

4 February 2015

CORPORATE PLAN 2015-16

Purpose

1. To update the Committee on progress with the FCE Corporate Plan for 2015-16 and to seek approval of the approach taken and key themes in the plan.

Recommendations

2. That the Committee notes the progress, approves the approach (separating the actions of Forest Services and Forest Enterprise) and content of the advanced draft Plan provided at Annex 1.

Background

3. We are at a more advanced stage in preparing the Corporate Plan at this time than in previous years, which means that the National Committee is being presented with a well-developed draft of the Forestry Commission England Corporate Plan for 2015-16 rather than a structure and outline.
4. The Plan has been restructured to contain two separate sections, one for Forest Services and the other for Forest Enterprise, recognising our move to create a more distinct management body for the Public Forest Estate.

Key features of the plan

5. The main focus of the plan will be forward-looking to 2015-16 but there will be brief recognition of key achievements from 2014-15 where we will be building around these.
 - 5.1. For Forest Services, we retain the same priorities as previous years in line with the Government Forestry and Woodland Policy Statement: protect, improve, expand. These are linked to our Key Performance Indicators wherever possible.
 - 5.2. For Forest Enterprise the priorities outlined are people, economy, and nature which align with the Strategic Plan for the Public Forest Estate.
6. Case studies have been sourced and are included in the draft.
7. Research and Evidence section will have require further addition of research priority questions. This information will be available from mid-February.
8. The finance and Indicator sections will require updating before publication.

Next Steps

9. Subject to the views of the National Committee on this draft a near final version of the plan will be shared with Defra officials before being cleared by the England Executive Board for submission to Ministers.
10. The overall timescale for publishing will depend on Defra's approach to the publication of Corporate Plans by delivery bodies, but it is not expected that the plan will be published before the General Election in May.
11. The Cross Border and Forest Research plans are being developed to a similar timescale.

Risk Assessment

12. The Corporate Plan is considered to be a low risk document. Whilst it is a public facing document which sets out the priorities and resource allocation for the organisation it shows continuity with previous years and is aligned with wider government objectives and the political support for ongoing programmes. The separation of the actions of Forest Services from Forest Enterprise is an approach that is aligned with other actions that are being taken and is not expected to raise any particular concerns amongst stakeholders.

Equality Impact Assessment

13. The Plan itself has not been subject to an Equality Impact Assessment. However, an equality Impact Assessment, if required, will be undertaken at an appropriate stage when any new actions proposed in the plan are implemented.

Communications

14. A communications plan will be agreed prior to the launch of the Corporate Plan.

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January 2015