



## **Minutes from ACF Board Meeting held at Aigas Community Forest Cabin on the 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2024 at 19.30**

### **Present:**

David Garvie (DG) - Chair  
John Graham (JG) - Treasurer  
Jo Young (JY)  
Fin Denerley (FD)  
Stephen Cotterill (SC)  
Alasdair Martin (AM) – New Forest Manager  
Phil Masheter (PM)  
Russell Ross (RR)  
Bob Bull (BB)  
Peter Smith (PS)  
Nataša Kenda (NK) - Minutes Secretary

### **Apologies:**

Neil Valentine (NV)  
Graeme Scott (GS)  
Mark Hedderwick (MH)  
Bob Hemingway (BH)  
Greg Jackson (GJ)

### **Minutes of Previous Board Meeting of 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2024**

Adoption proposed by JY. Seconded by PM. Approved.

### **Matters Arising from Previous Meeting**

None raised.

### **Forest Manager Report**

Circulated over a few emails pre meeting. Regular reports have been well received by the board members. AM will continue with this practice.

### **Sub-group reports**

- **Paths and Access:** Not met; lots of work done, including strimming. RR stated that some Crask residents might join a board meeting in the future; they are welcome to join, but cannot vote.
- **Wildlife & Ecology:** Will plan a meeting. Breeding goshawk confirmed; ospreys from the gorge are gone. Bird surveys have been done and peregrine and osprey nests were spotted. SSEN was informed but they oppose to share data with the public.
- **Deer Management:** Will meet after completion of the fence.
- **Equipment Groups:** Met on the 18<sup>th</sup> July, report circulated pre meeting. New wood processor purchase and a sale of the current one was discussed. A budget of max £3000 extra expense was suggested. Some members to attend APF Forestry Show (19<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> September) with some expenses covered by ACF and look for a suitable processor and compare prices. The group was asked to make a decision and go ahead with the purchase.

A new tractor is needed (100-115hp). PM suggested different options of purchasing (new, second hand), SC suggested to check with local dealers at the Black Isle Show. AM and SC proposed the idea of keeping the old tractor as well; it can still be used, but with care. A potential sale is also an option.

- **Wood Fuel:** The sales are satisfactory.

## **10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary 2025**

JY proposed forming an Anniversary sub-group. Volunteers and ideas are welcome. A yurt was donated, BB will advise on ordering a cover (14ft). An activity or theme for each month was suggested, such as woodland art & crafts, bothy project, music, heritage, involving local groups etc. Group will meet after the open day.

## **SSEN Overhead Line Project**

DG presented the new update, confirming SSEN current plans to take access through the forest, which would impact activities for up to 5 years (estimate). After discussion, it was agreed that SSEN's access would be unacceptable as we are a working community forest and so it was agreed that DG should continue to work with Bidwells (land agent) to oppose SSEN's plans for using the forest for access. It was also agreed, if negotiations to prevent access fail, that we should negotiate for any potential benefits from SSEN to make up for the impact on the forest.

## **SSEN Biodiversity Net Gain Planting**

PS questioned the downsides and the community backlash was mentioned. We will need to be transparent and post on the website or in a newsletter. AM volunteered to write an article for the community to be released at the time of the contract. The Heads of Terms have now been signed and DG proposed a vote to continue to full contract signature, pending legal advice and contract scrutiny; this vote was carried unanimously.

## **AGM and Open Day**

Planned for Saturday the 7<sup>th</sup> September 2024. They will be held on the same day to attract more people. Three directors to resign by rotation: PM (cannot be re-elected), JY and BH. FD will be suitable to be a candidate for an elected director.

## **Financial Report**

JG reported the invested capital of £361,200, current account balance £133,686.67. Expected inflow of funds - Cornerstone Airwave Mast Share - £3097.76 which was due on 06/08/2024 but was paid on 24/07/2024.

## **Items of Expenditure**

Strimmer was repaired; a new would cost approx. £560. JY, SC and DG proposed to have a regular/monthly report of all ACF expenses (purchases, salaries etc) to have an idea of what we're spending on and how to budget for the future. JG advised to connect with GS. AM agreed to start a system of presenting financial figures regularly.

## **Agenda Amendments**

None discussed.

**The meeting closed at 20.57. The next Board meeting will be held on Monday the 30<sup>th</sup> September 2024 at 19.30 at the Kilmorack Hall / Magnus House.**