

Minutes

Laide and Aultbea Community Woodland – Directors Meeting

Meeting held in the Aultbea Hall on Thursday 28th January 2016 commencing 2.30pm

Present: John Rippin, Kevin Ginty, Nick Murray, Matthew Thompson (Munro Harvesting), Peter Jarosz

Apologies: Jan Barclay, Tony Carpenter, Alan Turnbull, Aidan Bell

Brief by Munro Harvesting on clear felling operation

Matt Thompson presented an overview of the company, which is based in Dingwall, and a family business. They are partners with a sawmill business. Chip/pulp material is processed locally. They process 2m logs themselves, and can arrange to sell firewood locally.

Access for the felling operation would be via the existing path and small car park next to the Old Smiddy. The woodland area (compartment 4 on the map) contains a significant proportion of Spruce timber, which is the most valuable.

Stuart Booth in Aberdeenshire – contracts for harvester and forwarder, daily supervision of job. Matt will arrange walk around to review access arrangements. Aidan Bell, to review with Matt.

They will take a sensitive approach to felling, with hand felling of trees close to soft verges. The machines have a 25m reach. Hand felling to clear trees away from burns or soft verges. Care will be taken to avoid contamination of burn, with membrane traps to protect areas.

Matt will liaise with SEPA and SNH regarding windblown debris in the burns.

Timescales: The work to be completed not later than nominally summer 2017, through latest autumn 2018 with extension. Late 2016 is a likely target time.

There is a current shortage of spruce, so price is favourable. Also jobs are relatively low just now, which keeps harvesting cost low.

Matt will supply current market price in a week or two's time, and an indication of likely change.

KG to email Matt maps and website link

We reviewed the maps, and the 20 Ha (area 4 on map).

Felling licence – Aidan's responsibility to apply for the felling license and supply details to Matt.

Insurance is covered via Munro.

Directors' discussion on the harvesting program

The directors reviewed the brief and the consensus view was that we should aim to get underway in the autumn of 2016.

Approval of the last minutes

The minutes were approved. Proposed: Peter Jarosz, Seconded: John Rippin

Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

Treasurer's report

Peter reported finances substantially unchanged since the last meeting. Memberships continue to arrive. Membership numbers remain roughly constant. Gift Aid application to prepare and we can claim 'bucket' donations, where up to a fixed value is claimable for on-the-day collections at events.

Firewood and Christmas Tree Sale feedback

Took place on Saturday 28th November, raising approx £1200. Some further receipts subsequently. Christmas trees raised £135.

Training Courses

The chainsaw and ATV courses to be arranged. Considering training provider at Ullapool at special rates through the Crofting Commission. Two persons for ATV course, and three for the chainsaw course.

Priorities for year up to Easter Egg Hunt

We will be leaving holding area fences up to provide a storage area for cut firewood timber, clearing ahead of events. We will then focus on the events programme, and subsequently concentrate on the firewood sale.

Events Programme

Aidan is planning a Laide Woodlander's day, bimonthly on a Saturday, aimed at involving local people in tree planting initially. The 2016 events calendar notices to include 'keep it clean' logos for pest and disease control. KG to contact Jan re jpeg version of the logo.

Any other business

There was a short discussion on the use of skype, and it was agreed to try this out prior to the March meeting.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Feb 10th 2016 7pm for Skype trial, then March 31st via Skype, from 7.30pm.