



Agenda Item 5

26th March 2010

WNC 12.10

Woodlands for Wales Policy Positions: Welsh woodlands - their extent, nature & character

Purpose

1. To present to the National Committee for comment and approval the final DRAFT of the Welsh woodlands Policy Position in support of *Woodlands for Wales*.

Background

2. The purpose and process for developing Policy Positions in support of *Woodlands for Wales* has previously been discussed and agreed. Some of the key points are shown at Appendix 1. When considering earlier Policy Positions, the Committee has provided advice to strengthen the clarity concerning the purpose and role for the suite of Policy Positions. This has been taken forward in this latest example. In addition, members should have received an example of a previously agreed Policy Position, in publication format, illustrating the links and support to *Woodlands for Wales*.
3. The following Policy Positions are all under development or agreed. The outstanding positions have been scheduled for key governance steps via the FCWMB/NC Forward Look framework during 2010:
 - Welsh woodlands - their extent, nature and character; **[tabled]**
 - Water and Soils; **[agreed July 2009]**
 - Biodiversity;
 - Landscape, culture and heritage; **[agreed November 2009]**
 - Economic development & enterprise;
 - Education, Learning and skills; **[agreed November 2009]**
 - Community involvement; **[agreed September 2009]**
 - Health & well-being **[agreed July 2009]**

Recent progress and Next Steps

4. This latest Policy Position is the most fundamental of the suite as it covers the whole of the Welsh woodland resource. It attempts to describe and characterise the resource and its public benefit delivery NOW and then goes onto set out how the resource needs to change (including increasing in extent) to achieve the vision at the heart of *Woodlands for Wales*. Therefore it should contain no surprises, as all of the positions developed have already been set out in the strategy itself. But as previously

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described, the Policy Position provides more detail on why these positions have been adopted and how they might be delivered over the timeframe of the strategy. This is helpful for those charged with developing corporate programmes.

- To date, there has been no formalised external liaison on this Policy Position, except via the strategy consultation process itself, which set the key positions. However, the document has been discussed bilaterally with a number of external contacts and it is planned to formalise this after the National Committee meeting. In addition, FCWMB members were invited to make comments on this FINAL DRAFT and have recommended approval to the Committee.

Financial Implications

- Affordability will manifest itself in two ways. Firstly between programmes ('How Much') and secondly through business planning ('When'). Agreeing this resource allocation is the role of the Corporate/Business Plans. However because of our attempts to improve alignment from policy through to delivery, all those involved in setting policy or undertaking the corporate 'translation' need to take into account resource issues.

Risk Analysis

7.

Risk Component	Risk Type: Economic Reputational Env. & Social	Impact / Likelihood Score	Risk Score	Controls
That we do not achieve better strategic alignment	Reputational	5 / 3	15	Development of effective processes
That the 'outputs' are not useful	Reputational	3 / 4	12	Development of effective processes
That the 'outputs' are not used	Reputational	4 / 4	16	Effective governance & people management
Risk Score 0 – 5 Insignificant / 6 – 10 Low / 11 – 20 Medium / 21 – 25 High				

Communications

- Policy Positions will be published on the WAG and FC websites and will be used by the Policy team in taking forward with partners many of the tasks identified in the 'Agenda for Action' sections, as well as for continual development of the *Woodlands for Wales* Action Plan.

Recommendation

9. The NC is asked to comment on and agree the content of this FINAL DRAFT Policy Position.

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March 2010

Key aspects of Policy Positions in support of *Woodlands for Wales*:

- These Positions are a policy tool for setting down the detailed evidence and also to enable some strategic spatial analysis (if applicable) to be done. They are effectively appendices to the strategy itself and help to link to the Action Planning necessary for delivering the strategy.
- They deal with the 'why' and introduce the 'what and how' via the 'Agenda for Action' section. They are a vital component for developing the rationale for FC corporate responses (programmes) to the revised *Woodlands for Wales*. Through the development of the Action Plan for the strategy, we will seek to influence their use in a similar way by other delivery partners. As such, the main audience for Policy Positions is the FC Wales Policy team, as well as a wider policy/strategy/audit stakeholder audience.
- Some WSAP members have input to the specific work on the Policy Positions, whilst the wider process of revising the strategy has informed their development as well.
- As these Policy Positions are in support of the revised *Woodlands for Wales* strategy, they should be presented as such.
- A number of the Policy Positions, along with the FC Wales Corporate Programmes developed from the 'Agendas for Action', will be of wider interest externally to stakeholders and will merit the production of a publication. However, these publications are separate to both the Policy Positions and the Corporate Programmes.

