

Forest Research Executive Board Meeting – 31 August/1 September 2006

Present: Prof. J M Lynch (Chair) Dr H F Evans
Mr W L Mason Mr T Cornwell
Dr A J Moffat (AJM) Dr X Christophers
Dr C Quine Mrs W Harper (31 August only)
Mr K N Charles

Apologies: Prof S Evans

Copies to: Mrs Liz Holmes, Head of Internal Audit
Mrs Wilma Harper, Director of Corporate & Forestry Support
Mrs Ros Bull, Secretary to the Chairman

Agenda Item 1 – Progress on the FR Development Strategy

1. Two draft papers have been prepared for the Commissioners;

- i) Vision
- ii) Implementation of the vision.

(Present position {brochure; ‘Knowledge, Innovation, Sustainability’} is finalised and is with printers)

Much work has been done on papers (i) and (ii) by JL, Wilma Harper and the DG with support from XC, HE and AJM. The papers were re-titled ‘Development Strategy 2007-2012’ and were discussed at the GB EB meeting on 30 August.

2. The draft paper identifies that while FR has embraced the ‘Science and Innovation Strategy for British Forestry’ developed by country consultation and approved by Ministers in June 2005, we will also recognise and develop new areas in support of policy and economic gain.
3. Wilma Harper introduced her paper outlining the process for the implementation of the FR Development Strategy once the FR Vision had been agreed by Commissioners. This included:
- Staff
 - Facilities
 - Location
 - Governance and accountability
 - Development of a change plan
 - Communication with staff, TUS and stakeholders.

FREB members to let Wilma have comments by lunchtime, Monday 4 September.

Action: FREB

4. TC to contact OGC for a suitable candidate to lead the process.

Action: TC

5. Meeting with FR/CFS on 6/7 September, agenda items to include,

- Strategy for charging for advice.
- Review how PAG process is working
- Publication process

- Peer reviewed publications.

Agenda Item 2 – Feedback from GB EB meeting

6. JL reported the following from the GB EB meeting;
 - Joint meeting with Swedish Forestry Commission had been a success.
 - HR Strategy and HR Guide had been presented to the GB EB by HR Director, Kim Lardge.
 - No candidates had been selected for appointment to the FC fast-track graduate scheme out of the 400 that had applied.

1st September 2006

Agenda Item 3 – Minutes of last meeting

7. Accepted.

Agenda Item 4 – Matters arising

8. KC will present a paper regarding the review of FR's reorganisation to the next FREB with options for the way forward. **Action: KC**
9. Three bids had been submitted by FR for up to 6 months of a FC fast-track graduate trainee to work on a specific project. **Noted**
10. Steve Lee has been nominated as FR's representative on the FC 'Greening Committee'. **Noted**
11. XC will produce a first draft of her review of the Library by end of September. **Action: XC**
12. Mark Broadmeadow will be invited to attend the next FREB with an up-dated 'National Expert Centre on Climate Change and Forestry' (NECCaF) paper. **Action: AJM**

Agenda Item 5 – Finance

13. Agreed that TC's more detailed analysis of expenditure against CFS programmes should be passed to CFS with a suitable commentary. HoDs to investigate significant areas of over-spend. **Action: TC, HoDs**
14. Capital, not all agreed spend has been activated. TC will circulate details of unspent approved capital allocation to HoDs. **Action: TC**
15. TC is arranging Risk Management workshops at NRS and Alice Holt. Areas of high risk will have to be covered by a Business Continuity Plan (BCP). More details regarding BCPs will be published in due course. **Action: TC**
16. The discussion paper produced by TC on 'Staff cost inter-charging and long term leave' will be put on the agenda for the October FREB. **Action: TC**
17. TC predicted, based on available information, that FR's forecast is set to exceed target contribution by £62K, however, there has been some deterioration since the last review. **Noted**

18. TC will carry out a detailed review of forecasts at end September. HoDs to review all forecasts, in detail, by mid September. **Action: HoDs**
19. HoDs to complete first pass at Divisional Business Plans by end of September. TC will circulate proposed Divisional targets early in September. **Action: TC, HoDs**

Agenda Item 6 – Staffing

20. KC presented his staffing paper which indicates present staffing of 269 (FTE) against a Corporate Plan figure of 270 (FTE). These figures did not include an increase of casual and fixed term staff to service the SNWS and NIWT contract work. **Noted**
21. KC expressed concern at the way 'Not Fully Effective' (NFE) markings are dealt with under the present procedures. KC will produce a paper for the next FREB outlining alternative methods which could be adopted within the Agency while awaiting the review of the FC Performance Management System. **Action: KC**
22. JL to circulate HR Guide and HR Strategy documents. **Action: JL**
23. Health & Safety Accident Reports, KC reported that 3 RIDDOR accidents had occurred and been reported to HSE in 2005/06 with 44 days absence at a cost of £6600. **Noted**
24. An analysis of Accident Book entries was presented. HoDs were asked to consider the benefits of ergonomic workplace organisation and safe access and egress as a way of reducing accidents. TSU continues to have more slips/falls which reflect the nature of their activities. The remaining 20 out of 33 Accident Book entries represent a wide variety of unsafe conditions without any apparent trends. **Action: HoDs**
25. KC reminded HoDs of the need to include 'Health & Safety' as a formal agenda item at least once a year during Divisional meetings. Martin Jukes will remind HoDs of the structure of this item and what needs to be covered (including 'Driving at Work'). **Action: KC**
26. KC will write to Janet Dutch about the Field Stations, which have no entries in the report, to ensure that Accident Books are available and used. **Action: KC**

Agenda Item 7 – Divisional Reports

27. Divisional reports were tabled and will appear on the Intranet. **Action: XC**
28. Communications report; in the notes from the 'Technical Publications Group meeting' the timing of technical refereeing is mentioned. XC clarified this and said the matter is being considered by Jo Davies and Elaine Dick. **Noted**
29. XC to circulate the publications 'authorisation form' to HoDs. **Action: XC**

Agenda Item 8 – AOB

30. The programme for the visit on 8 September of Ian Forshaw, Gareth Wardell, Wilma Harper, Louisa Huxtable (Researcher & Technology Adviser, Swansea University), Mark Clement (Professor of Innovation and Deputy VC of Swansea University) was discussed and is being finalised by XC. **Action: XC**
31. CQ requested that HoDs gave as much notice as possible of new NRS arrivals to Martin Abrahams in order that accommodation can be discussed. **Action: HoDs**

32. HoDs to ensure that all new arrivals are taken around and introduced to staff particularly JL at Alice Holt and CQ at NRS. **Action: HoDs**

33. KC will arrange for a check list for new arrivals including Health & Safety. A new, new-entrant FR induction pack will be available by end of September. **Action: KC**

34. PFS will speak to Carl Foster about QA training at Programme Leader level. **Action: PFS**

Dates of next FREB Meetings – Meeting on 26/9/06 at AH may be moved. HoDs will be consulted and notified of new date. **Action: CH**
October meeting on 30/31st at AH.