

Forest Enterprise Scotland
Management Board Meeting
Inverness / Edinburgh / Dumfries 15 April 2015

Attendees:

Simon Hodge, Chief Executive
Michael Ansell, Head of Forest Renewables
Les Bryson, Head of Operations
Jo Ellis, Head of Planning and Environment
Donna Hutchinson, Head of Finance
Michael Hymers, Head of Corporate Support
Janette Mushet, HR Operations Manager (Items 6 & 7)
Alan Stevenson, Head of Communities, Recreation and Tourism
Laurie Tyson, Head of Estates
Hilda Todd (Minute Secretary)

Apologies:

Rosetta Forbes, HR Business Partner

1. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING & ACTION POINTS

Simon ran through the action points from the previous meeting.

AP 1.3: Michael H to liaise with David Felstead/IS in the preparation of a Gant chart which will demonstrate how all of the active / planned IS projects interlink and the agreed timescales for delivery.

Discharged

AP 1.7: Simon to raise FES's concerns as to how prepared / equipped the industry is to deal with windblow and in particular the number of and experience of trained competent chainsaw users with FISA.

Discharged

AP 7.1: Corporate Support to produce a calendar of management information for circulation to the Board.

Discharged

AP 7.2: Rosetta to speak to David Beagley and the resourcing team on how best to communicate HR information to staff.

Rolled over

2. FINANCE REPORT

Donna provided the FESMB with an update on the interim financial outturn for FY 14/15.

The main points are summarised below.

- Timber cash up on previous forecast.
- Year-end accounting will continue well into May.
- Business Plan for FY 15/16 and FY 16/17 has been confirmed.
- Carry-over projects / expenditure has not yet been agreed and/or communicated with Unit Managers.

Les provided an update on the impact that exchange rates were having on timber sales / customer demand. It is anticipated that the volume contained within the Sales Plan will be sold, although income levels will be down. A slight reduction could be absorbed; however a significant reduction would require cuts to the agreed budget.

3. RISK MANAGEMENT

Donna updated the board on risk management and the following was agreed:

Each functional lead will complete their own 'functional' risk register and Donna will produce a mechanism for summarising the top risks for inclusion in the full risk register.

Michael H raised concerns that in functionalising the risk register and only reviewing the top risks, cross-functional issues would be overlooked. The risk register in its current form is good and very helpful as a management tool.

Donna agreed to re-consider and circulate a revised proposal for a more condensed version of the Risk Register.

AP 3.1: Donna will circulate a proposal of a more condensed version of the Risk Register.

Top Risks

9. Simon asked Donna to set up a meeting with FAS and FCS to discuss VAT.

AP 3.2: Donna to arrange a meeting to discuss how FES/FCS manages VAT in the future.

24. At a recent procurement meeting, Donna, Les, Graham and Ian identified unsatisfactory, audit performance. Staff should be encouraged to improve procurement performance.

36. This was a top risk last March but Laurie will drop a note to Donna and Rosetta on staffing as it may be downgraded.

37. Longannet closing will not affect this risk.

49. No longer a top risk and can therefore be removed.

Emerging Risks

Ability to service Scottish Government Strategic needs.

AP 3.3: Donna to incorporate the above as appropriate.

4. RENEWABLE INVESTMENTS

Michael Ansell presented a paper on investing in renewables as a follow up to the site visit to Clashindarroch windfarm by the Board in November 2014.

The Board agreed to endorse the concept contained in the paper, subsequently allowing Michael A and/or Simon to discuss with the National Committee.

5. UKWAS CAR 04 CLOSE OUT ACTION PLAN

Chris Nixon presented the Action Plan and sought the Boards views on raising awareness of UKWAS with staff and/or contractors.

The following points were discussed:

- The development of a comms plan. Including revised information for staff/contractors being made available on the internet/intranet.
- Not keen on the use of a 'sticker' as it is the National Forest Estate that is being approved rather than those working on it.

The following action points were agreed:

AP 5.1: Michael will work with the DIS digital team to re-visit what information relating to UKWAS is made available to staff/contractors on the internet/intranet.

AP 5.2: Michael will discuss how comms around UKWAS fits with the wider comms priorities.

Chris asked if we could take the opportunity of raising the issue at the 'All Staff Briefings'.

AP 5.3 Simon will include the UKWAS logo in his PowerPoint presentation for the forthcoming 'All Staff Briefings'.

6. RECRUITMENT PROCESSES

Five options were discussed; however none of them address all of the issues that the organisation faces.

It was agreed to concentrate on the Workforce Planning exercise and use its outputs as the basis for any long-term mechanism for identifying low and high priority posts.

Janette confirmed that the initial returns were currently being analysed including benchmarking.

7. HR UPDATE AND STAFFING

Janette provided an update on the key changes within HR.

The iGrasp E-Recruitment system has now been replaced with CS E-Recruitment. Recruiting managers should use the new system for all new vacancies, although iGrasp will run in parallel, till the end of May.

Michael raised the creation of a new post (i.e. FES Secretariat Officer). The CC580 Administration team is facing a lot of pressure with the 'new' requirements from Scottish Government / EnFor. Following discussion it was agreed that Corporate Support would draw together a business case.

AP7.1: Michael H will draft a business case for the introduction of an FES Secretariat Officer.

8. QUARTERLY UPDATE FOR FES PROJECTS

Sylvi gave an update on the projects and their status. The main points covered were as follows:

- Greenoak hill: Access issues as an active site. Still months away from getting some viable options together.
- Cunnigar Loop: Bridge contract finally confirmed. We need to agree comms with Glasgow City Council given the delays to the parks opening.
- Productive Broadleaves: Review due to staff resources.

- Peatland Action Plan: Twenty five projects managed by six project leads in less than six months. Estimates so far on the resources; two/three man years. Good support from SNH. Now working at shutting down and the restoration of the peatlands.
- Procurement reform: Not involved directly but communications are ongoing as the Scottish Government are behind by three/four months. We should have access to the e-tendering next week. This gives us more time and our interim action can be looked at. Amber due to the increasing urgency of improving our procurement process. Donna will work with Sylvi to get a project infrastructure and plan firmly in place.
- West Highland Way: There have been some difficulties and the board decided to draw to a close with the contractor. Due to the changes in contractor, there is a lack of visibility and time to retender. The original shovel ready project centred on Ptarmigan and pleased with the result. Some money is tied up in the carry forward which will help in getting the HLF project underway. There could be a contribution from HLF as well as some lottery money.
- John Muir path project: Delay due to road construction but should be complete in May.

9. CORPORATE COMMITMENTS FY15-16

Zoe circulated the 'draft' Corporate Commitments for FY 15/16 following initial feedback from the Board. A short discussion then took place focusing on potential overlaps and/or repeat ion from previous commitments.

10. ORGANISATIONAL/FUNCTIONAL UPDATE

Safety Climate Tool results from FES/FCS were now known and time would be set aside at the May meeting of the Board to discuss.

The organisation is required to carry-out an Equality and Diversity review and Alan sought clarification as to how the review would be implemented and what role FES would play. Given revised Scottish E&D requirements potentially the review would lead to significant change. Simon confirmed that no discussions had yet to take place, however the FCS lead is Nicky Whitaker.

AP 10.1: Alan will discuss the E&D review with Nicky and clarify how FES will feed into the process.