

**THE FORESTRY COMMISSION ENGLAND EXECUTIVE BOARD
MINUTES OF THE 113TH MEETING
Conference Room, National Office, Bristol
16 July 2018**

Attendees:

Ian Gambles
Richard Greenhous
Simon Hodgson
Steve Meeks
Meirion Nelson
Jo Ridgway
Mike Seddon

Jenny King – Minute Secretary

Apologies:

James Pendlebury
Joe Watts

1. Welcome

Ian Gambles opened the meeting. Apologies had been received from James Pendlebury and Joe Watts. Meirion Nelson deputised for James Pendlebury.

2. Minutes and actions

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as a true and accurate record.

Updates on the action point were given as follows:

Regarding reward: Jo Ridgway updated on recruitment of a Reward Programme Manager and that a Defra voucher scheme had been postponed until autumn. The Board agreed to discuss FC engagement with the Defra voucher scheme as part of a reward update at the October meeting. Meirion Nelson reported that FR had notified HMRC that FR anticipated it would start providing rewards to staff to ensure any tax implications were appropriately addressed.

Action 1: Jenny King to schedule reward as an item on the October EEB agenda.

3. Matters arising

None.

4. Finance report

Steve Meeks summarised the paper and the Board discussed the progress of the cross-border trisection work, an emerging risk relating to oversubscription of Defra's Staff Exit budget and the potential for this to impact the FC through the decommissioning of Silvan House, and finance report Annex A. The Board discussed Defra plans to develop 5 year rolling budgets and the links to the forthcoming Spending Review. The Board agreed that each of the business units would provide high level aims to be achieved from the spending review to Steve to support the preparation for the Spending Review.

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Action 2: Simon Hodgson, Richard Greenhous and James Pendlebury to provide Steve Meeks with high level business aims to be achieved from the spending review by mid-September.

5. Future Forestry Commission

Steve Meeks summarised the progress of the Future Forestry Commission (FFC) project and introduced the Summary Plan. The Board discussed the progress of each work stream and the need for clarity of the role of the Director's Office/ Commissioners' Office and the various work areas that would be owned by each of the business areas. The board agreed each workstream was required to draw together a list of work that would be led centrally for the FC as a whole, and areas that would be led by the business areas.

The board agreed that each work stream required a definition of:

1. Areas where the organisation was required to act as a single legal entity.
2. Areas where the organisation wanted to have a single coherent response.
3. Areas where the business entities have the autonomy to act independently.

Board Appointments.

A flyer for the Forestry Commissioners recruitment has been circulated, and a candidate pack is being worked up with Defra's Public Appointments Team with recruitment expected to start at the end of July/early August 2018. The appointments will be subject to ministerial, and No 10 approval.

Branding.

FS launched gov.uk website on the 9 July, no change to branding was required for FR. The board discussed the work towards branding completed to date by FE and Simon Hodgson confirmed that Josephine Lavelle is leading on FEE branding. The importance of being sighted on each business units approach to branding was emphasised to avoid surprises and be able to deal with questions from internal and external stakeholders.

Working together.

Jo Ridgway reported an upcoming workshop with the Trade Unions to progress the working together protocol and a meeting with senior HR colleagues to define areas and policies that would be led centrally for the organisation as a whole, and areas where business units would lead. The board agreed the need for FR colleagues to be involved in the work towards future collective bargaining arrangements.

Documentation

Ian Gambles requested assurance that this work stream was appropriately covered by the FFC and working groups. Simon Hodgson confirmed he would work with Mike Seddon and John Stride to map policies owned exclusively by FE. The board discussed the need to review KPIs and MI in advance of the establishment of new governance boards of Forestry Commissioners.

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Action 3: Director's Office to coordinate the compilation of a core list of documentation requiring change, update or commissioning for April 2019.

6. AOB

Ian Gambles closed the meeting.