

STRATEGY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

FOREST ENTERPRISE ENGLAND

Wednesday 13th July, 09:30 – 11:30
James Pendlebury's Office, Alice Holt Lodge, Farnham, Surrey, GU10 4LH

ATTENDEES

Chair- Simon Hodgson (Chief Executive, FEE)
Mark Pountain (Non-executive board member)
Sir Harry Studholme (Non-executive board member/ Forestry Commission Chair)
Rachael Edwards (Head of Strategy & Insight, FEE)
Paddy Harrop (Head of Marketing, FEE)
David Hodson (Head of Finance & Business Support, FEE)
PK Khaira-Creswell (Head of Corporate Affairs & Governance, FEE)
Jo Ridgway (Head of HR, FEE)
Michael Seddon (Director of Operations, FEE)
Mark Street (Head of Estates, FEE)

Secretariat: Josie Sterling

AGENDA TOPICS

1. Welcome and Introduction | Item Lead: *Simon Hodgson*

Discussion:

- Rachael E and Jo R were delayed arriving to the meeting so discussions on rolling action 9 for CNCA were postponed to later on the agenda. Updates were made to rolling action 11.
- The new agenda and paper format and content were explained to the board with reasons given including to better define the purpose or outcome required by papers. The new format has also been developed following the one year review of the Board in April which asked for more time to be provided for 'challenges' and less time to be spent on standard update business. The changes introduced are intended to be dynamic- further changes and suggestions will be welcomed.

Action items	Person responsible	Deadline
None		

2. Consent Agenda / Item Lead: *Simon Hodgson*

- Minutes of the April meeting were agreed.
- The CNCA update paper was agreed and the Board were provided with final published copies of the CNCA document, with assurance that further details on the full rollout plan will be given as soon as available.
- The Board reminded the teams working on the document to carefully consider the communications plan and consider thoroughly who needs to be engaged with. The Board also agreed the CNCA work needs to be seen as ongoing progression with real value to the FE and not just as a one-off or only for the value of external parties.

Action items	Person responsible	Deadline
None		

3. Chair Report

| Item Lead: *Simon Hodgson*

Discussion:

The Chair raised a few of the main ongoing issues within FE's work to include:

- a. Transition of corporate services from GB level remains very prominent. Work is generally on schedule but being reassessed currently due to continuing complications with Scottish decisions.
- b. Transfer of Finance and HR areas is still on track for the 2016/17 programme but there is a lot of work still to do. The new finance system is expected 1 April 2017 but this date may be reviewed.
- c. A Brexit analysis has been done by the Executive Team (ET) with minimal significant issues uncovered, however, outcomes that could potentially become a problem and have been recognised and recorded in a risk register. Further work will be produced on this as necessary.
- d. Staff movements are time consuming at present due to a relatively high level of retirements and movement at senior level- a minor risk of loss in expertise and knowledge has been recognised.
- e. Work is ongoing within stakeholder relationships i.e. productive building with Sport England and continuing business developments with Forest Holidays and Camping in the Forest.
- f. The Eustafor conference was successfully hosted by FE in the Lake District in June and went very smoothly- helping FE to further foster good relations, expertise and knowledge exchange with other European state forestry organisations.

Action items

Person responsible **Deadline**

None

4. Financial Performance Report

| Item Leads: *David Hodson*

Discussion:

The Board were provided with the financial position to the end of May 2016 (month 2). Main points highlighted included:

- a. The year is going well to date with some of the technical issues covered in the paper. Financial position and cash position are both looking good and ahead of calculated profile.
- b. The capital programme was slightly behind at end of May. Improved capital controls are being put in place now to mitigate this- with scheme managers to provide and lock-in the scheme profiles early on in future, so they can be judged and planned for accordingly.
- c. Forecast is difficult to judge at month 2 but FE are confidently expecting an improvement following quarter one figures which will be released by the end of July
- d. VAT position- reports have now been received from Scott Moncrieff and PWC agreeing the position that FC will be taken within negotiations with HMRC in autumn to finally agree the VAT position. Exact costs to FE are currently still hard to predict.

Conclusion:

It was discuss how much of the sustainable forest management figures are roading. The Board were assured that activity schedules sit behind the figures showing further detail and insight and demonstrating the ongoing programmes behind the figures.

Action items

Person responsible **Deadline**

David to distribute the historic and forecast expenditure figures for roading.

David Hodson

Nov-2016

5. Performance Management Dashboard

| Item Lead: *Rachael Edwards*

Discussion:

The ET were provided with a copy of the Dashboard completed to the end of June 2016. The main points of discussion included:

- a. A few indicators changed from 2015/16 and a new Dashboard for 2016/17 has now been finalised.
- b. Indicator no. 12 will now monitor total energy consumption (instead of CO₂) for the estate and travel, with a target of a 2% reduction year-on-year from baseline of 2015/16.
- c. Other additional, new indicators are number 15, 'deer culled' and two organisational indicators (22 and 23) which will be populated from September once HR data integrity has improved.
- d. Indicator 8 for accident rate higher is flagged as red currently as the level is higher than this time last year.
- e. Indicator 19 for discovery pass sales is also flagged red as it is below target. This is believed to be a result of where renewal dates fall and is expected to come back on track at end of next quarter.

Conclusion:

The Board confirmed the difference between the Dashboard as in-year monitoring, in comparison to the annual, published corporate indicators which FE still uses to determine longer-term trends.

Action items	Person responsible	Deadline
None		

6. Health & Safety Report

| Item Lead: *Mike Seddon*

Discussion:

The Board were presented with the Health & Safety (H&S) figures for a 3 year period from 2013-16, showing accidents and incidents for both public and FE staff. The discussions highlighted:

- a. Staff accident rate- these figures will oscillate depending what happens in year but are broadly at where expected currently. Importantly there have been no chainsaw accidents during the last year.
- b. Main accident causes are slips, trips & falls and injuries whilst handling or lifting- FE is working to address this with annual refresher training for manual handling and other ongoing work.
- c. The most considerable issue at present is increase in absence from work and particularly absence due to mental health issues. It is unclear at present whether this is as more people are comfortable reporting these issues or whether there are actually increases in mental health issues, but FE is putting in place actions to reduce the trend with new initiatives such as Mental Health First Aiders.
- d. Public accident levels have increased but this is believed to be due to improved reporting since the GB H&S initiative- staff are continually commended for recording all accidents.
- e. The transfer of H&S functions into England is now underway, with consultations ongoing. The aim remains to have this function established by the end of this financial year but some challenges and potential variations in service are still expected during the process of change.

Conclusion:

- The Board agreed FE must ensure current expertise is retained with changes to the H&S function and that the risks in losing and replacing this experience must be carefully considered.
- Investigations, led by Mike S, will continue into the level and causes of public 'slips and falls from height'- a key issue to be addressed as the core recreation market is families.

- The Board were reassured a paper on wellbeing has been produced for the England Staff Council and initiatives and preventative policies are now being put in place for mental health issues.
- The Board agreed how FE work with contractors in H&S is also vital. The Board discussed it needs to be clear contractors and their workers' safety is just as important as FE staff's. Contractors on FE land also need to take responsibility for H&S on sites and this should be formalised in contracts

Action items	Person responsible	Deadline
1. Share the Staff Council Wellbeing paper with the Board.	Jo Ridgway	Aug-16

7. FE Strategy Proposals

| Item Lead Rachael Edwards

Discussion:

The Board were provided with an update on the work for a new Strategy Framework, as developed to date (with a full update to be brought in September). Key points highlighted to the Board included:

- The Framework will be for the organisation itself; it is not intended to replace any existing documents and is due for completion in December, with work to embed it afterwards.
- One of the key aims is giving greater certainty and a vision for all staff to work towards.
- The Board were directed towards the four recommendations and asked for their feedback and approval on each.

Conclusion:

- First recommendation- timeline. The Board agreed the timetable for change and confirmed work will adapt to the legislative context if and when it occurs.
- Second recommendation- vision statement. The Board agreed the vision is good- short, sharp and captures the spirit of relation to wider work. The Board asked for the ET to reconsider use of the word 'fun' to consider if it is professional and broad enough. It was also suggested the word 'creative' could be better than 'innovative' and to remove 'widely-recognised' as this is not needed.
- Third recommendation- themes. The Board agreed the themes are fundamentally very good. The word 'customers' was discussed and confirmed to be appropriate in encouraging cultural change within FE and heightened understanding of all 'customers'. It was also agreed that 'offer' may be a better term than activity and that 'growing *your* natural capital' could be more appropriate.
- Fourth recommendation – engagement. The Board agreed that an 'inform and engage approach' was preferred and that a formal consultation would not be appropriate for this framework.

Action items	Person responsible	Deadline
Make changes to the Strategy as per the above discussion and consider any subsequent comments received from the Board, prior to further testing. The Strategy Board away day in September would focus on the next iteration and developments of the Strategic Framework.	Rachael Edwards	Sept 2016

8. FE Leadership Model

| Item Lead Simon Hodgson

Discussion:

The Board were shown the final Leadership Model document for FE as developed by the Cambridge Strategy Centre. The main points highlighted to the Board included:

- a. The model is designed to be applicable for all levels of staff and across a wide range of services, with its generation having had input from all levels- including phone consultations with a range of staff and a number of workshops with the senior team.
- b. The model is joined up between purpose, vision and values, with the framework used entirely trackable back to the wider civil service frameworks.
- c. One key outcome was that more strategic management activity should be done by the Executive Team rather than focus on day-to-day organisation and management duties.
- d. Roll-out will include workshops, videos alongside help from other organisations to deliver and explain the model to all staff.

Action items	Person responsible	Deadline
None		

9. Capital Programmes | Item Lead *Mike Seddon & Tristram Hilborn*

Discussion:

The financial elements of the Capital Programme were covered under the financial report (item 4). Other areas for information highlighted to the Board included:

- a. Delamere is coming up for tender at end of month so more certainty on progress there should be available then.
- b. Unfortunately, no external funding has been received for the Wendover project as the Local Economic Partnership wanted to focus on infrastructure and direct economic impact in the area.
- c. From an estates perspective an update on the A11 mitigations will be available by the end of the year. Regarding acquisitions, the Crown Estate are now moving forwards on the sale of forestry assets in the South-West and leasehold land in Thetford is available for purchase- providing opportunity to gain some more assets in future, which could be beneficial to the Estate.

Action items	Person responsible	Deadline
None		

10. Visitor Engagement Programmes | Item Lead *Paddy Harrop*

Discussion:

The Board were asked to approve the planned visitor engagement programmes (a combination of Operations and Marketing team work) for 2016/17 into 2017/18. Main areas of discussion included:

- a. The programmes include focus on young people, learning, understanding of the estate and the physical benefits of the estate.
- b. The work will cover a wide range of individual programmes in a number of areas- all intended to generate more support and more engagement. Various targets have been set for each.

Conclusions:

The Board approved the programme but also asked for some consideration to be given to whether there may be merit in having 'brand ambassadors' for certain elements.

Action items	Person responsible	Deadline
Any further questions or comments on the programmes to be sent to Paddy H and/or Mike S	All	Aug-16

11. Business Areas Update Report

| Item Lead *All*

Discussion:

The Board were provided with an opportunity to ask any questions on the content of the report. No queries were raised during the meeting.

Action items	Person responsible	Deadline
None		

12. Risk Register

| Item Lead *David Hodson*

Discussion:

The Board reviewed the risk register and agreed there were no major changes to date to highlight and that no new additions were required.

Action items	Person responsible	Deadline
None		

13. AOB

| Item Lead *All*

Discussion:

No future agenda items were raised.

Next meeting- Strategy Board Away Day, 13th September 2016, Forest of Dean (details TBC)