

**Research Management Board Meeting - 9 October 2002 - Alice Holt
(video link to NRS)**

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 with one amendment. Para 28 '½' should read '01/02'.

Matters Arising

2. H of NRS to write to Area Land Agent querying the basis of the valuation received and inform him that we are considering seeking an independent valuation of NRS buildings.
Action: BM
3. The reviewing exercise of regrading Research Workers will be concluded soon.
Action: Discharged
4. CEO to spend a day at NRS with Woodland Ecology's GIS officer as part of 'Back to Shop Floor Day' on 25th October.
Action: Discharged
5. HoF has given timetable for Business Planning meetings to CEO.
Action: Discharged
6. CEO to ask DG to extend his Alice Holt address scheduled for 13.30 hrs on 23rd October to NRS and to take the opportunity to discuss AAIS, while the DG is at Alice Holt.
Action: PF-S
7. CEO and P&AO will attend AAIS/TAT buffet lunch on 22nd October.
Action: PF-S, KC
8. CEO to discuss with Hugh Evans our concerns that a medium term project (nematode production) is being staffed by casuals.
Action: KC
9. P&AO to circulate Health & Safety accident statistics to HoBs.
Action: KC
10. H of NRS is considering a candidate for the H&S Committee Chair at NRS. **Noted**
11. CEO has arranged a senior liaison meeting with PPD for 26th November. Prior to the meeting he will:-
 - meet with Jenny Claridge and Alison Melvin to follow up proposals made to HoBs to modernise the presentation of the Annual Report. He will also discuss with PPD:-
 - publications
 - strengthening Forest Research's presence in Wales;

- the implementation of Stage 2 of the Quinquennial Review;
- mechanisms for agreeing funding;
- concerns about changes to existing programmes.

Noted that HoF may be required to attend meeting.

Action: PF-S

Reports

12. Guidance on corporate hospitality is being prepared by Silvan House.
13. Open competition is being prepared and Forest Research's CEO post will be advertised in November. CEO to write to Duncan Macniven regarding the advertisement, informing Duncan that at the DG's meeting with Heads of Branches in May the question of consultation within Forest Research about the CEO's job specification was raised and it has been raised again. **Action: PF-S**
14. Woodland Survey's move to NRS has been approved by the FC Policy Board.
15. Internal trawls will be held for new executive FC Commissioners.
16. CEO will raise with Duncan Macniven the question of the release of the Quinquennial Review to Forest Research staff. **Action: PF-S**
17. Staff activity regarding APF/IPF Forestry Fair was noted and appreciated by the RMB. **NOTED**
18. Location and future participation in shows etc will be decided by the RMB. **NOTED**
19. Research Promotion Boards, P&AO to amplify guidelines to candidates and Board members. Boards will be announced in January, to be held mid to late March with an effective date for promotions of 1st April. Boards to be held, in future, on an annual basis. **Action: KC**
20. H of NRS to let CEO have suggestions of possible external Board members who CEO will then approach. **Action: BM**

Finance

21. HoF reported that at mid-year we are on-track to exceed our net contribution by +/- £30K. **NOTED**
22. The requirement by Treasury to show a 6% return on capital might be reduced to 3.5%. **NOTED**
23. Capital of £500K almost fully allocated, some leeway to accommodate urgent (eg move of WS to NRS) or emergency items. **NOTED**
24. HoF confident that we can deliver the increased cash surplus asked for by the Commission. **NOTED**
25. Business Planning cycle has been missed by five Branches. Time sheets are not being submitted. Despite three reminders, not all mid-year PMS marks have been submitted.

This is unacceptable and the RMB expressed concern. CEO to speak to Branches concerned. **Action: PF-S**

26. HoF to organise a date for a meeting of CEO, P&AO and Alison Melvin to discuss contents of Corporate Plan. **Action: TC**

Staffing

27. Concern was expressed at the predicted rise in staff numbers. **NOTED**
28. Two LRWs at TSU(N) Newton Field Station approved at PB6a on a 12 month FTA with possibility of extension or permanency. TSU(N) **Action: KC**
29. RMB agreed the change of name of “Statistics and Computing Branch” to “Statistical and IT Services”. **Action: KC**

Integrated Management – Experimental Database

30. The RMB’s decision regarding the recommendations contained in the above report are as follows,
- (A). CEO will be “data-champion”. Tracy Houston will be invited to attend the RMB when this matter is being discussed.
 - (B). Project will be funded centrally. Working Group to provide a project plan including costings for proposals for 02/03 and 03/04 and to propose members for the Implementation Group.
 - (C). Accepted, Working Group to advise how it is intended that work will be done.
 - (D). Accepted, start with field experiments. Mensuration sample plots to be included. Include all field data that involves more than £2K of effort.
 - (E). Working Group to make recommendations for data – storage systems.
 - (F). Accepted in principle, but not yet ready for implementation.
 - (G). Accepted, work to be done in due course.
31. The RMB would like a small Implementation Team to be established to take these recommendations forward. Thanks were recorded to the Working Group for its efforts. **Action: PF-S**

AOB

RMB to meet on 31 October at 13.30 prior to the Joint HoB meeting.

Date of next meeting – 13 November 2002 at NRS to be followed by Audit Committee Meeting.