

## **Minutes of the Kilfinan Community Forest Company Board of Directors, held at the Office 5pm on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> July, 2014**

**Attendees:** David Blair (Chair), Robert Borruso, Willie McAllan (late), Steve Williamson, Andrew Graham-Weall, Nikki Brown, Jamie Chaplin-Brice, Craig Blair, **Apologies:** Fiona Hamilton

**Welcome from David**

### **Minutes of the previous meeting**

Proposed correct by SW and seconded by DB

### **Matters arising**

- 1 **Hydro** – Extraordinary general meeting (7<sup>th</sup> July) approved SIS/REIF funding package.
- 2 **Volunteering Project** – ended 15<sup>th</sup> June.  
**Youth project** going well ... Red Squirrel Route ... very positive feedback from community at large. Project ends 31<sup>st</sup> July, presentation at 1pm from group.
- 3 **Archeology** – all forming up well for next week's event.  
**nb** there is funding available 'Adopt a Monument' which may be useful.

**The directors** congratulate Craig on his terrific programme, enthusiasm and hard working approach and wish him well in his new job in the Maldives.

**nb** Craig is happy to talk staff through the practicalities and paper work for the Composting Scheme, he will hand over to Andy.

- 4 **Operations Managers** final report

**Felling:** The harvesters are nearly finished. There is estimated to be around 4000 cubic metres (excluding Larch). This will be paid once the timber has left, minus the upfront payment as per the last felling.

There is still around £2000 of FLI income from the final wagons which left site in June.

The felling contract is due to finish shortly (as agreed so the Hydro works and Archeology can start).

Rob is liaising with the contractors to get the stumps moved.

I have arranged a meeting with EGGER for an official handover – Steve and I met with Mike Yerbury last week, he's keen to help with the rest of Acharossan if possible. I will talk through financial aspects with Willie/Steve/Rob prior to the EGGER meeting to ensure a smooth handover.

**OHPL course:** I was due to do an OHPL harvesting safety course but this is on 19<sup>th</sup> September with SSE. I suggest someone goes for the sake of continuity, but we don't have a great deal of land presently that requires harvesting near OHPL, what about the new forest? Normally this course would have to be paid for, but in this instance it would be free. There is ongoing dialogue with SSE regarding the sterilization zone surrounding our OHPL, which we would be paid NOT to plant – speak to Ninian Clark about this.

**Chainsaw courses:** Drew has asked if we have anything for a small trees course?

In the rec area there are the pines still (although some of these have no Felling Licence).

The "wildlife coupe" in FL I has some small trees suitable, but there wouldn't be much left for the wildlife if we fell these...

Also down by the school there is a smattering of spruce near the forest school area.

**Rhododendron:** SRDP have paid KCFC for the second claim area. Ross' men and Brian's men are due back to finish the 3<sup>rd</sup> area in the next few weeks – Colin walked the site with me and the contractors. I have spoken to Steve regarding the protocol for claims; this is to be submitted once the work is complete to our satisfaction (I'd suggest having the area inspected before paying the contractors and keeping a retainer of some sort as agreed in the contract).

**Health and Safety:** Rob is to take on the health and safety files, with Colin working on the ground for day to day health and safety. Tomorrow (Tuesday) I will complete the filing of H&S and will arrange with Rob when to talk through these. Equally, Rob and Colin will be responsible for the PUWER and maintenance/upkeep of machinery etc. I'd suggest that Rob and Colin hold inductions to all the machines to check that they are happy. All staff have been inducted on machines, however a refresher would be

advisable to ensure staff competence and a signed RAMS sheet in the H&S folder would be a good system to show this.

**Relationships:** Ian Thomas who compiled our forest plan has some work to do on the relationships between private forestry companies and community woodlands. Primarily if there is anything you want to see done (i.e. that the commission will then offer advice on) this is a good opportunity to say – speak to Ian.

**FWA Prize:** The ‘Wood of our Own’ event might be a good time to have the chainsaw sculpture ready for – Nikki can you speak to Andy? He was due to visit while I was on holiday...

**‘A Wood of our Own’** As many of you will know, Elaine Jamieson (FCS) and Diane Oliver (CWA) have decided to host ‘a Wood of our Own’ here in Tighnabruaich/Kames. This will include a visit to the forest. Nikki will liaise with Diane, but it’s again an opportunity to raise burning issues directly with the forestry commission as well as a good networking event.

**Strategic work:** Nikki is getting into the strategic forest work, e.g. we met with UPM on Friday.

**General operations:** As arranged, I handed over my tasks to Colin on Thursday before I left for my holiday to Guernsey – he seems to be managing well with the mill orders etc. I did do an appraisal with Colin recently and he showed that he’s keen to get on with operations as best as possible. Rob will keep an eye on systems and make sure that things are running smoothly. Balliemore managed to get Rob and Mary’s Ash logs over, these will need milling in the back end of the year. Tristan moved some more 6m larch for us also (while the timber crane was here it made good sense).

**Handover:** I have written a 5 year plan of tasks that will need to be considered on top of day to day operations (for which there is also a plan). A meeting to discuss my files would be advisable and also to talk through anything that is unclear. I’m sure there will be things that I have overlooked or are not perhaps as obvious as I see them to be – in this instance, please do pick up the telephone!

**Andy:** has agreed to work on a self-employed basis

**Thankyou!** Finally, thank you all for a great time here – I will be back to visit and hope to see the forest keep growing!  
(End of Ops Report)

**Sculpture:** we need to find an artist quickly, as the chain saw guy (Andy?) has not come back to us.

**David and all directors:** thank Jamie for his time here, it has been hugely appreciated and he leaves us well set up for the future.

### **Development Manager report**

#### **Recruitment of admin assistant**

- Adam now in post – report on issues.
- Adam contract for 6 months – being drafted. 8 week probation.
- Post is part funded via A&B council’s work programme (50% wage cost recoup for first 6 months). Process claim at week 8 and then at the end of the 6 months.

### **Projects**

#### **Purchase of Upper Acharrossan**

- Meeting with FCS took place on 8<sup>th</sup> July; action points and timeline have been sent over to the board sub-group. Immediate actions: organise formal ballot via the council and feasibility study to be undertaken. Can potentially get funding for these and cost of valuation. NB to investigate.

- NB to circulate map to the board with additional 100ha area being sold by FCS to the west of existing boundary. Board to agree on which area to buy.
- Initial survey of additional 100ha done – mostly wind blow; good amenity value and road.
- Meeting with UPM Tilhill took place last week; they will potentially offer capital for the purchase; they will do their own initial valuation and to come back to us with a proposal (within one month). EGGER to also be approached.

### **De minimis**

- A significant barrier in terms of timings to find funding to buy Upper Acharrossan.
- KCFC could potentially challenge the de minimis ruling since commercial timber operation is not posing a threat to the European timber market. NB has been in touch with Aigas (are in a similar position) – they have advised this is done on a case-by-case basis; NB to contact HIE and ask for case to be reviewed and seek a ruling on state aid.

### **Skills development programme**

- NB has put together a plan and budget, incorporating workshop, employment coordinator post and training centre. More work to be done on joiner apprentice involvement – NB and RB to action.
- Potential funding streams for the project – HIE (training centre and workshop) and Comic Relief (employment coordinator post).

### **HIE - social media project**

- HIE has asked if KCFC would be willing to be put forward for a new funding pilot (due to run from now until the end of March), in partnership with digital media agency, 'Hot Tap Media'. HIE would support the costs of KCFC working with Hot Tap Media to deliver a social media drive for a particular project, the aim being to create 'hits' and ultimately raise awareness of the specific project and our profile.
- Could be ideal for the skills development programme, particularly in relation to reinstating the Cowal Car Share.
- Hot Tap Media contacting NB to discuss further.

### **Woodland burials**

- NB and RB have surveyed potential sites – top of event space, flat felled area near school, steep wooded area by the bottom of the school road.
- SEPA guidance re water courses (must be within 50m of any watercourse, and 250m of any spring, well or borehole used as a source of drinking water). Top of event space and steep wooded area ruled out. Only potential area by the school – Ok with sufficient screening?
- NB has spoken to Joanna Dominic (Caladh funeral services) and Greenock Funeral services and there is market demand. NB has put a comprehensive plan together.
- Application for a feasibility study in progress (Investing In Ideas, Big Lottery).

### **School placements**

- Going well – CB working well with students and working to agreed plan.

### **Archaeology week**

- Organised for 26<sup>th</sup>-31<sup>st</sup> July – 28 volunteers including 5 team leaders (kids).

### **Housing**

- NB has red penned RB's Masterplan, AGW has tidied it up.

### **Events**

#### **Summer open day**

Thanks to all for contribution at summer open day – around 200 people attended and great feedback.

**Wood of our own event**

- KCFC has been asked to host it here – 29<sup>th</sup> Aug, Kames Hotel. NB to organise with Di Oliver (CWA).

**CWA event**

- RB and SW going.

**Forestry festival – Italy (LEADER)**

- RB has contacted LEADER directly – possibly attending.

**Any Other Pertinent Business:**

- Michaela Hunter has offered to help with HR matters
- Penny Graham-Weall has offered to help with the 'Woodland Burial Scheme'.
- AGM accounts almost finalised. Potential date for AGM of October / November.
- TDDT, a director will attend each meeting, based on issues.  
Next meeting will include Rob B and Nikki B

**Date of next meeting** : Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> August at 5pm