

WOODFUEL SUPPLIERS MEETING
MONDAY SEPTEMBER 15TH
WARWICK UNIVERSITY
NOTES (in Draft)

Present:

Angela Duignan – Forestry Commission (Chair)
Ewan Bent – Midlands Woodfuel
Martin Bishop – Charltons
Robert Bland – Midlands Woodfuel
Neil Bond – RES
James Bush – Denton Park
John Bushby – Wood4Heat
Rebecca Carr – FC Scotland
Alan Corson – Forestry Commission (FC)
Jason Gallagher – Silvapower
Caroline Harrison – ConFor
Geoff Hogan – BEC FC
Mark Lebus – LC Energy
Bill Massey – HETAS
Chris Miles - Econergy
Julain Morgan-Jones – SE Woodfuels
Mark Prior – Forestry Commission SW
Gesa Reiss - EFIP
Gideon Richards – REA
Will Richardson – Yorwoods
Tony Saunters
Jonathan Scurlock – NFU
Mike Seville – CLA/ Anglia Woodfuel
Andrew Tolfts – Bioregional Dev Group
Richard Wagstaff Silvapower
Simon Wallis - FC
Sam Whatmore – Forest Fuels Ltd
Alison Chaplin – Forestry Commission (notes)

Apologies

Sarah Brown Brentwater Parks, David Club Northwoods, Richard Collins Green Energy Supplies, Oliver Combe BSW Sawmills, Steve Drysdale Mendip Forestry, Ken Humphries Woodgate Martin Glynn RDI, Sawmills, Mike Ingolby Bowland Bioenergy, Oliver Latter Boomeco, Richard Palmer AWJenkinson, Paul and Shirley Plummer Norfolk Wood, Guy Warren UPM Tillhill, Doug Wentworth Taylor Made Timber, Ashley Williams Euroforest.

Introductions

Angela Duignan FC opened the meeting by welcoming those present and highlighted the potential for growth of the woodfuel industry. The woodfuel Strategy highlighted a target for England of utilising an extra 2m green tonnes per annum by 2020. Since 2007 the Renewable Energy Strategy consultation document proposed a renewable heat target for 2020 of 14% - currently this figure is around 0.6% with similar targets for electricity and transport fuels.

Individuals introduced themselves and described their company background to the meeting.

Rebecca Carr FC gave a presentation on work on creating a GB woodfuel suppliers group following a perceived demand from practitioners. One such group already exists in Wales and initial talks are underway in Scotland and with interested trade associations such as, Confor, REA, and FCA, on a possible forum.

Some funding is available to investigate the need, issues and priorities of a wood fuel suppliers group and how this could operate on day to day basis along with possible structures taking into account existing industry groups.

Woodfuel Suppliers Group; Scope & Structure

Points Raised included:

- The group needs to be seen as credible and professional
- Professional standards (can be voluntary in early stages). However caution needed not to swamp the industry with too many as it could be counter productive
- the creation of a new profession
- a strong lobbying role
- to be beware of de-stabilising influences from other sectors
- Improve marketing and image of industry/branding
- to be a “one stop shop” for information and contacts
- education to user interface particularly M&E consultants
- to address fragmentation
- security of long term supply of resources
- Consumer confidence in contracts
- sustainable prices for small producers
- group cover “biomass” or “woodfuel” only
- target developers and forward planners
- Join forces with boiler suppliers – combination of market forces
- Business plan/group funding
- To deal with industry uncertainties
- Ability to counter competition
- The need to represent the chip supplier who isn’t a land owner
- Group will need to have longevity as previous groups such as bioenergy and pellet groups were too small to sustain themselves or lobby effectively
- Possible existence under the umbrella of REA as a sub group
- Members must supply fuel to energy end user
- Could represent chip, pellet, log, recycled and energy crops
- Recycled Wood Association already exists
- Not a producer group forum or boiler group but strong interaction required
- GB role or England only role

Biomass Energy Centre

Geoff Hogan outlined the role of BEC to be the one-stop shop for impartial and independent advice on bioenergy and portal to disseminate relevant studies and reports.

Points raised during discussion included

- Need to gather good data on economics and resource through market study – last woodfuel resource study was 2004
- REA renewable heat map of UK including boiler locations due in October
- Current FC list on the web site of woodfuel suppliers is not helpful as includes every one who requests with out indication of experience
- In future the credibility of those appearing on wood fuel supplier lists could be illustrated either through disclosure criteria such as number of contracts / volume/ years of experience etc or an assurance scheme providing professional accreditation.
- Perhaps make available an online form for suppliers to complete for details to be included on web site
- Need to ensure industry representation on the BEC Steering Group
- www.biomassenergycentre.org.uk
- Further integration of resources particularly waste wood required
- List of research conducted by technical development was distributed FYI
- All those working in woodfuel are encouraged to feed in to FC what research and information is most helpful for their business needs.

Improving Fuel Delivery Systems

Chris Miles from Econergy gave a power point presentation and points raised in the following discussion included

- Accuracy of information on fuel supply from boiler installer was very important such as cost and delivery mechanisms
- The fuel supplier needed to be involved from the outset to enable accurate forward planning of resource and design of adequate fuel reception and access
- A way to include fuel delivery requirements up the building contract chain was needed such as an assurance scheme
- Design guidance was required – reference was made to several guides already in existence
 - Working title is “Biomass Heating – A Practical Guide for Site Owners” from the C Trust due out this year and includes model contracts.
 - Wood Pellet Fuel Utilisation Design Guide by the Energy Crops Company Sept 2007
 - Procurement Guidelines for Biomass Heating by Buro Happold January 2007
 - Future Energy Yorkshire model fuel supply contracts
- Full lifetime costings of wood heating systems is required to compare proposed capital cost savings at design stage with operating costs to illustrate short –term nature of ‘savings’
- Discussion also followed on the Government’s renewable energy strategy consultation document. Chris encouraged people to favourably respond to the suggested development of a renewable heat support mechanism. This could provide financial reward to those using wood fuel and reduce disparity in prices

achieved by power stations that receive renewable obligation certificates (ROCs) for burning wood.

Fuel Standards, Air Emissions and Approval Systems

- Gideon Richards from REA gave out handouts providing an overview of the CEN standards and air quality
- Product standards for chip, log, pellets and briquettes were being developed and were expected to be complete by 2010
- CEN standards are free to download from the BEC website
- Meantime existing standards such as G30 are still used for warranties by boiler companies
- Sustainability standards from the EU are also being developed
- Real need to ensure quality and sustainability standards are achievable and pragmatic. This requires industry input and lobbying
- Bill Massey from HETAS ran through proposed Solid Biofuels Assurance Scheme. This aims to
 - Ensure products meet required standards
 - Relevant processes and systems in place to meet these standards
 - Periodic audits
 - Certification
- Air quality is an increasing issue for planning and environmental health in local authorities. Two modelling studies, one in Scotland and one in London are underway to look at potential impact of air quality from various biomass uptake scenarios. Defra is co-ordinating a working group on this.
- Measurement and Modelling of Fine Particulate Emissions (PM10 and PM2.5) from Wood-Burning Biomass Boilers
- www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2008/11/05160512/0

Government Procurement Guidelines from April 2009

- From April 2009 any timber purchased for central government estate, including wood fuel, has to have evidence that it was sourced from sustainable sources. It is hoped that local authorities and others will follow this example of best practice (explain category A and B).
- Definitions of the categories are included with the meeting notes but include certification and chain of custody for category A evidence
- FC is working with defra to find an interim solution to category B evidence that precludes the need for full chain of custody or only utilising wood from certified forests.

Securing Fuels Supply – Woodland Owners and Grants

Alan Corson reported on how the FC markets and sells 1.5million m3 of timber through a mixture of long-term contracts and tenders for standing sales and direct production. Information on historic and future tenders is available on the Forestry Commission website. Alan also outlined the FC's timber volume forecasting procedures. The next production forecast would be available in 2011.

Suppliers felt that they needed the following from the FC

- “fuel security”
- How best to use local woodlands
- an idea of when “peak fuel” was reached.

- Identification of each of the FC's woodfuel representatives at each regional office

Caroline Harrison from Confor highlighted issues around volumes and cost of extraction and support from RDPE and Defra infrastructure and capital Grants

- These grants helped but were not efficient and it was not easy to plan around them
- They were not user friendly
- They lacked an overall strategy
- RDPE mid-term review coming shortly.

Will Richardson from Yorwoods handed out a flyer for Ignition 09 wood fuel exhibition (www.ignition09.co.uk)

Conclusions

1. General agreement of a need for **representation** of the interest of woodfuel suppliers and address barriers to growth.
2. Key issue was need to increase **professionalism** and credibility of sector
3. Improve **marketing** capability of woodfuel suppliers.
4. Co-ordinate **input into ongoing work** on standards, air quality, procurement and
5. Address **contract confidence** and security of supply
6. **Educate** consultants working on building industry interface and specification.
7. **Lobbying function** for industry financial support and removal of barriers
8. The group to include those who **deliver wood fuel** (from any source virgin fibre, arb arisings, offcuts, recycled, srf) **to end energy users** (heat or electricity).
9. Name of group, forum, network or association to be clarified
10. Potential to explore sitting as an industry subgroup within one of the other trade associations.

Attachments

1. Rebecca Carr presentation
2. List of woodfuel officers for each region and forest district
3. Econergy presentation
4. CPET procurement guidance notes August 2008
5. List of research conducted by FC technical development
6. HETAS proposed Solid Biofuels Assurance Scheme.