

## Forest Research Executive Board Meeting – 29 September 2006

**Present:** Prof. J M Lynch (Chair) Dr H F Evans  
Mr W L Mason Mr K N Charles  
Dr A J Moffat (AJM) Dr X Christophers  
Dr C Quine

**Apologies:** Dr P Freer-Smith  
Mr T Cornwell

Mrs A Melvin attended for items 1 – 6.

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

### Agenda Item 1 – Introduction to purpose/format of meeting

1. JL introduced this item. **Noted**

### Agenda Item 2 – Minutes of last meeting

2. Accepted with one amendment to item 31, notice of new arrivals to NRS was also to be given to Wayne Blackburn. **Noted**

### Agenda Item 3 – Matters arising

3. TC has contacted OGC for suitable candidates to lead the management of change within FR. **Noted**
4. XC's review of Library Services has been delayed due to other commitments, target date now end of November. **Action: XC**
5. TC has indicated that Risk Management Workshops will be held at Alice Holt on 2 November and at NRS on 23 November. These will be led by Michael Webb, FC's RM expert. **Noted**
6. The discussion paper, produced by TC, on 'Staff cost inter-charging and long-term leave' will be put on the agenda for October FREB. **Action: CH**
7. KC had circulated a list of the items to be covered at the annual Divisional review of Health & Safety to FREB members. **Noted**

### Agenda Item 4/5 – Feedback from Commissioners' meeting/Development Strategy

8. JL gave feedback on the presentation of his vision for the future of FR to the Commissioners. The matter was the subject of some debate with the outcome that the Commissioners endorsed the vision.
9. The actual documents will be released to staff on Monday, 2 October including a 'Question & Answer' paper. Following this, all staff meetings will be held on Tuesday at Alice Holt by PF-S and AJM and at NRS, by CQ and BM. These meetings will be followed by Divisional meetings and, at a later date, "all staff meetings" where staff

will be addressed by JL and the DG. A representative from each out/field station will be invited to these meetings. **Noted**

10. A Senior Change Manager will be recruited externally on a Fixed Term Appointment to assist JL manage the changes. **Noted**

11. Feedback from Divisional meetings to be sent to CH. **Action: FREB**

#### **Agenda Item 6 – National Expert Centre on Forestry and Climate Change**

12. Mark Broadmeadow presented his paper. FR's Change Manager will manage FR's strategy which will involve redirecting resources into growth areas such as this. MB's paper was endorsed in principle by FREB. JL will discuss with Wilma Harper and the DG how this can best be taken forward. **Action: JL**

#### **Agenda Item 7 – Review of FR's Reorganisation**

13. KC presented his paper. It had originally been agreed that the recent reorganisation of FR into Divisions would be reviewed after a suitable settling in period. A number of options were discussed and it was agreed that this will be a specific action point for the new Change Manager.

**Noted**

#### **Agenda item 8 – Finance**

14. In TC's absence on a/l, his Financial Report was discussed. The forecast for 2006/07 has improved slightly with an expectation to exceed target contribution by £165k. **Noted**

15. TC will do a detailed review of forecasts when the actual half-year figures are available and requested that HoDs review their forecasts, in detail, by mid-October.

**Action: HoDs**

16. TC reminded HoDs that the deadline for the first pass at divisional business plans for 2007/08 has passed and time needs to be devoted to this during October if we are to keep to the timetable.

**Action: HoDs**

#### **Agenda Item 9 – Staffing**

17. KC presented his staffing paper which indicated a present staffing level of 262.5. This is predicted to rise to 273.3 by the end of December mainly due to an increase of 10 casual and FTA posts for TSU and Biometrics surveys. Planned staffing for 2006/07 is 270.0 **Noted**

18. KC presented his paper on the administration of Temporary Responsibility Allowance (TRA) within FR. It was agreed that TRA would only be granted when there are specific duties or a piece of work for a limited time which is considered enough to raise the post into the next pay band. **Noted**

19. In the case of instances where the additional work is not temporary then the member of staff should be advised to apply for the next research promotion round or, if not eligible for this, for the post to be evaluated through the JEGS process. **Noted**

20. KC presented his paper on the limited assessments available under the present Performance Management system. The meeting felt that the number of overall box markings available to managers needs to be increased. This is being considered by Central HR but will take some time to be concluded. In the meantime it was agreed

that HoDs will rank staff on an informal basis with a view to looking at the training and development needs of those considered to need this most. **Action: HoDs**

21. It was agreed that 'Standards Meetings' for 2006/07 will be 'kicked-off' by JL at the November FREB. This will be followed by further meetings at NRS and Alice Holt. **Action: JL**

**Agenda item 10 – Divisional Reports**

22. Divisional reports were tabled and will appear on the Intranet. **Action: XC**

**Agenda item 11 – AOB**

23. XC asked HoDs to remind their staff who are producing a FR/FC publication or associated published material that they should speak to Joanne Davies (FR's Publication Manager). **Action: HoDs**

24. XC asked HoDs to require their staff who are organising or present material at high profile external events to notify David Georghiou (FR's Webmaster) so the event can be 'advertised' on our website in order not to miss the opportunity to further build our reputation. **Action: HoDs**

25. CQ proposed that staff attending conferences etc. should routinely produce diaries of their attendance at the event recording key points and contacts made. **Action: HoDs**

26. Andy Hall and/or Ian Tubby to update the November FREB meeting on the activities of the Biomass Centre. **Action: BM**

27. Simon Hodge to be invited to attend the 28 November FREB at NRS. **Action: CH**

28. Where possible, future FREB dates to be on a consistent date each month. Claire Holmes to organise FREB dates for coming 12 months. **Action: CH**

**Date of next FREB Meeting** – 30/31 October at Alice Holt.