

Minutes Laide and Aultbea Community Woodland – Directors Meeting

Meeting held on Wednesday 31st July 2019 commencing 7.30pm, in the portacabin

Present: John Rippin, Kevin Ginty, Jan Barclay, Aidan Bell, Peter Henderson, Geoff Dalzell, Peter Jarosz, John Bramham

Apologies: Harry Burn, Tony Carpenter

Approval of the last minutes

The previous minutes were approved. Proposed: Peter Jarosz Seconded: Geoff Dalzell

No matters arising

Matters for AOB

There was one matter arising, concerning the AGM and notifications of members. Also pearl mussels and benches.

Treasurer's Report

£18,800 currently in our bank account. Gift Aid investigated, and should recover c. £2,500 in the coming days. In the financial year 1st June 2018 to 31st May 2019 there was £1,154 memberships, £1,700 donations, £3,544 firewood sales and along with some additional income totaled £7,400 income for the year.

Revenue fairly healthy, but membership could be improved and we should have a membership drive. Contacting lapsed members and firewood club members should help to generate some more interest.

AB reported that the SRDP claim submitted, not yet paid approx £1,300.

QAVS presentation

JR reported the event went very well, and HRH chatted to everyone in the line up.

Procedures for projects and subcontractors

JR reviewed the responsibilities attached to being directors and trustees of the charity. All the directors are volunteers. Agendas are circulated prior to meetings via email, and the opportunity exists at that point to add any other items to the agenda.

JR prepared a summary which he presented.

Minutes of meetings are produced and circulated, not always by the same person depending on availability.

Meetings are bi-monthly, and minutes are the main way in which directors can remain party to decisions made.

Sub-committees are periodically appointed to focus on specific projects, as a way of managing complex tasks requiring more than bi-monthly input.

PJ reported he had attended a meeting at Strathpeffer regarding trustees' responsibilities by OSCR. Significant decisions, and financial outlays above a certain value should be approved by a meeting of the directors. OSCR have a programme reviewing the procedures in use by charities in Scotland, and examining groups which do not adhere to their (OSCR's) guidelines.

The subcommittee should call a meeting, where key decisions are to be made and discussion is needed to ensure consent.

There was some discussion on subcommittees taking responsibility, previously delegated by the board at the full meeting. Budgets allocated where appropriate can be delegated, for deployment by the appointed subcommittee. Brainstorming ideas at the beginning, and scoping budgets as far as possible, should facilitate smooth running. Where new circumstances arise which necessitate fundamental change on a project, then a full meeting should be called to explore and decide upon options. Such a directors' meeting must be quorate, requiring a minimum of 50% of the board to be present.

Sourcing of quotes for procurement – to comply with normal best practice, we should seek a minimum of three quotations from different suppliers. Every procurement likely exceed £2,000 in value should come into this category.

Events

JB gave a brief summary of events to date, including external groups including experts in areas such as dragonflies and butterflies and moths. Upcoming events include Barry Blake's butterflies and moths, and Peter Cunningham's pond dipping and electro-fishing. Fungi in the autumn, and possibly another bat walk.

Inclusion of other organisations and facilitators

JR - John Hedger offer to produce a fungi information board "Laide Wood Fungi" agreed that John Hedger will go ahead and prepare the content for this along with Jim Henderson taking the photographs, and we will arrange the production of a new panel, similar to the original nature trail panels. JR will investigate the possibility of external funding to support this.

The yurt will be used by the NTS again late Summer, by the Care & Learning Alliance.

JR was approached by Samantha-Jo McArthur, Community Development Officer, Skye and Lochalsh Council for Voluntary Organisations, for inclusion in their brochure which will now cover Wester Ross, which was agreed.

Training

PH reported that a five day chainsaw felling course had been taken by three of the working parties group PH, AH, HB. PH said that the assessment stage was not needed as we are not a commercial organisation. Ken Smith also completed a chainsaw course, mostly funded by the Royal Navy.

Plantings

The planting has been scoped out and should take around four weeks. A site visit by the planter confirmed it. The trees have been ordered and availability confirmed. HB will contact Christie's Elite on his return and try and obtain as early a delivery date as possible to afford good daylight hours.

Funding Applications

Funding will be sought for the link trail planned to connect the existing main trail to the new path from the north car park.

Firewood Sales

Target £4,000 this year. Work commenced on cutting and drying firewood, ready for the winter sale.

Newsletter handover

Chloe Hall is now editing the newsletter, and KG has handed it over to her.

Any other Business

JB reported an enquiry in the Wood regarding the benches, and the plastic ones. The recycled plastic benches were donated some time ago.

NC500 website entry available as we are a charity, via Visit Wester Ross.

JR liaising with AB on larch timber for bridge to the common grazing.

The next meeting will be the pre AGM taking place in the portacabin on Wednesday September 11th followed by the AGM on Wednesday 25th September which this will take place in the meeting room of the Free Church Aultbea.

21:00 KG