

Forest Enterprise Scotland (FES) Management Board Meeting

26 January 2017

Attendees:

Simon Hodge, Chief Executive
Trefor Owen, Head of Land Management
Michael Hymers, Head of Corporate Support
Michael Ansell, Head of Estates Development
Donna Mortimer, Head of Finance and Procurement
Rosetta Forbes, Head of HR Scotland
Alan Stevenson, Head of Community and Visitor Services
Rhondda Salmond, Secretariat

Apologies:

Brent Meakin, Head of Business Services

Others:

Liz Walker (Items 6, 7 & 8)
Alison Grant (Item 8)
Jo Ellis (Item 8)

1. Minutes of last Meeting 20 Dec 2016

The Board agreed that the record of 20 Dec 2016 was held to be a true and fair record of the meeting.

2. Action Points and Matters Arising

Ref:	Action	Who	Target Date
11/02	Provide an update on investigations in to the Depreciation Review.	BM & DM	17 March 2017
12/04	Bring a further developed Built Asset Management Strategy to FESMB in the new year.	BM	17 March 2017
12/05	Consider how rationalisation income can best be used towards buildings or fleet, and present proposals to the FESMB	BM	17 March 2017
01/01	Nicol Sinclair to contact Business Services leads in covering for Brent's period of absence.	NS	3 Feb 2017
02/01	Map dependencies between programmes with links to Corporate Development Programme	LW	17 march 2017
03/01	Liaise with guest speakers regarding final arrangements for Team Leaders Meeting	MH	27 Jan 2017

Action Points: 10/07, 11/03, 11/09, 11/10, 11/11, 12/01, 12/02, 12/03, 12/06 and 12/07 are discharged.

3. Chief Executive Update

Simon Hodge advised that the debate on Forestry in Scotland held in Parliament on the 24 January 2017 was considered a success, with cross party support obtained for the proposed motion. Simon thanked staff for contributions to the briefing.

As part of the Scottish Government Forestry Devolution Programme a workshop is planned to finalise the scope for the programme and ensure that all of the 'key' stakeholders have a shared understanding. The HR Workstream is progressing, and a lead in Scottish Government has been appointed to take this area forward.

Brent Meakin will have a period of absence. Nicol Sinclair will be providing support to Business Services in the interim period, with Nicky Whitaker also covering specific aspects.

AP 01/01: Nicol Sinclair to contact Business Services leads in covering for Brent's period of absence.

4. FES FY 17/18 Business Plan

Donna Mortimer advised that a paper was presented to the National Committee for Scotland in early January 2017 forecasting expenditure of £26.5m in FY 17/18, including late additions of £0.5m to Environment and £2.5m to Digital & ICT and highlighting that VAT reconciliation for FY 16/17 will be based on assumed costs, but will be incorporated in to Business Plans for FY 17/18 using historical data.

The FY 17/18 Business Plan is nearing completion, with final consideration given to potential impact of transferring HR and Learning & Development in to FES from April 2017, and adjustments for the Woodland Creation Programme and New Woodland Investment Programme (NWIP).

A new approach to Business Planning was adopted this year, and feedback will be incorporated in to the Financial Structures Project to develop the approach going forward. This includes how to disseminate costs for Business Service functions across the wider business utilising Service Level Agreements (SLA's) and current technology.

5. Priority Programmes/Projects Update

Organisational Redesign Programme: Trefor Owen advised that the scoping of the programme was progressing with Land Management and Community & Visitor Services remaining the priority areas, but recognising that interdependencies with Business Services and Corporate Support need to be mapped as part of the programme.

Woodland Creation Programme: Trefor Owen advised that the programme of sales for the next year has now been clarified by Scottish Government, and this will be discussed at the next Board meeting. Notifications for 2017 sales will be notified in February.

Establishing Corporate Services Scotland (ECCS): Rosetta Forbes advised that the programme remains on track, with proposals to transfer HR and Learning & Development in to FES from April 2017 to be incorporated in to plans once financial arrangements are finalised.

Health, Safety & Wellbeing (HS&W) Programme: Simon Hodge advised that the first HS&W Programme Board had taken place. The programme will be delivered over a three year period, with five projects/workstreams identified for priority progress.

Corporate Development Programme: Michael Hymers advised that scoping of the programme continues, including how the Scottish Government Forestry Devolution Programme will fit.

AP 01/02: Liz Walker to map dependencies between programmes with links to Corporate Development Programme

Portfolio Management: Michael Hymers advised that the Corporate Support Team is continuing to develop the approach to implementing Portfolio Management in to FES, including how Non-Executives will participate.

Programme/Project Resources: Michael Hymers advised that he had received feedback from function leads on the resources requirements to support priority programmes/projects going forward. This information will be used to consider resourcing options going forward.

6. Quarterly Management Update (FES Dashboard)

Liz Walker presented the Quarterly Management Update. The FESMB agreed that the dashboard continues to develop and bring together appropriate management and performance information.

Finance: Information on finance will be revisited, including introducing confidence rating to pressures and relievers, and using forecast information to report against budget.

Performance: Donna Mortimer advised that NWIP acquisition budget is amber as the allocated budget will not be fully utilised in year. The resource will, however, be carried forward for 17/18 acquisitions.

Programmes/Projects: Michael Ansell advised that the Land Registration Project is at risk to due to capacity pressures; this will be clearer when the forward planning piece is completed. Trefor Owen advised that a Project Manager has been engaged to lead the Newton Nursery Transition Project, and the project is on track to meet April 2017 deadline for transferring staff.

Human Resources: Rosetta Forbes advised that in year headcount figures will be included in future reports.

7. FES Corporate Plan/Framework Agreement

Michael Hymers advised that the current FES Strategic Directions and framework are due to expire. As the organisation moves towards establishing Forestry and Land Scotland future versions will be incorporated in to FES's Corporate Plan. This will reduce repetition and enable future documents to be more succinct, including opportunities to strengthen people aspects.

8. National Spatial Plan

Alison Grant presented a paper on the approach to developing FES's National Spatial Plan. The FESMB agreed that a national spatial plan would provide a key link between the Corporate Plan and Land Management Plans and agreed the mandate to proceed to the next stage of the project. The Board noted that this approach would replace the current District Strategic Plans in the FES planning hierarchy.

9. Organisational/Functional Updates

Community & Visitor Services:

Alan Stevenson advised that the Community Asset Transfer Scheme (CATS) is now operational, and final preparations are being made on the composition of the assessment panel.

There has been increased Ministerial interest in the Tweed Valley recreation offering as part of engagement with the South of Scotland Alliance. Work is continuing with the Forest District to provide briefing on proposals to work with other partners to increase mountain biking opportunities in the area.

Discussions are ongoing with BBC Scotland to consider opportunities in the Galloway area for a TV production.

Estates Development:

Michael Ansell advised that negotiations are nearing completion regarding the sale of 190ha at Dunstan Hill.

The Scottish Energy Strategy to 2050 has recently been published, and work is underway to understand the impacts on FES.

Human Resources (HR):

Rosetta Forbes advised that HR is continuing to participate in the Tax Advisory Group, including analysing the results of the Travel Survey undertaken with staff in late 2016.

Alison Kennedy from the FCS HR team will be project manager for Scottish Government for the Staff Transfer Project of the Forestry Devolution Programme.

Preparation is underway for the Scottish Government Strategic Forum, with Trade Unions.

Land Management:

Trefor Owen advised that he has been working with his leadership team to review the Land Management Risk Register, and approach to Business Planning.

10. AOB

FES Team Leaders Meeting

The FES Team Leaders meeting is scheduled for 2 February 2017, with presentations from guest speakers Bridget Campbell (Director for Environment and Forestry, Scottish Government) and Geoff Ogle (Food Standards Scotland).

AP 03/01: Liaise with guest speakers regarding final arrangements for Team Leaders Meeting

The date of the next FESMB is the 9 February 2017.