

KCFC Board meeting minutes – 24th March

Present – David Blair, Fraser Brown, Fiona Hamilton, Steve Williamson, Robert Borruso, Willie McAllan, Colin Willment, Craig Blair, Nikki Woolf

Apologies – Jamie Chaplin-Brice

Welcome from David

Minutes of the previous meeting proposed – DB, seconded – SW.

DB notified those present that Andrew Graham-Weall has stepped down from the board. The board extended their thanks to Andrew for all of his hard work; he will be missed.

Operations Manager report

This was read out by CW in J C-B's absence

EGGER

- 15 wagons of chip due to leave on 27th March.
- RB expressed concern about the amount of timber labelled to go (2/3rds larch) - means we have limited firewood for the year. Board to inspect to what's due to go.
- Further standing sale is yet to be confirmed, waiting on prices from EGGER. Euroforest yet to get back for a meeting. J C-B looking to approach further companies; he has the current sawmill prices so when EGGER gets back in touch we'll know where we stand.

Long Term Forest Plan

- Still with Tom Davies; J C-B has asked again for his co-operation in getting this on the register for 28 days.
- SW to contact Tom in J C-B's absence.

Rhododendron project

- Inspection failed; we have been allowed longer to rectify this. J C-B has spoken to Ross who understands the situation and is putting time into covering the ground again. It was highlighted that good work has been done, but areas are not satisfactory. CW and J C-B to walk through the site with Ross in the first week of April.
- No rubbish being left around anymore, however CW has had to warn the rhodie squad about wearing appropriate PPE.

Windblow

- Agreed that windblow needs cleared; we can rent the Alstor from Ross for £400/ week with CW driving as he has been inducted. J C-B has pegged into 4 days. Agreed that a day at a time would be better, with CW, CB and volunteers working together to achieve this – agreed that this would be too expensive on a weekly basis. CW to try and strike a deal with Ross, e.g. to use it for a day here and there rather than committing to a full week; suggested that CB could help out with volunteers on a Tues and a Thurs, over two weeks.

Digger

- There is an outstanding invoice from Donald; still doesn't know when he'll be finished. Possibility of using the digger in exchange for cladding, but this depends on whether it is to be re-let out – Donald checking with the hire company. RB to update the board and speak to local digger operator James Edgar (must be someone with a ticket).
- RB has spoken to John Moran – KAG seem happy to pay for the digger to carry on with their stumps.
- Agreed that burning stumps is the only feasible option and the best way forward.

Sales

- We've now sold quite a few sawn items; NW provided an update of March sales. Some items are costly to produce, J C-B to review the price list in April.
- Don McInnes helped to make the sheep troughs; agreed that KCFC will pay for a new bandsaw blade as we've worn a few out using his equipment and we're grateful for his help.
- *Association of Scottish Hardwood Sawmillers – ASHS*; RB and J C-B attended an event this time last year. Membership offers benefit in that we are part of a sawmill directory from which product can be sold. Although predominantly hardwood, this group includes larch etc. J C-B to confirm cost of membership.
- KCFC is receiving enquiries for working off-site, however we are not currently insured for this. NW to get a quote from the NFU for sale of products to be taken off-site and for competent persons to work off-site to, for example, install sheds. In the meantime, it was agreed that KCFC could recommend Colin or other local contractors to do this work on a freelance basis, using the forest's timber.
- Question over who could do design work for these structures; better to concentrate on purely supplying timber at this stage?

- J C-B has been asked by the Community Council about felling at the viewpoint; getting a quote from the NFU to update insurance.

FSC

- The smallholder fund has paid £ 4,147.61 into our account for becoming FSC certified. This has cost us £800 to date, but there will be further costs shortly and annually (group scheme membership, audits etc). The board agreed this is OK.

Ops Building

- Work has halted; effort to complete for Easter.

Milling Shed

- Work has slowed on the milling shed, but we have now got most of the beams thanks to CW and CB. The volunteers are scheduled to clad another bay, SW getting the bar/nuts for this. Once the shed is clad, Robinsons can return to finish the guttering and flashing.
- The Cordstrap is ordered, J C-B to bring it north after his holiday, along with a crate for firewood will enable us to wrap the offcuts better for sale.

Health and Safety

- Since the last meeting, we have had our first accident in the accident book this year, a volunteer tripping over. This highlighted that J C-B needs to spend some more time on health and safety/risk assessments etc – he will block a day entirely to do this on his return.
- NW is now a first aider.

Volunteers

- Kings Court are doing great work clearing brash in the windblow area; thanks to them. £1250 in training budget - CB to get quotes for crosscut, telehandler, spraying and first aid courses.
- CB confirmed he is happy to incorporate 4 hours' composting into his week; no need to block time aside to do this.
- CB and NW to attend the Dunoon Jobs Fair; to organise Marketing/ promotional material for this.
- J C-B has approached the Woodland Trust again regarding tubes for our trees, we can then do a planting day (will have to be shortly). Site visit taking place on 17th April to work out if

they can further help with our replanting; agreed that the trees in the polytunnel would be better off outside.

Chainsaws

- CW now has the spare parts to mend the chainsaws and will make time to fix these to bring them up to working order – should we be clearing the windblow, we'll need them. If they are broken beyond his ability, agreed we can send them to West Coast Plant Hire.

Rubbish

- J C-B bagged up some rubbish which has been taken.
- Thanks to the board member who cleaned the toilet in last week's rota.

Machinery

- Telehandler is due to be checked over by AT Best, no fixed date yet just when they are next in the area. They will call prior to arrival.

Cares Loan

- Letter in the in-tray, requires action by 28th March.

Treasurer Report

- WM confirmed that we expect £80K into our account in 2014 through sale of timber; sawmill target for the year is now £13K. Overall income of £100K would be reliant on the sawmill, and so looking unlikely; oncosts sitting at £70K. We are on the cusp of breaking even.
- Heritage Lottery Fund like our bid but there are financial things we need to sort out; they are emailing WM. However this is looking very promising.
- Hydro loan – Pete (consultant) has put the bid together; because they are assessing the bid we must have got through the investment committee. Pete is now working on the financial side. On other hand, DB has heard from Co-hydro who have given us further content to build into the bid. We're hoping for July-Sept for installation (31 days to install), however this could be brought forward.

Housing

- Rock & rubble from the road; enough material to finish and firming up nicely.
- RB is doing a presentation on the housing project at a Rural and Islands Housing Seminar in Oban on 4th April. To report back to the board.

- Architects still working on the master plan – will take a bit longer.
- Housing update at the Community Council meeting on 18th March went well.

AOB

- Agreed that we are not in a position to rehome Bram just now.

Date of next meeting – 10th April