

**Minutes of Morvern Community Development Company
Board Meeting held in public
Tuesday, 14th May 2019, Lochaline Village Hall, 7.30pm**

MCDC/MCTC Directors: Sarah Jones, Nick Tordoff, Angus Robertson, Alasdair Firth, Jennie Robertson, Jane Stuart - Smith, Mark Lawrence, Lilia Dobrokhodova (Development Officer)

Members of the public: John and Freda Beston, Keith and Henriette Laidlaw, Annie Tordoff, Martin Sampson, Donald Kennedy. Zoe, Kat and Andy for RSPB presentation.

Apologies: Lesley Jones

Agenda:

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of previous meeting
3. Matters arising
4. EU LIFE bid presentation by RSPB
5. Projects update
 - Barr hydro (Angus/Nick/Sarah) – SPV
 - housing
 - community hub
 - Pontoons/shore facility
 - Morvern Eco wheels
 - Caravan park
6. 20 year anniversary
7. AOB
8. Next board meeting held in public – 14th August 2019, Lochaline Primary

2. Minutes – Angus proposed, Nick seconded.

3. Matters arising – all on the agenda.

EU LIFE bid – Jane welcomed RSPB to the meeting. RSPB presented their EU LIFE bid to the meeting. This followed by questions and answer. RSPB welcomed any further questions by email to Andy.Robinson@rspb.org.uk RSPB left the meeting.

4. Projects

Barr Hydro – sub – group continuing to work on delivering the project which is now a fully consented scheme. Lease agreement with FLS is nearing completion, some technicalities are being discussed (trees, roads). The lease is for 40 years with a clause to ensure we can renew after that. Also a possibility of buying the land, however at this point it is easier to lease, but this could be looked at once the scheme is built.

Looking for places for compensatory tree planting, this does not have to be conifers, can be broadleaf. Looking at several options and areas. Work continues on detailed design and various tenders being sought. Everything has to be in place, including money, by October 2019. Aiming to start construction in January 2020. The scheme has to be complete by August 2021 at the latest to qualify for FITs tariff. Decisions have to be made on money and SPV. MCDC cannot be an SPV as it is a charity. Therefore a separate SPV needs to be created and it can either be a bencom or a trading company. The benefit of setting up a trading company is that it can be done quickly, it will ensure the control is retained locally and at a later stage could be converted into a bencom if needed. But bencom cannot be converted into a trading company.

Decision: the meeting agreed unanimously that a trading company be set up, limited by shares and wholly owned by MCDC. The company name is MorVolts (decided by the majority of votes at the meeting). Angus, Nick and Sarah will become first MorVolts directors and Lilia company secretary. In time, it may be necessary to bring more people on the board with relevant skills and expertise. MCDC to transfer £100.00 to MorVolts bank account when this is set up.

A discussion took place on how income from the scheme will be structured following the construction. There was no particular agreement on this from the meeting but in discussions it became clear that the community wanted to see a little bit of money coming in straight away, provided debt payments are fulfilled. MorVolts will aim to shape the debt repayments in such a way that the community will see benefits sooner rather than later. Decision on this is still to be made.

There is no community share offer at the moment, but it is possible that there will be one post construction. This is to do with wanting to retain local control of the scheme. The term “community share” is misleading and it will be open to the whole of the UK.

A discussion took place about setting up something like a “Community Wealth Fund”.

Housing and Community Hub – still £50K short for one – bedroom housed adjacent to the hub. Building warrants in for both projects, once secured will go to tender on both and hopefully the same contractor could build both projects. The public art competition is out. Deadline for submissions on 31st August 2019.

Pontoons – run by MCTC. Mark Lawrence joined the board as the third director. There were some issues with regard to cleanliness of the pontoons in the winter. This was due to harbour masters working very limited hours during the winter months but local boats wanted to use the facility in winter. There was some overlap with this at the start of the season too but procedures now in place to keep everything clean and tidy. MCTC plan to hold a meeting in July 2019 with potential users of the harbour in winter. If the pontoons are not used well and at least cover costs, then MCTC won't be able to afford to staff and run the facility in winter.

An opportunity for a community boatyard has been discussed now that the net station lease with the Estate is coming up to the end. The Estate are open for a dialogue on this.

Morvern Eco – Wheels – the project is now completed. Now all the work and running of the car club is done with proceeds from car hires. Morvern Eco morning is scheduled for Saturday with a herbal walk and efficient driving training. A discussion took place about the car range, driving in a rural hilly area etc.

6. 20 years of MCDC – plans are being developed for a celebration in September.

7. AOB – a comment has been made by a member of the public about the huge range of projects MCDC is working on.