from venison sales.

Short Term Future Financial Position

Cash remains secure for the next several months.

Trading Company Balance

Balance stands at approximately £200.

J.N.Morrison - Treasurer