



Minutes of the Board Meeting held in The Magnus House, Aigas Field Centre on Monday 1st. October.

Present:

Peter Smith PS
David Garvie DG
Chloe Denerley CD
Jackson GJ
Neil Valentine NV
Russell Ross RR
John Graham JG
Mark Hedderwick MH

In Attendance:

Helge Hansen HH
Madeleine Robinson MR
Graeme Scott GS

Apologies:

Andrew Leaver, Phil Masheter

Declaration of Conflict of Interest: None noted. PS questioned whether this always needed to be included.

Minutes of Meeting of 3rd September 2018

These minutes had been circulated to the Board in advance.
Proposed JG. Seconded DG. Approved.

Chairman's Business

PS welcomed everyone and invited each person present to introduce themselves briefly.

Report from forest manager HH

Harvesting

Helge reported that the current phase of felling is now about 80% complete. The big machinery is expected to be out within 2 weeks with extraction continuing for a further few weeks after. He estimates 3,000-4,000tons of wood with an approximate value of £80,000. NV and HH both expressed their satisfaction with the contractor.

Milling

HH and NV are exploring options for producing tongue and groove timber.

JG thought the market for milled timber was developing and suggested the woodfuel group might explore this. PS referred also to the market for unprocessed timber for customers to process themselves.

CWA Wood Fuel Event

The event was hosted by Chris Marsh of the CWA. HH and NV said that other groups were also struggling with delivery with solutions including subcontracting and monthly “collect your own” wood sales. HH recommended that ACF firewood should be described as semi-seasoned with advice to store it under shelter for 1 month before use.

JG will invoice Chris Marsh for hosting event today.

Matters Arising Not Covered Elsewhere

Training

NV reported that the windblow course was ongoing with 2 or 3 trainees to be tested soon. Machinery training is also continuing. Suitable reimbursement to NV was discussed. NV,PS,JG,GS and PM are to explore options and GS asked for the issue of payment to Board members to be put on the agenda for the next meeting.

CWA Conference Strathpeffer

NV and PS will attend the conference on 13th and 14th October and guide a group visiting the forest.

Option for Development Group

JG suggested that a Bothy and an astronomical observatory were ideas to explore. He will email the Board members asking for volunteers to form a development group. MR will research observatories.

Membership List

MH and MR expressed concern that some members were not receiving emails. MR will ask John Buckingham for help in updating the membership list.

Broadleaf Autumn Planting

NV asked whether any broadleaf autumn planting was planned. It was agreed with HH to use volunteers to plant about 600 broadleaves in November between the Ladies Walk and the golf course. JG and PS approved the expense involved. GS will obtain used tubes offered by Strathnairn Community Woodland.

Sub-Group Reports

PS suggested that the sub-groups should meet and discuss their organisation.

Paths and Access

MH offered to assess the loose and possibly unstable rock at the first hairpin bend.

Deer Management

HH has received a revised estimate of £56,000 + VAT from Davy Reid for the deer fencing. RR and GJ want to see the line of the fence before approval is given. PS will consult with local residents. It was agreed to give a commitment to Davy Reid to go ahead with the proviso that some modifications might be required. HH stressed that speed in reaching a decision was important and PS and NV agreed to expedite matters while HH on holiday.

Wood Fuel

JG confirmed that gifts of firewood will be made to members of the community as before.

Wildlife and Ecology

No meeting

Financial Report

JG has obtained a card machine.

Bank balance currently £94,776.07 with £18469.15 due from Scottish Woodlands of which £12k should be in in the next week. GS undertook to sort out VAT registration and to liaise with PS and JG over appropriate backdating.

The meeting closed at 21.20.

The next meeting will be held in the Magnus House on Monday 3rd December at 1900