



#### Agenda Item 4 – Feedback from GB EB meeting

10. It was agreed that the FC's land be revalued over coming years into forests of different categories, commercial, heritage, recreational, etc. A committee will be set up to take this forward. FR is expected to be represented. **Noted**
11. A presentation to the GB EB by Derek Gilfillan, Chief Procurement Officer, was well received. **Noted**
12. A statement will be issued by the DG/TUS to staff about a consensus on the way forward regarding the current pay dispute. **Noted**
13. Dragon Consultants who are advising on 'FC branding' reported that the 'FC brand' is an incredibly powerful brand. Discussion ranged at GB EB about the type of organisation we are today and where do we want to be in the future. This was distilled into three models, 'expert organisation', 'stewards of the land' and 'innovative deliverers'. The implications of adopting each of the models were discussed and the conclusion reached that we would like to be, in part, all three of the models! Staff and external stakeholders will be engaged in this development, what it would mean to them including the architecture of the brand including logos. **Noted**

#### Agenda Item 5 – Electronic Records Management System (ERMS) and FC's Sustainability Project.

14. Martin Abrahams is FR's representative on both these groups. He reported that Atkins Environment had been commissioned to come up with a strategic sustainability action plan for England which was being adopted by the FC for the whole of GB. A workshop had been chaired by Marcus Sangster. Wilma Harper is the FC 'champion' for this project. A Greening Committee has been set up at NRS and volunteers are being sought at Alice Holt. We will be looking to appoint our own 'champion'. **Noted**
15. Martin Abrahams reported that the Electronic Records Management System (ERMS) is designed to store, manage and retrieve new records electronically. The FC has decided to stay with the Oracle based system. A Steering Group has been set up under the Chairmanship of Alan Mitchell with Martin as FR's representative and is due to meet next week. Martin has put out an overall corporate file plan to all of FR and has received some comments. The GB EB will discuss ERMS in June and, it is expected, that action will follow quickly after that meeting. HoDs are asked to comment on whether the overall corporate file plan meets FR's needs. MA will re-issue his request regarding this to HoDs. **Action: MA, HoDs**

#### Agenda Item 6 – Finance

16. TC presented 2005/06 schedules showing Division by Division forecasts compared to plan and an overview of operating and cash flow expected performance. This indicated that the combined expected results of all Divisions and Groups indicate that the Agency will have a surplus of £128K (100.7% full cost recovery).
17. The 2006/07 overall position from the latest divisional plans shows a net shortfall. This is not unusual at this stage and appears mainly due to a low level of forecast income. TC requested that HoDs revise their plans ready for the forthcoming bipartite budget meetings. **Action: HoDs**
18. Capital funds available for 2006/07 is £0.5M. Bids received to date amount to just over £1M. Each bid will be discussed with HoDs at the budget meetings. **Noted**

19. BM queried the basis on which TSU charge for work done rather than the price quoted often without reference to the Programme Leader. TC will hold two seminars on costing and planning so everyone will understand the basis on which this is done.  
**Action: TC**

#### Agenda Item 7 – Staffing

20. KC reported on staffing issues. Quite a substantial decrease in staffing numbers mainly due to the TSU redundancies, plus the usual run down of 'casual' posts at year end. 12 posts have been lost with 8 members of staff leaving on 30 April 2006. The balance is made up of vacant posts.
21. Recent interviews have produced a Senior Economist, Social Sciences Project Leader, Social Science Research Assistant, Computing Officer and a TD Project Leader. Advertisements have been placed for an Intellectual Property Manager and a Climate Change Project Leader. Some discussion took place regarding the merit of having applicants for science vacancies make a presentation. It was agreed that the requirement to make a presentation would be decided on a post by post basis and the audience attending such a presentation could be expanded beyond the formal interviewing board. **Noted**
22. FREB members and JD are asked to let KC have nominations for TP mark with the back page of the PMS report (which gives the reasons for the TP) by 31st May. The reports will be collated by KC and passed to JL for final signature before passing to HR, Silvan House for bonus payments. **Action: All**
23. KC will give the FREB a briefing on the implications of the Age Discrimination Act which comes into force on 1 October 2006. **Action: KC**
24. Charges for centrally provided services are due to increase from 1 April. Finance and Accounting Services, Silvan House, have centrally calculated the charges for services which indicate a substantial increase for FR. FREB agreed that the proposed charges were not acceptable and asked TC to negotiate the charges on a more equitable basis. **Action: TC**

#### Agenda Item 9 – Innovation and Alice Holt Site Development

25. The Director General, Tim Rollinson, updated FREB on what he regarded as the main challenges to the FC; political and financial. On the political front, following devolution, service delivery is hugely important to our continued success. On the financial front, our static income is eroded by inflation which means we need to bring in new income streams, examine costs/efficiencies and to be more business-like as an organisation. Natural resources protection is featuring in Government policy and we need to focus on new policy agendas such as climate change and energy biomass. We must be prepared to take risks and start with a blank sheet of paper. Existing resources will be re-directed, some existing practices will be wound down and re-directed into the new big issues that really matter. Thought could be given to setting up a national or international 'Institute for Climate Change'. JL thought that the OECD conference at Wilton Park might influence these thoughts. The DG is looking for FR and other parts of the organisation to come forward with ideas. **Noted**
26. Alice Holt Site Development - in December '05 a sub-group of Forestry Commissioners was set up to look at AH site development. Eric McRory, FC's Chief Economist, has prepared an initial 'options for change' paper. The options range from 'Do nothing' to 'Relocate to an entirely new location'. He will prepare an economic appraisal for the range of options in a paper to be completed by the

summer (2006). A note will go out to staff, signed by TR and JL, early next week. XC will draft the paper.

**Action: XC**

27. In closing, the DG said he wanted to see FR as more of a driver for strategic change. Heads of Divisions are invited to make the JL aware of any proposals they have for efficiency gains which could be fed into the business planning process. **Action: HoDs**

#### Agenda Item 10 – Business Development (PABs)

28. Alison Melvin attended for this item. Alison is still awaiting responses from some HoDs on Potential and Actual Business (PABs) and wishes to draw a line under Phase I (by 22 May). These will inform the position paper with Phase II being opened immediately. PABs will then be updated on a regular basis with a link to the contract schedule. **Action: AM, TC**

#### Agenda Item 11 – Divisional Reports

29. Divisional reports were tabled at the meeting.
30. AJM will arrange for HoDs to meet our recently appointed economist (Gregory Valatin) to make him aware of the work being done and what he could assist us with. KC to send a copy of Gregory's CV to HoDs for information. **Action: AJM, KC**
31. All to feed suggested locations for the next FREB to CH. **Action: All**
32. PFS reported on progress with QA. A recent visit by Internal Audit went well, report is awaited. The system we have put in place is sufficient to satisfy the Joint Code, experiments and surveys must have plans, proper 'signed off' notebooks must be used, SOPs will be increased. PFS will put a note out to HoDs and JD asking them to put SMART targets for QA in individual FJPs, he will include training and development aspects/records. **Action: PFS**
33. PFS reported that Research Strategy Management Board (RSMB) minutes have been published and that Programme Advisory Groups are initially being established in 4 priority areas. RSMB members have expressed a wish to see FR Programme ROAME statements over the course of the year as a way of familiarising themselves with the work underway. The extended role of the FC Advisory Committee on Forestry Research has now been agreed. This gives the Committee (ACFR) responsibility for research prioritisation and horizon scanning for work provided to the FC by providers other than FR (as well as for FR's). Monitoring and evaluation of the research strategy may impact on our RLOs in re-jigging data for issue to countries. **Action: HoDs, XC**

#### Agenda Item 12 – Any other business

34. KC to issue Clive Brasier with a 'Fellow of Forest Research' contract. **Action: KC**

