

Research Management Board Meeting – 9 January 2003 at Alice Holt

Present: Dr P Freer-Smith
Mr W Mason
Mr T Cornwell
Mr K Charles

[cc: Head of Internal Audit]

Minutes of Last Meeting

1. Accepted

Matters Arising

2. H. of NRS will deal with the re-evaluation of NRS building when the annual revision takes place (shortly). **Discharged**
3. Fountain Forestry building, options for the building were discussed – lease commercially or move in a FR branch – to be discussed at a meeting to be chaired by CEO in February. **Action: PF-S**
4. The secondment of a social forestry project leader to Cardiff University was discussed with PPD by the CEO. **Discharged**
5. Transfer of Woodland Surveys to NRS, Central Personnel are arranging personal statements of excess fares entitlements. Following that the unions will be consulted and the move finalised. **Action: KC**
6. The purchase of GIS specific servers approved. In Jane Smyth's absence the purchase will proceed in consultation with Steve Smith, Sam Evans and Wayne Blackburn. CEO will discuss with Hugh Evans. **Action: PF-S**
7. P&AO to ask Steve Smith for the amount of funds needed for the training aspects of GIS. **Action: KC**
8. P&AO to circulate the Risk Management paper to HoBs, publish it on the FR Intranet with a link to FC Risk Management Strategy (Boyd Glen to advise how this links in). **Action: KC**
9. Risk Management paper to be circulated to RMB members for discussion and updating at next RMB. To be put on February RMB agenda. **Action: KC**

Reports

10. The CEO reported that the preliminary results of the Staff Survey are available. They will be analysed to FR level and circulated to staff. **Noted**
11. The minutes of CEO's meeting with PPD will be circulated to HoBs. **Action: PF-S**
12. CEO discussed the charging by FR Branches for advice to the greater FC with PPD. Once our allocation of funds for advice is exhausted then further costs will need to be recovered. HoF is looking at a procedure for monitoring this. **Action: TC**
13. CEO and H. of NRS to remind HoBs of the need to keep HoF informed about emerging contracts. **Action: P-FS, TC**
14. H. of NRS reported that National Office representatives had been invited to a recent review of the Timber Quality Programme which was very successful and involvement of the National Offices should be borne in mind when reviews of this nature are held in the future. CEO, H. of NRS to inform HoBs. **Action: PF-S, TC**
15. Bill MacLachlan will be invited to attend HoB meetings at NRS and Alice Holt to 'kick-off' the IiP review of FR. **Action: KC**

Finance

16. Corrective action identified during the review procedure has been found to be satisfactory and we are now looking at an operating surplus of around £60K providing Branches maintain their forecasts at the current level. We are likely to enter the new FY with a projected shortfall of £117K. **Noted**
17. HoF will review forecasts as at end of December. If a surplus is identified then there may be additional money to be allocated for training. **Action: TC, KC**
18. HoF reported that in 2003/04 we have a 'windfall' of £300K because of the reduction in return on capital invested from 6% to 3.5%. We do not yet know whether we will receive an inflation increase (£272K) from PPD. **Noted**
19. HoF will issue our Business Plan to HoBs with caveats. **Action: TC**

Staffing

20. Agreed that a replacement for Fiona Kennedy be externally recruited at PB3/4 on a permanent basis. **Action: KC**
21. No other posts approved until we know our funding situation for 2003/04 especially the inflationary increase. **Noted**

Standard Format for Staffing Bids

22. Format approved subject to an additional box asking HoBs to state whether there are any other staff within FR able to do the job being bid for. HoF to write to HoBs. **Action: TC**

Five Year Capital Investment Programme

23. HoF to circulate his paper to HoBs for comment. **Action: TC**

Corporate Plan

24. RMB discussed 'Key Targets' for 2003/04. RMB members to respond to CEO on draft Plan by 10 January. **Action: BM, KC, TC**

Standards Meetings

25. P&AO to write to HoBs reminding them that at this time of year they should be meeting with their Reporting Officers and tentatively setting end of year performance marks. H. of NRS and CEO will then meet on a one-to-one basis with the Confirming Officers reporting to them. **Action: KC, BM, PF-S**

Any Other Business

26. Approval given for funding to be made available to widen the Alice Holt Broadband (approximately £3K). **Action: TC**

Dates of next RMB Meetings

17 February at NRS
19 March at NRS
14 May at Alice Holt
24 June at Alice Holt