



- Development of the Alice Holt site. The DG is writing to staff clarifying the situation. **Noted**
- The Head of OST's Science and Engineering Profession Team, Rob Ashmore and Rachel Lloyd, OST Policy Advisor are visiting FR, Alice Holt on Friday 3 March. They will give a staff seminar on 'Professional Skills for Government from the perspective of the Scientist/Engineer profession' which will be followed by presentations from FR staff. OST are going to produce a quarterly electronic magazine (e-zine) for the civil service science and engineering community and FR will feature in the first issue. **Noted**
- A paper was presented to GBEB by HR Director, Kim Lardge in which she put forward succession planning, talent management and graduate (fast-track) recruitment. FR is willing to sign-up to these and felt that the envisaged 'secondments' for fast-tracked graduates had to be meaningful in terms of value to the organisation and the development of the graduate. **Noted**
- Progress on Business Improvement; DG feels the way forward is linked to the branding image and how the FC is perceived. **Noted**

#### **Agenda Item 5 – Staff Survey**

11. HoDs have sent JL notes on progress from their Divisional perspectives following the staff survey. JL will circulate responses and XC will draw these responses together and report back to the March FREB. **Action: JL, XC**
12. It is JL's intention to undertake a review of the effectiveness of FR's reorganisation. **Noted**

#### **Agenda Item 6 – Corporate and Forestry Support**

13. Wilma Harper, Director of Corporate and Forestry Support, made a presentation explaining the range of CFS's responsibilities and staff involved.

#### **Agenda Item 7 – Science time for communications activities**

14. XC clarified with all HoDs that communications activities within a science project are charged to the project. TC will clarify charging methodology and codes. HoDs to inform their staff. **Action: TC, HoDs**

#### **Agenda Item 8 – Business Development PSRE**

15. Alison Melvin updated FREB on Business Development and Innovation including;
  - We are moving steadily towards the establishment of medium term goals for FR's income generation and partnership at the Divisional level. The target is for Divisions to populate PAB tables by 1 May. **Action: HoDs**
  - There is a need to look beyond income generation which is opportunistic for immediate financial gain, to what FR and FC need to do to develop their longer term opportunities.
  - FR needs to clarify which of our partnerships are strategically important and to review the staff training and skill base necessary to achieve our objectives.
  - The PSRE contract has been received from OST. Our income from this is £495k over three years with complementary funding of £75k a year from the FC (although this is not additional money to FR).

16. The recruitment and location of the IP professional to be paid for from the PSRE funding was discussed. AM to circulate the job description to HoDs. HoDs to provide comment to AM/JL about this and the location of the post. **Action: AM, HoDs**
17. AM to give her presentation on 'Innovation/PSRE award' to Corporate and Forestry Support. **Action: AM**
18. PF-S alerted Wilma Harper about concerns raised about unallocated money in our 06/07 and 07/08 budgets. TC proposed that money be fully allocated for 06/07 and that we use the normal arrangements for moving money around in-year. Wilma suggested that PF-S should speak to Steve Gregory. **Action: PF-S**

### **Agenda Item 9 – Finance**

19. Forecasts indicate that the Agency will have an end of year surplus of £55k against its target net contribution. TC advised that expenditure for the rest of the year needed to be closely controlled and unnecessary spend avoided. **Action: HoDs**
20. HoDs to update forecasts by end of February. **Action: HoDs**
21. Current forecast for TSU is a net loss of £230k. **Noted**
22. To date, capital expenditure for 05/06 stands at £663k. **Noted**
23. Progress continues to be behind schedule for the preparation of business plans. We now have details of CFS funding so HoDs should push ahead with finalising their plans to enable TC to present an overall summary of plans the March FREB. **Action: HoDs**
24. When preparing their plans, HoDs should pay particular attention to the level of real and prospective external income. The overall agency plan is for a planned £2.3M which represents an increase of nearly 15% over the peak level achieved in 2004/05. If this is not achievable, expenditure proposals will need to be reduced to compensate. **Action: HoDs**

### **Agenda Item 10 – Staffing**

25. KC presented his paper detailing recruitments, staff losses and predicted end of year staffing figures. Current staffing level is 274.2 (FTEs), projected to end of FY – 277 against a Corporate Plan figure of 278. **Noted**
26. The level of recruitment is putting a strain on available office accommodation and HoDs must consider where staff are going to be accommodated when putting in requests for additional staff.
27. A colour coded plan of Alice Holt was circulated which indicated the Divisional distribution of staff around the building. It was agreed that it would be inappropriate, at this time, to undertake a large scale movement of staff in order to rationalise their proximity within Divisions. **Noted**
28. Given the recent resignation of a member of IT support, HoDs to give TC an indication of the competencies required for the replacement member of staff. **Action: HoDs**

29. Martin Abrahams represented FR at a recent meeting at Silvan House to discuss the proposals for an Electronic Records Management System [ERMS]. FR's involvement for this had been previously handled by Jane Smyth and Catherine Oldham [who had been a member of the ERMS Working Group]. This was now being taken forward by the FC at Steering Group level. KC to ask Martin to attend the March FREB and to brief the meeting on developments. FREB to decide how this initiative will be taken forward by FR and by whom. **Action: KC**

#### **Agenda Item 11 – Divisional Reports**

30. BM reported to FREB that he had attended a FC meeting at Birmingham to discuss The final report of a consultancy study into the potential impacts of Short Rotation Forestry (SRF). The report raised a number of issues which will likely be addressed by field scale operational trials. **Noted**
31. Janet Dutch needs work programmes from HoDs ASAP and nominations from Divisions for the nursery management groups at Alice Holt and NRS. **Action: HoDs**

#### **Agenda Item 12 - AOB**

32. Corporate Plan, XC will circulate the Corporate Plan and the present draft for comment by HoDs on the content, milestones and performance indicators. A quick response is required. **Action: XC, HoDs**
33. XC circulated a paper titled, 'Rigour, respect and responsibility: a universal ethical code for scientists'. XC will circulate a form of words to ensure that this is included in PMS reviews and it will be included in our Framework Document. **Action: XC**
34. CQ is looking at the opportunity of making the vacant bungalow at NRS into accommodation for Visiting Scientists. HoDs are invited to give feedback to CQ. **Action: HoDs**
35. AJM circulated a paper detailing the Programme Group which is led by Rod Leslie. Rod would like a FR interface for each of these groups. AJM will obtain more information for the next FREB. **Action: AJM**
36. TC informed the FREB that the Annual Report and Accounts have to be laid before Parliament on 20 July 2006 and asked for the cooperation of HoDs in identifying authors. **Action: HoDs**

**Date of next meeting – 28 March at Alice Holt**