



VAT. No. 310378531

## **Minutes of the ACF Board Meeting held in Kilmorack Hall on Monday 7th February 2022 at 1930.**

### **Present**

Peter Smith PS  
John Graham JG  
Madeleine Robinson MR  
Graeme Scott GS  
Chloe Denerley CD  
Russell Ross RR  
Andrew Leaver AL  
Bob Hemingway BH  
Jo Young JY  
Neil Valentine NV  
Phil Masheter PM

### **In Attendance**

Helge Hansen HH

### **Apologies**

Hermione Jackson HJ  
Mark Hedderwick MH

### **Declaration of Conflict of Interest**

None declared

### **Minutes of Previous Board Meeting of 6th December 2021**

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

### **Chairman's Business**

PS suggested that a Business Improvement Review group should be set up to look at various aspects of policies, procedures and governance. PS, AL, MR, GS and JG will serve on this and community consultation will be included. Members of the Board are encouraged to feed in any relevant issues to the group who will report back at each Board Meeting.

## **Vice-Chairman's Business**

Nothing raised.

### **Report from Helge Hansen, Forest Manager**

HH described the recent storm damage with roughly 20 hectares badly affected and approximately 2,000 tons of windblown timber. This is mainly Scots Pine which needs to be harvested rapidly before it develops blue stain. SW have assessed the area and plan to bring in machines in March. A separate contract will be drawn up for this work. HH will obtain approval from Scottish Forestry. PS suggested getting a quote from another contractor but NV advised against this as SW are on site, proceeding rapidly is essential and other contractors are likely to be busy. Felling in the East part of the forest will continue as soon as hand cutters are available again and should be completed in the next month. HH hopes that there will be considerable regeneration in this area which could be assessed prior to replanting within the 5yr timescale.

The next phase of felling will be discussed after the current phase is complete. Davy Reid is working on the fence again and will move to the East area very soon. PS and PM advised that there is some drainage work to be done at the Crask, particularly associated with the proposed deer grid. PM noted that as some of the proposed work is next to the public road the Highland Council may need to be consulted.

HH presented a map of the suggested new paths in the area above the car park. Approximately 150metres of easy access smooth path is planned. It was agreed that pedestrian and mountain bike paths should be kept separate as much as possible. JY suggested that Paths For All might provide technical advice and she will contact them about this. HH will get quotes for the work which is expected to cost £3-5,000.

## **Sub-Group Reports**

### **Paths and Access Group**

Notes from the Zoom meeting of 10th January had been circulated. It was agreed that the area between the A831 and the river, particularly adjacent to the picnic lay-by, will be planted to improve the environment for wildlife and increase biodiversity. NV has sourced species such as blackthorn, buckthorn, hawthorn and crab apple which will be available soon and planted as soon as possible.

RR reported that discussions with Nature Scotland and RSPB about signage are still ongoing. CD volunteered to compose wording for our own signage and JG said that he could get signs made up.

### **Deer Management**

No meeting. Nick Richards has shot a few deer in the past week including a Sika.

### **Wood Fuel**

JG explained the new certification procedure being introduced on 1st April 2022 for inclusion on the BSL (Biomass Suppliers List) which provides proof that wood fuel

meets the eligibility requirements for the Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) scheme. The new system is more expensive and complex. The wood fuel group will look into this.

### **Wildlife and Ecology**

Not met. CD said that lots of crested tits have been observed.

### **Composting Toilet**

Board approval was given for this to go ahead. The estimated cost is in the region of £11,000.

### **Articles of Association Working Group**

Not met.

This will be incorporated into the BIR (Business Improvement Review) group.

### **Equipment Group**

A winch upgrade was proposed. This had been researched by JG and NV had viewed the equipment which is available locally. NV said that it seemed robust and would make both operation and training easier and safer. It costs approximately £6,000. AL was not happy about further expenditure on specialist equipment at this time. A majority of the Board agreed to go ahead with the purchase. The existing winch will be sold.

### **Financial Report**

JG said the current bank balance was about £308,000 with £6,900 mast rental due and £32,000 outstanding from SW. A lot of timber is still to be invoiced.

GS presented a Receipts and Payments Summary for the 10 months to 31st December 2021 and volunteered to provide quarterly figures in the future. He advised that caution was needed about future cash flow as income from felling will decrease. It was agreed that annual cash flow projections were needed.

JG will review the forest fire insurance which may need adjusting to take into account the felling.

### **Secretary's Report**

The next meeting is planned for Monday 7th March at 1900 In Kilmorack Hall if it is available.

### **AOCB**

BH suggested that the pig enclosures should be removed. This was agreed. PS will check if Jim Mann wishes to retrieve the materials.

The Board approved BH's request for £385 for a people counter.

The meeting closed at 21.50