

**Minutes of Board Meeting for
North West Mull Community Woodland Company Ltd
Meeting held on Mon 30 November 2015**

Present: Colin Morrison, John Morrison, Andy Mayo, Iain Thomson (via Skype), John Addy

Also Present: Malcolm Ward (Development manager), Louise Liddell (Administrator)

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

2. There were **apologies** from Ian Hepburn

3. The **minutes** of the Board Meeting held on **Monday 24 August 2015** were **signed** by CM as a true record of the proceedings

4. Matters arising:

- Action points to be carried over:
 - **AM to update** Triodos account
 - **MW to get price** for picnic tables – Tilhill have reiterated their agreement to purchase these.
 - Waterfall footpath - SRDP can provide funding (£100 per hectare) for maintaining but not establishing footpaths – **MW to consult** 2012 Access Feasibility Study for further funding suggestions.
- The board acknowledged that the scheduled discussion on the Micro Hydro scheme would be limited due to the absence of IH.
- Firewood was provided for the Dervaig bonfire night and unused wood has now been removed

5. Items not on the agenda

- Site access via neighbouring land

6. The **Finance Report** was circulated by AM at the meeting.

- AM expressed concerns about whether there will be sufficient cash flow over the next 2-3 years to fulfil NWMCWC's obligations
- MW reported that the estimated cost of fencing Langamull has increased. Fencers have been able to give this more realistic estimate following work done elsewhere on the island.
- JA raised the possibility that some aspirations may need to be suspended
- The board recognised the need to be able to make more informed financial decisions. To this end, the handover of financial concerns from IH to MW is to be progressed. **AM to set up a meeting** in w/c 14th December between AM, IH and MW. A dedicated finance meeting will then be scheduled for late January 2016.

7. The **Development Manager's Report** had been circulated by MW prior to the meeting.

- **Forest management:**
 - MW passed on Tilhill's apologies regarding the Forest Design Plan which is now being reviewed
 - The last of the pulpwood has now been exported from Langamull South. **MW to meet with Tilhill** to reconcile the remaining fuelwood stocks.
 - MW reported the offer of a purchase of 500 tonnes of fuel wood. As this offer would result in a cost to NWMCWC, the board agreed that it should be declined.

- BSW have offered a gross price at which they would commit to taking around 500 tonnes at roadside in the first quarter of 2016. **MW to confirm** the net price for this offer.
- The bid by Highland Wood Energy to provide woodchip for Tobermory High School was unsuccessful, and it is believed that Argyll and Bute council are investigating chipping and pelletizing independently. **AM to correspond** with the head teacher at THS to emphasise the advantages of using Island Woodfuels.
- **Housing:**
 - MW and CW attended a housing seminar on 6th November, in which the discussion focussed on allocations and housing need.
 - West Property have received a cash offer for plot 2 at West Ardhru, and agreed terms of sale. Twin Deer Law have raised a query regarding the Lottery burden on the plot – the board believe that the sale is unaffected as long as it is not for revenue – **MW to confirm**.
- **Island Woodfuels:**
 - MW met with a customer who now has chipping facilities and has changed their regular order from woodchip to poles. They are happy to co-ordinate chipping dates and share the cost.
 - A neighbour has submitted concerns to Argyll and Bute council regarding the noise levels and traffic associated with the proposed woodshed. This has prompted further questions from A&BC around whether the drying floor constitutes ‘processing’ and therefore requires planning permission. **MW to seek out previous correspondence** on the matter before proceeding.
- **Forest crofts:**
 - Six croft management plans have now been received. Tilhill have advised (based on their experience) that a specific map format is preferred – maps to be amended according to this advice.
- **Micro Hydro:**
 - Pre-accreditation has not yet been approved but further information has been requested by Ofgem and provided by MW.
- **Woodland burials:**
 - A&BC have advised that the proposed woodland burials site should be moved to a “Rural Opportunities” area. MW has responded, emphasising that the area will remain woodland, that proposals for buildings can be withdrawn if necessary, and that several partners have been consulted on the suitability of the site.
- **Toilets:**
 - A&BC were unable to meet the deadline for reports prior to the OLI committee meeting. As such, a decision on the requested price is not expected until after 10th February 2016.
- **Funding:**
 - A request for an extension to funding has been submitted to DTAS

8. Micro Hydro:

- Some discussion was had around the advantages of debentures vs community shares, but the board agreed that this discussion could take place more fully with the input of IH.
- JA raised a query about what had caused delays to the Micro Hydro so far – the board agreed that external bodies such as SEPA and A&BC have delayed proceedings, but that there has also been a lack of focus on this project.
- SEPA have not yet indicated whether the sketch submitted for the redesign of the weir is acceptable. However, the board advised that **MW should request a full design** from Mott MacDonald before March, to be charged to the CARES loan.

- There has been no contact from the Torloisk estate so far – **MW to approach the factor** directly for a response.

9. Correspondence:

- A funding application to the Bank of Scotland for the Dervaig toilets was unsuccessful
- Notification of changes to rates at Triodos was passed on to AM
- Highland Game notified NWMCWC that the price paid to us for venison has been reduced due to falling demand following an e-coli scare.

10. Any other competent business:

- **Site access via neighbouring land**

A letter was received from a neighbouring landowner, outlining a number of conditions for future co-operation over site access. The board agreed that though discussions have taken place over several years, satisfactory progress has not been made. As such, all of the requests made in the letter should be met. **MW to inform the neighbour** of this decision and seek clarification on some points.

12. Date of next meetings: 21st December 2015
January meeting tbc

Development Report November 2015

1. **Forest management** – MW and IAH meeting with Tilhill to discuss our long term forest design plan review. A further review should finalise. MW to meet with Tilhill to reconcile the remaining woodfuel stocks for the final LMS cut. The last of the pulpwood from LMS has been exported week starting 23 November, but saw log still remaining on site – no movement expected before the new year. WA haul route not to be scraped until further weathering – no major movement of large vehicles expected soon.
2. **Housing** - CM and MW attended a housing seminar 6 November with the other island projects, discussing housing need and allocations. West property have managed to agree terms of sale for plot 2 in West Ardhu.
3. **Island Woodfuels** –
 - i. Extremely busy period for both domestic and commercial supply. A commercial customer has changed product from chip to poles. I met with the customer on 24 November to ensure they continued to be happy with service provided and the meeting had a positive outcome. Long outstanding accounts are being tidied up and outstanding payments being made.
 - ii. Woodshed. I'm in discussion with A&BC planning regarding their concerns with the previously given prior approval on permitted development. Following on from a neighbour's complaint they wish more information on our plans. Most recently (27 Nov) I've provided them with some additional information relating to noise levels and the amount of chip being "produced" there. This shouldn't prevent the project going ahead, but the timescale is likely to be affected.
 - iii. I attended the last Sustainable Mull and Iona meeting on Wednesday 18 November to lead a discussion on wood pellet production and market availability on the island.
4. **Forest crofts** – Management plans are being received and are ready for board discussion. I currently have 6 of the 9 plans. I've had individual meetings with several crofters. Following discussion with Tilhill they will send some further submission "rules" relating to maps to ensure they meet the required FCS standard.
5. **Micro Hydro** – (Main agenda item) We've had a response requesting further information from Ofgem (and information has been provided) but as yet no formal decision on pre-accreditation. As part of the waiting period I'm attempting to complete other outstanding issues relating to the upper and lower areas of the scheme. A note of correspondence has been received from a neighbour – this also to be discussed in the main agenda.
6. **Woodland burials** – Following my pre-planning enquiry, A&BC have responded saying they couldn't support the positioning of the burial site in its current location. With agreement from directors I've responded to this to give further information on the site and make a compromise on both the toilet and shelter – the preference being to continue to push for this location.
7. **Toilets** – A&BC have advised that as they're having to produce a new business case to supply the facility to us at the requested price (or lease arrangement) and as doing so is "a resource intensive task", they were unable to meet the deadline of 16 November for reports prior to the

OLI area committee meeting. A decision has now been delayed until the next area committee date of 10 February 2016.

8. **Funding** – A request for extension of DTAS funding has been submitted and will be submitted by them to the Scottish Government.

MW 27/11/2015

