

## Agenda Item 11 Board of Commissioners' Meeting Memo No 09/25

### AUTHENTICATION OF THE OFFICIAL SEAL

#### 1. Purpose

To seek Commissioners authorisation for named officials to act on behalf of the Secretary to the Commissioners to authenticate the official seal.

#### 2. Background

The Forestry Act 1967, Schedule 1, Part 1, Administration, includes, at section 4, the following provision:

*4 (1)The Commissioners shall have an official seal, which shall be officially and judicially noticed.*

*(2)The seal shall be authenticated by a Forestry Commissioner, or by the secretary to the Commissioners, or by some person authorised by the Commissioners to act on behalf of the secretary.*

#### 3. Issue

Currently we do not have any persons authorised by the Commissioners to act on behalf of the Secretary, this means that the official seal of the Forestry Commission (since April 2019 when the Forestry Commission became an England only organisation) can only be routinely authenticated by Richard Stanford (as an Executive Commissioner) or Richard Barker (as Secretary to the Commissioners).

Whilst the need to authenticate the seal is an infrequent event, most often needed for the signing of Deeds of Release from historic forestry dedication schemes or other Deeds this lack of additional persons authorised to authenticate the seal does create a potential point of failure or delay. Furthermore, with Crispin Thorn, who will replace Richard Barker as Secretary to the Commissioners from 31 March 2025, being based in York rather than Bristol it will be an additional complication.

#### 4. Proposed Action

It is proposed that the following named officials are authorised as persons to authenticate the official seal where the matter in question relates to the business area or activity recorded.

| <b>Name</b>      | <b>Role</b>                                  | <b>Business area or activity authorised to authenticate the official seal</b> |
|------------------|--|---|
| Derrick Osgood   | Director of Finance and Corporate Governance | All areas and activities  |
| Anna Brown       | Director Forest Services                     | Forest Services   |
| Michael Seddon   | Chief Executive Forestry England             | Forestry England  |
| James Pendlebury | Chief Executive Forest Research              | Forest Research   |
| Carol Hawkey     | Director of Estates, Forestry England        | Forestry England  |

## 5. Conclusion

The Board is invited to:

- agree the persons named above are authorised to authenticate the official seal on behalf of the Secretary to the Commissioners.

**Richard Barker**  
**Secretary to the Commissioners**  
**March 2025**