

Forest Research Executive Board Meeting – 10 May 2005

Present: Prof. Jim Lynch
Dr Peter Freer-Smith
Dr Hugh Evans
Prof. Sam Evans
Mr Bill Mason
Dr Andy Moffat
Dr Chris Quine
Mr Tony Cornwell
Mr Ken Charles

Copies To: Head of Internal Audit
Head of Technical Services Unit
Director of Communications
Director of Corporate & Forestry Services

Agenda Item 1 – Minutes of the last meeting

1. Accepted, subject to the following amendments; Para.9(b) add “unit” to, “TSU will reorganise to five field station *units*”.

Para.9(d) add “where appropriate” to, “. . . .”and will provide to three new Research Liaison Officers (RLOs) *where appropriate*”.

Agenda Item 2 – Matters arising

2. It was clarified that every other FREB meeting would be split into two areas, routine business and strategic issues. These will be held over an afternoon and the following morning. Claire Holmes to check FREB member’s availability for future dates.
Action: CH
3. HoDs to encourage staff to participate in the Staff Survey and allow up to one hour for staff to complete the questionnaire.
Noted
4. TC has agreed ‘high priority’ capital bids with JL and has written to HoDs detailing successful bids.
Noted
5. KC to prepare a discussion paper covering Research Promotion Procedures and FR’s Annex to FC’s Grading Guidance for next FREB.
Action: KC
6. Standards Meetings have been arranged at Alice Holt on 17 May and NRS on 20 May for staff with reporting/confirm responsibilities for staff in PBs 2, 3 and 4. PF-S and CQ to arrange meeting for those staff reporting on PB’s 5 and 6.
Action: PF-S, CQ
7. KC awaiting response from solicitors regarding draft waiver to be signed by staff undertaking work on a personal basis.
Action: KC

Agenda Item 3 – Reports

8. PF-S up-dated the FREB with regard to the TSU Review. BM reported that the Nursery Review Group would meet in 10 days. **Action: BM**
9. HoDs to show in '**bold**' important areas of their reports that could be used for research highlights. **Action: HoDS**
10. Difficulties in finalising budgets for 2005/06 were highlighted by HoDs and Finance Director. This will be discussed at the FR/CFS meeting on 11 May 05. **Noted**

Agenda Item 4 – Feedback from the Commissioners' Meeting

11. Agreed at an Extraordinary meeting of the EB that *P. kernoviae* will be tackled by on-going exclusion as opposed to an eradication strategy. **Noted**
12. Also agreed that Forest Holidays PPP will be progressed with a short list of two commercial partners. **Noted**
13. JL attended a Commissioner's/EB "think tank" meeting at Pitlochry. The September meeting of the Commissioners will be held in Northern Ireland where research will be the main focus. JL will be asking HoDs for input for this meeting. **Action: JL**

Agenda Item 5 – Finance

14. TC reported that the expected final result for 2004/05 is a cost recovery of 99.7% against the target of 100%. This represents a net deficit of £41k which is considered satisfactory. **Noted**
15. TC reported that for 2005/06 the plan is in balance to deliver a net surplus of £211k. This includes the capping of the TSU plan to a net loss of £322k. **Noted**
16. Capital expenditure has been released for priority and urgent project related requirements and a provision made for IT. A reserve of £250k is in place to cover for emergencies, unforeseen replacements and other contingencies throughout the year. **Noted**

Agenda Item 6 – Staffing

17. KC reported that current staffing levels are running at 269 against a planned Corporate Plan figure of 278. The reduction is largely due to the expected end-of-year reduction in casual staff which will increase as seasonal work increases in the summer and a delay in some planned recruitments. **Noted**

Agenda Item 7 – AOB

18. The membership of the FREB was reviewed and agreed that FR's Director of Communications be invited to join the Board as a full member. **Action: JL**
19. A TSU Service Board will be established by P F-S. **Action: P F-S**
20. PF-S to check with Stephen Bennett regarding the timing and logistics of recruiting new members to the Forest Research Advisory Committee. **Action: PF-S**

21. HoDs to consider possible members for the Committee and to inform PF-S.
Action: HoDs
22. The draft agenda of the FR/CFS meeting to be held on 11 May was discussed. The meeting will include discussion on a draft Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) which is intended to clarify our shared understanding of how the major aspects of the relationship between FR and its parent department, the FC, will work in practice.
Noted
23. TC reminded HoDs of the Chief Executive's Innovation Fund and how they might apply.
Noted

Date of next meeting: 7 June 2005 @ Alice Holt