

Forest Enterprise Scotland (FES) Management Board Meeting

28 June 2017

Attendees:

Simon Hodge, Chief Executive
Bridget Campbell, Director for Environment and Forestry (am only)
Michael Ansell, Head of Estates Development
Trefor Owen, Head of Land Management (am only)
Michael Hymers, Head of Corporate Support
Donna Mortimer, Head of Finance and Procurement
Nicol Sinclair, Head of Business Services (Acting)
Rosetta Forbes, Head of HR Scotland
Phil Whitfield, Head of Design & Interpretation
Rhondda Salmond, Secretariat

Apologies:

Alan Stevenson, Head of Community and Visitor Services
Brent Meakin, Head of Business Services

Others:

Rebecca Boenke (Item 8)

1. Minutes of last Meeting 25 May 2017

The FESMB agreed that the record of 25 May 2017 was held to be a true and fair reflection of the meeting.

2. Action Points and Matters Arising

Ref:	Action	Who	Target Date
11/04	Function leads to consider annual Health & Safety policy statement for their areas of responsibility, and develop appropriate approach to fulfilling requirements of the Safety Climate Survey Action Plan	All	21 July 2017
1/05	Scope of Vehicle Replacement to be reconsidered. NS/AF to agree replacement programme with TO, before confirming with DM	NS	21 July 2017
5/05	FESMB to be advised how the cost of change for the New Agency will be embedded in to Business Planning process	DM	21 July 2107
6/05	Costs for the ORP Programme to be clarified and resubmitted to the FESMB	TO	21 July 2017
1/06	Options paper to be presented to FESMB regarding the branding of vehicles and related costs during period of transition to Forestry & Land Scotland (F&LS)	NS	21 July 2017
2/06	Head of Fleet and Buildings to work with Head of ED and Head of LM to identify a forward programme of rationalisation sales based on a consistent and agreed set of business tests	NS	18 August 2017

Ref:	Action	Who	Target Date
3/06	Develop comms resources to enable sharing of the Corporate Plan, such as Trefor developed for the WWF presentation	MH	18 August 2017
4/06	Present future paper to FESMB on benefits of new IT system to support fixed price e-sales	NS	18 August 2017
5/06	Seek FESMB input to scoping submission to the Cabinet Secretary, outlining broad principles for the development of the F&LS Brand	MH	21 July 2017
6/06	Update Portfolio scoring and weightings in relation to legal and ministerial requirements	MH	21 July 2017
7/06	Collate additional information on dependencies and resourcing to inform portfolio prioritisation at July FESMB	MH	21 July 2017
8/06	Issue communications to staff updating them on the outcome of the Portfolio Board meeting	MH	21 July 2017

Action Points: 3/03, 9/4, 14/4, 2/5, 3/5, 4/5, 7/5, 8/5, 9/5, 10/5, and 11/5 are discharged.

AP 1/06: Options paper to be presented to FESMB regarding ongoing branding and related costs during period of transition to Forestry & Land Scotland (F&LS)

3. Chief Executive Update

Simon Hodge advised that he had attended two meetings with Fergus Ewing (Cabinet Secretary for the Rural Economy and Connectivity) recently. The first focussed on woodland creation, and the firming up of a programme of projects to be taken forward, including the FES New Woodland Investment Programme (NWIP)

The second meeting included discussion on the Renewable Energy Sector and efforts to simplify the application of the SG Woodland Removal Policy.

4. Organisational/Functional Updates

Estate Development: There are currently a number of renewable energy options under consideration across the estate, demonstrating some potential for new projects despite changes to subsidy regimes.

A significant tranche of New Woodland Investment Programme disposals will shortly go to market. However, further focus needs to be put on rationalisation sales of surplus buildings and development plots to fund Agency operational capital requirements.

AP2/06: Head of Fleet and Buildings to work with Head of ED and Head of LM to identify a forward programme of rationalisation sales based on a consistent and agreed set of business tests

Corporate Services: Michael Hymers advised that he will be on leave from 7 to 21 July 2017, and Siobhan Thompson will provide secretariat cover with support from FC Scotland during this period.

Human Resources (HR): Rosetta Forbes advised all Performance Management returns have now been collated for FES for 2016/17, and submitted to the Cabinet Office. A paper will be submitted at the next FESMB highlighting performance achievements, and wider HR issues.

The recent high number of independent investigations has highlighted a requirement to have more staff trained as investigators. HR will be contacting function leads to identify suitable staff to be trained.

Finance: Donna Mortimer advised that end of year finance actions were being finalised with Internal Audit.

The organisation is approaching the end of Quarter 1 for FY 2017/18, and performance information is being collated. The Business Monitoring Report process is also due to begin.

Requirements in relation to HMRC continue to be taken forward, and communications are planned to ensure full implementation of the Agency VAT strategy.

Land Management: Trefor Owen advised that he had attended the Royal Highland Show, and used the opportunity to engage directly with stakeholders in an informal environment.

He also presented at a World Wildlife Fund (WWF) event to present on New Generation Plantations to international attendees, utilising information from the refreshed Corporate Plan to outline the range of work undertaken on the National Forest Estate (NFE).

AP3/06: Develop comms resources to enable sharing of the Corporate Plan, such as Trefor developed for the WWF presentation

Business Services: Nicol Sinclair advised that Business Services are experiencing a few capacity issues at the moment due to staff turnover, absence and the peak leave period.

Communications are being developed to introduce FES staff the concept of Smarter Workplaces, and how this could be adopted across workspaces in the future.

A new IT system is being introduced to support fixed price e-sales, such as for firewood and recreation permissions. A paper will be presented to the FESMB at a future date outlining the benefits of the system.

AP4/06: Present future paper to FESMB on benefits of new IT system to support fixed price e-sales

The Finance Structures project is progressing well, and an update will be provided to FESMB at a future date.

5. Scottish Government Update

Bridget Campbell (Director for Environment and Forestry) provided an update on the political context in which the Scottish Government (SG) are currently operating. Brexit has significantly added to and changed forward priorities. As details unfold the SG is developing its strategic approach and capacity to manage the Scottish end of Brexit.

The relationship with Cabinet Secretary REC continues to develop, and we are learning how best to support him in relation to forestry and the work undertaken by FES. An opportunity still remains for FES to engage with and promote the work of the organisation to the Cabinet Secretary and others in SG in a more expansive way.

Bridget reiterated her view that FES looked to be in a good place, and how impressed she was with the positivity displayed at the Battleby Team Leaders meeting which highlighted the willingness of staff to embrace change. Throughout the transition to Forestry & Land Scotland (F&LS), and transfer to SG we need to recognise and nurture staff with the talents we need going forward.

The Forestry and Land Management (Scotland) Bill is progressing well through the Scottish Parliament, thanks to the efforts of the Bill Team and others to proactively engage in and support the Parliamentary process. It is clear that a large proportion of the Members of the Scottish Parliament (MSP's) are not conversant in forestry and/or land management, and this highlights further that more needs to be done to sell the benefits and positives achieved by FES to others.

The SG Programme for Government which sets out the legislative programme for the next year is currently being developed and will outline the manifesto to be delivered in 2018/19. This will be an opportunity to reflect the already ambitious change programme relating to forestry.

6. Forestry Devolution Programme

Simon Hodge advised that an update on progress of the New Agency Project had been provided to the Forestry Devolution Programme Board. This included presentations to inform decisions on a mandate for the Agency brand, and on the Agency ICT Target Operating Model.

There are five aspects emerging for early progress in the New Agency Project:

- Establishment of the HR Target Operating Model to inform the Programme, including Terms & Conditions and wider Staff Handbook aspects. Rosetta Forbes is meeting with SG representatives to progress this area;
- Proposed new agency governance model, particularly the appointment of Management Boards and Non Executives. Also exploration of the potential to involve and engage other external stakeholders in the future governance model;
- Definition of the benefits that will be achieved through the New Agency, and how this can be utilised to inform and communicate the vision for F&LS;
- A submission to the Cabinet Secretary, outlining broad principles for the development of the F&LS Brand;
- Effective communications, ensuring staff are aware of and understand each of the key projects and workstreams.

AP5/06: Seek FESMB input to scoping submission to the Cabinet Secretary, outlining broad principles for the development of the F&LS Brand

7. Senior Leaders Meeting

Michael Hymers advised that the agenda for the Senior Leaders Meeting to be held on 30 June 2017 has now been agreed and the focus will be the Forestry Devolution Programme, particularly the New Agency Project and component workstreams.

8. Portfolio Management

Rebecca Boenke presented the FESMB with a revised and prioritised portfolio that incorporated views and feedback from function leads on scoring, weightings, dependencies and risk.

The FESMB took the opportunity to reflect on how the revised portfolio fitted with the Strategic Objectives of the organisation, particularly in relation to legal and ministerial requirements and requested some further changes to reflect discussions.

AP6/06: Update Portfolio scoring and weightings in relation to legal and ministerial requirements

The FESMB then considered the capacity and resources required to deliver day to day activities, existing and additional change requirements, and where the organisation may face “pinch points” or risk. It was agreed that additional information was required on dependencies and resourcing to inform further discussion before decisions could be reached on a reprioritised portfolio. The Board recognised particular pinch points in some parts of Business Services, and envisaged that the additional work would help in identifying where additional capacity was required, and how we might best schedule demands on key services.

AP7/06: Collate additional information on dependencies and resourcing to inform portfolio prioritisation at July FESMB

AP8/06: Issue communications to staff updating them on the outcome of the Portfolio Board meeting

9. AOB

There were no items raised under AOB.

The date of the next FESMB is the 27 July 2017.