

7 April 2016

CORPORATE PLAN 2016-17**Purpose**

1. To update the Committee on progress with the FCE Corporate Plan for 2016-17 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 and content of the advanced draft Plan provided at Annex 1.

Background

3. The Plan is at an advanced draft stage, with just a few additional sections to be finalised and incorporated.
4. The 2016/17 Plan has been restructured, with emphasis shifting away from the approach where Forest Enterprise has been represented as an entity in its own right. This is a reflection of the current operating environment and presents the work of Forest Enterprise as a delivery agent funded as part of Forestry Commission England's activity.
5. The Committee may be aware of the shift to a high level single departmental plan and a change in the way in which Defra Arm's Length Bodies are presenting their activities. There is currently a more integrated approach within the Defra family and the developing 25 year plan for the Environment will impact on how future activities are presented. In line with this change for the Defra family of ALBs, we are not expecting any future Corporate Plans to follow the current template.

Key features of the plan

6. The main focus of the plan will be forward-looking to 2016-17 but there is some recognition of key achievements from 2015-16, where we will be building around these.
 - 6.1. For Forest Services, we retain the same priorities as previous years in line with the Forestry and Woodland Policy Statement: protect, improve, and expand. These are linked to our Key Performance Indicators wherever possible.
 - 6.2. For Forest Enterprise ('Forestry Commission England's Funding of England's Public Forest Estate') priorities outlined are people, nature, and economy, in alignment with the Strategic Plan for the Public Forest Estate. There are also sections on Forest Enterprise England Goals and Governance, and Forestry Commission England's Guardianship and Funding of PFE Public Benefits

which gives an overview of Corporate Natural Capital Accounting and Payments for Ecosystem Services.

7. Case studies have been sourced. Some are included in this draft, with some still to be finalised.
8. The Finance and Indicator sections will require updating before publication as final budgets have not yet been confirmed.
9. There is no separate Cross Border Corporate Plan for 2016/17. A Cross Border section is currently being drafted for incorporation into this Plan.

Next Steps

10. The draft Plan has been submitted to Defra, and both the Committee's and Defra's comments will be taken into account before submission of a final version to Ministers.
11. The Forest Research plan is 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.

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.

PK Khaira-Creswell
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