

**Minutes of Board Meeting for  
North West Mull Community Woodland Company Limited  
Meeting held at Dervaig Church Hall on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2011**

**Present:** Colin Morrison, John Morrison, Calum Duffy, Alex Duncan, James MacPhail, Iain Thomson, Andy Mayo, Catriona Duncan, Chris Baker and Ann Evans (Company Secretary).

**Also Present:** Ian Hepburn (Development Manager)

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

2. There were **apologies** from Alistair Scarlett, John Addy, Matthew Reade, Ailsa Morgan and Belinda Hale (Administrator).

In the absence of BH, the Minutes were taken by AE.

3. The **Minutes** of the Meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> July 2011 were **signed** by CM as a true record of the proceedings.

4. **Matters Arising.** The revised Minutes for the Meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> June 2011 have been completed and are ready for signature by CM.

The ceremony to officially open the Haul Road was held on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> August 2011. This was arranged at very short notice when a preferred date was supplied by the Scottish Cabinet Ministers.

JMac is continuing to progress the idea of shooting deer for sale as venison.

IAH has spoken to our lawyer about the suggestion by AS that the agreement with UPM Tilhill breaches the Articles of Association. It has been confirmed that no breach has occurred. The agreement was made while the old Articles of Association were in effect, but the agreement complies with both the old Articles of Association and the new ones which were adopted to comply with updated Charity and Government legislation.

MR has spoken to Jamie Laurie about reinvigorating sales and use of the Woodmizer and some work is now coming on stream.

CM has discussed fundraising with CatD and she will look at options for a free event in partnership with other local groups, possibly in the Autumn. All ideas to be brought to the next Meeting.

The Train for Trainers seminar has been rescheduled for March 2012. CD is continuing to work towards a Lantra assessment which will allow him to train.

5. Two **items** were **declared** that do not appear on the **Agenda**. The letter from Graham Dale sent to the Cabinet Secretaries immediately prior to their visit to NWMCWC, and an item from CD re fallen trees.

6. JM had previously circulated his **Finance Report** which is in an abridged format suitable for public view. There was discussion about the way financial information should be set out and how it might be interpreted. The short term cash situation could be quite difficult but with sales of timber, potential interest-free loans from three people who wish to remain anonymous, an undertaking from IAH to postpone payment of his salary and the income from the Woodmizer, firewood and Christmas trees it should be possible to guarantee salaries in the short-term for at least three to six months.

CD expressed concern about the Company getting further into debt by accepting cash loans or advances. He is also concerned that the information about felling in Langamull is correct and that everything possible should be extracted as per the felling tender and the Forest Design Plan. IAH confirmed that everything listed for felling in the Forest Design Plan was included in the Harvesting Contract. IAH has requested the contractors to start at the North end in view of the possibility of Sea Eagles nesting next Spring. CD asked how road repairs will be paid for if there is a severe frost. IAH confirmed that road repairs would be at our cost.

JM is hopeful that the Micro Hydro scheme will cover staff costs and other overheads. IT believes we should keep moving forward and progress the projects. CB expressed concerns over the financial situation. It was agreed that the priority projects are felling of timber, Micro Hydro, woodland burials and crofting. It would be an option to delay the housing project IAH stressed that should the Micro Hydro and/or the Housing proceed a significant proportion of the overheads would be met out of the capital budgets for the projects. The Paths and Access should be treated as a separate project.

The Board agreed to JM's interim plan to cover the cash shortfall but concerns about getting into too much debt were expressed by JMac, AID, CD and CB.

7. IAH had previously circulated his **Development Manager's Report**. There have been no major developments this month and there were no questions or queries. The Directors agreed that the format was suitable for the Community Forum and publication.

8. **Community Forum**. Concern was expressed that people can make contentious comments anonymously. The Board agreed that all comments should have names put to them. This will be addressed at the next Forum meeting. All questions and queries that require an answer at the next Forum on 12<sup>th</sup> September 2011 must be submitted to NWMCWC a week before so answers can be properly researched and prepared. **Action IAH/BH** to confirm this with the Forum. CM has been asked to amend the draft minutes of the last Forum and is unhappy about this as amendments should be tabled at the meeting just prior to adoption and signature. The Board agreed that just this once he will make the amendments if requested.

9. **Community Land Scotland** would like to hold their **AGM** on Mull in March 2012. It will involve arrangements for 70 – 80 people, mainly organised by NWMCWC. The Board agreed that the Company should organise this. **Action IAH/BH** to progress.

10. **Road Opening/Forest Crofts**. Cabinet Secretaries Mike Russell and Richard Lochhead came to North West Mull on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> August to officially open the Haul Road and witness the signing of the first three Forest Croft leases. Many other guests involved with NWMCWC also attended and were very happy with the delivery of such a large Project. There will also be good publicity in the local press.

11. **Directors** had been asked to think about the **skills** they can contribute to the Company: JMac – Deer Management and jobs requiring his plant, CD – forestry skills training and one off jobs in woodlands not yet harvested, CM – business management and committee experience, IT – fencing, AMay – business and financial experience, CatD – business management, JM – business set up and management, CB – interest in renewables and hydro scheme, AE – interest in housing project and disability awareness. AM had previously indicated that she would like to stay involved with the Access Project.

The dates people are available for Directors Training are needed by the end of the week. **Action IAH** to contact those who have yet to indicate a preference.

12. There were no **subcommittee reports**.

**13. Fundraising.** It was suggested that if we are to put on a Burns Supper the planning needs to start very soon.

It was suggested that the BUYAT feature on our website could be more heavily promoted. **Action CM** to check ease of use.

It will be possible to sell Christmas Trees again this year. CB offered the use of his quad bike if he is given notice in advance.

**14. Correspondence.** Notification of the Reforesting Scotland AGM has been received. Two booklets, one on Timber Transport best practice and one on Managing Small Woodlands have been received and may be borrowed from the Office by anyone who is interested. The renewal notice for Community Energy Scotland has been received. **Action BH/JM** to renew membership at £20.00.

**15. Any Other Competent Business.** CD offered to remove three hanging trees that are near to the Forest School. JM said the Salen Show was a successful PR day.

Graham Dale had sent a letter to the two Cabinet Secretaries and posted it on the Community Forum FaceBook page the evening before the official opening of the Haul Road. The letter contained some defamatory comments. IAH is to write to Mr Dale offering a conciliation meeting so the Board can provide him with the true facts. **Action IAH.** As he has put the letter on the Forum FaceBook page with wrong information CM is to contact the organisers to ask them to moderate what goes onto the site and to inform them about the proposed meeting. **Action CM.** The Board agreed to this plan of action.

**16. The next Board Meeting** will be held on **Monday 19<sup>th</sup> September 2011** at 7.30pm in Dervaig Church Hall.

The Meeting closed at 9.40pm.

## **North West Mull Community Woodland Company Limited**

### **Finance Report to 19th August 2011**

#### **General**

Petty cash stands at £44.85. This essentially comes from donations collected from the Village Toilets which the Company looks after and is used essentially to purchase consumables for the toilets.

Cash available is £6896.18. This balance is after payment of salaries, and all other invoices up to 19<sup>th</sup> August.

A payment from HIE covering July GCA allowable expenses has been credited to the account.

The Gift Aid rebate of £856.25 has been received from HMRC Charities Division.

Helen MacKay has cashed her £1,000 servitude payment cheque.

#### **Haul Route**

In the coming months there will be further bills related to Servitude final payments to be paid.

#### **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 will not entirely be met from Grant Funding and the GCA Grant is in its final stage.

#### **Upcoming Costs**

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

#### **Short Term Future Financial Position**

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

The Treasurer will give some verbal comments on options at the Board meeting.

#### **Trading Company Balance**

Balance stands at approximately £1,700.

**J.N.Morrison – Treasurer**

## Development Managers Report August 2011

### 1. Timber Haul Road

- a. **Road Construction** - Surfacing is expected to be finished by the third week of August

### 2. Fishnish timber export

Planning permission has been granted for the jetty at Fishnish. The proposed Jetty is smaller than would be ideal in terms of the length of the berthing face, TSL have now agreed that a 60 metre berthing face to allow the use of 3000 tonne vessels should be incorporated. The Forestry Commission are putting a project for the larger jetty to their Board this month with a view to fully funding the development no contracts have yet been signed.

### 3. Timber Harvesting

May now start in November

### 4. Timber Haulage

The tender process for timber haulage cannot begin until the situation surrounding the export jetty is resolved. UPM Tilhill have held a meeting with TSL to discuss transport of the timber stockpiled from cutting the road line.

- 5. **Forest Crofts** – The memorandum of agreement for two of the first three crofts were signed on the 18<sup>th</sup> of August when the 3<sup>rd</sup> croft is signed off the agreements will be registered with the crofters commission.

- 6. **Access Feasibility Study** –Work has started on a survey of potential path and cycle ways. The consultations to establish the local and wider communities wishes with regard to the development of the woodlands and surrounding areas for access and recreational purposes has now closed and appraisal of the response will begin in September.

### 7. Management Sub committees

No minutes received

### 8. Housing

Joint Venture - we now obtaining an opinion from an accountant specialising in Taxation and we expect clearance of the financial model within the next 7 days.

### 9. Sale of Proposed Building Plots

As before

### 10. Use of Sitka.

. Not Progressed this month

### 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 final report has not been supplied as yet, the latest input from SEPA suggests that some flow mitigation may be needed in September and October, this could reduce the revenue forecast by £5.6K but until we apply for an abstraction licence we cannot pre- judge SEPA's response.
- b. I'm still awaiting a response from Torloisk re the servitude to allow the construction of an off take weir.

### 13. Mr D Thomas Dervaig Motors Site

No progress this month