

**Minutes of Board Meeting for
North West Mull Community Woodland Company Limited
Meeting held at Dervaig Church Hall on Tuesday 21st June 2011**

Present: Colin Morrison, John Morrison, John Addy, Alex Duncan, James MacPhail, Iain Thomson, Ailsa Morgan, Matthew Reade, Chris Baker, Alistair Scarlett, Catriona Duncan, Calum Duffy (see below) 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 no **apologies**.

It was decided that the Board would go straight to item **10. Harvesting Tenders**. Calum Duffy was to arrive late to the Meeting so this item could be discussed without him. The agreed panel of Ian Hepburn, John Morrison, Ian Moody and Gavin Brown of Tilhill, and Mick Bottomley of Forestry Enterprise Scotland had met in Oban on Friday 17th June to review the tenders. Four tenders had been received. They were all marked using the process and score sheet previously agreed by the Board. After scoring both the 'soft' issues and price there was a clear winner, Colin Brolly. JM and IAH recommended that the Board accept the findings of the panel and that the contract should go to the winning tender. Some members of the Board were unhappy that the contract would not go to Hugh Duffy as he is local. A long discussion followed with the main points as follows:

JA asked if all the experts on the evaluation committee had agreed to the process that was used. IAH confirmed that both FCS and Tilhill use similar criteria and were happy with the process. It was explained that commercial confidentiality meant that the financial details of each tender could not be divulged, however the three other tenders were considerably more and not in the Company's best financial interests to accept. Unfortunately the local tender could not compete with the winning tender.

JM and CM stressed that the duty of the Board was to ensure that the Company was run in a financially viable way. JA added that as a Community Company as well as a Charity, the Board had a duty to maximise the income from the timber. AS, Al.D and J.Mac were of the opinion that the road building contract had been given 'off island' and they were not happy to see the harvesting contract go the same way.

JA raised two issues that troubled him. Firstly, the Board had agreed to the makeup of the committee and the evaluation criteria so it was wrong to override the committee's recommendation. Secondly, the scale of the cost difference made it impossible to support the local bid.

CM called the Meeting to vote on whether to give the contract to the panel's recommended tender, Colin Brolly or the local, more expensive tender, Hugh Duffy. The Board voted by six votes to four and one abstention for the appointment of the local contractor, Hugh Duffy.

3. The **Minutes** of the Meeting held on Monday 16th May 2011 were **signed** by CM as a true record of the proceedings.

4. **Matters Arising**. The School Summer Fair went well. MR has the designs for way markers in hand.

5. Two **items** were **declared** that were not on the **Agenda**. Evaluation by HIE, and the letter in Round and About from Mr. Graham Dale.

- 6. Appointment of Director.** There had been one application for the position of co-opted Director, from Andy Mayo. It was unanimously agreed to invite him onto the Board. **Action CM** to contact Andy.
- 7.** JM had previously circulated his **Finance Report**. He added that he had just completed a Gift Aid application for c£836.00.
- 8.** IAH had previously circulated his **Development Manager's Report**. It was agreed that no further action would be taken for a Bird Hide at Dunan Neill. Instead a site at Langamull will be chosen to capitalise on the white-tailed eagles in the area.
- 9. Dervaig Motors and Campsite.** A letter has been received from Dave Thomas in reply to our request that he reinstate our boundary. In it he says that Argyll and Bute Council have ordered him to stop all work on the site, so he can't restore our boundary until he is allowed to recommence work.
- 10.** This item was discussed at the beginning of the Meeting.
- 11. Ulva School Community Association.** This started as a group to fight the threat of school closure but is now looking at organising a local housing scheme. Helen Mackay and Carolyne Charrington have indicated to CM that they would be happy to have discussions with NWMCWC to ensure we are not duplicating anything. **Action CM** to progress.
- 12. Community Forum.** This is due to take place on Monday 27 June at 7.30 pm in Dervaig Church Hall. It has been advertised in the Newsletter, on the website and by local posters. AS suggested putting out large roadside signs to maximise attendance. **Action AS** to make and put out signs. CM, AM, JA and CD are to attend. Councillor Mary Jean Devon has agreed to come and CM will invite her to chair the meeting until a permanent chair has been elected. IAH will also attend.
- 13.** The **AAR subcommittee report** had previously been circulated. AM has stood down as Chairman and JA has taken over with the agreement of the rest of the committee.
- 14. Fundraising.** The date for the Woodland Gala Day has been settled as Sunday 4th September. It was agreed that trying to tie this in with the Haul Road Opening was too complicated. **Action CM** to progress organising the Haul Road Opening with Mike Russell and Richard Lockhart. The Gala Day subcommittee will meet very soon to decide on all the events and sideshows. JM said we will be able to sell Christmas trees again this winter. It was suggested that as part of the Deer Management we could sell venison. **Action J.Mac** to investigate. It is unlikely that the Green Burial Ground will be ready before late 2012 but there is a possibility of advance sales of lairs.
- 15. Correspondence.** MR had an email from Alan Kelsey suggesting that he did not withdraw from his agreement to allow the road across his land and that our version of events is less than honest. IAH has all the relevant documents and letters that show NWMCWC acted reasonably and offered him exactly the same as the other landowners who agreed.
- 16. Any other Competent Business.** Claire Hannah (HIE) visited and saw JM and IAH. Her intention was to review the business, see where we are and send consultants help us decide where to go next. She agreed that NWMCWC has a clear vision for the future so suggested instead that an independent review is done to show what we have already achieved and delivered. This will enable us to show future prospective funders that we deliver what we promise. The Board agreed this was a good idea. **Action IAH** to contact Claire.

The June issue of Round and About contained a letter from Graham Dale that directly criticised NWMCWC. As many of his statements were inaccurate a Company response has been sent to R&A for publication in the July issue.

17. The **next Board Meeting** will be held on **Monday 25th July 2011** at 7.30pm in Dervaig Church Hall.

The Meeting Closed at 9.20pm