

Mr Allan MacKenzie
FCTU Secretary
Silvan House

Forestry Business Units
Lomond Court
Castle Business Park
Stirling
FK9 4TU
margaret.shearer@forestry.gsi.gov.uk
Tel: 01786 435609
Fax: 01786 435601

Director Forestry Business Units
Michael Ansell

Dear Allan

15 March 2010

REVIEW OF FORESTRY BUSINESS UNITS

Please see the attached letter which I have received from Andrew Stewart from Prospect. Jean Lindsay informs me that we should be corresponding via yourself and not directly with individual Trade Unions. I am more than happy to respond to the points Andrew raises and my comments are below.

Once it was decided to establish a dedicated FCS Business Unit 'Forest Renewables' it became clear to the EB that this would induce some changes in the FBUs. Therefore it was decided that it would be an appropriate time to stand back and take an overall strategic look at the FBUs and to commission a high level report into whether the FBUs are still optimally configured to meet the FC's needs going forward.

As such the review is not intended at this stage to result in a detailed action or implementation plan for any particular course: it is about assessing strategic options and weighing up alternatives (including the status quo). This is one reason why we are looking for the first report to be concluded rather swiftly – by the end of May 2010.

The intention is that once options have been established and considered as a result of this review, if any further work is required then a new process will be kicked off, further involving the trade unions and other staff.

If I turn to Andrew's specific points in the same order.

1) Steering Group comprises Simon Hodge (Chair), Simon Hodgson and Peter Garson. Advised by Jean Lindsay and myself.

2) As described above the SG has been kept to a limited membership which corresponds to the swift and high level nature of the report requested. Therefore we have not requested TUS

representation on the SG although there will be the opportunity for the TUS to discuss with the consultant undertaking the exercise and to raise it at the FBU Staff Council meetings.

3) The first meeting took place on 9 March 2010. Notes of the meeting will be published on eConnect.

4) Paul Jarah, an independent Management Consultant, with considerable experience in this field.

5) The TUS will be able to discuss this review directly with Paul and via the FBU Staff Council.

6) For reasons mentioned above no detailed consultation on the Terms of Reference have been undertaken outside the EB.

7) I think this may be something to consider if one or more options identified in the review are considered worthy of taking further. At this stage, however, we are simply dealing with examining options.

8) I am not aware of any specific Confor statements on the work of FBUs and it follows none were taken into account in setting up this review.

9) The formation of Forest Renewables has been discussed at FBU Staff Council meetings during the last year (eg 7 October 2009) and at the FCS Staff Council meeting (16 December 2009).

10) As per the agreed Recruitment and Selection Procedure there are circumstances when it will not be necessary to go through the standard recruitment and selection process. On the occasion to which Andrew refers, the Director General authorised my transfer to the post of Head of Forest Renewables as a management posting on level transfer. This post is graded at SSG1. The decision to grade the post at this level was taken by Director Scotland by evaluating and comparing:

- the amount and quality of work that the unit does and will do in future;
- how that work is or could be organised and the number of staff in the different Pay Bands needed to support this;
- comparison of job quality with similar jobs;
- wider organisational implications and benchmarking.

I hope the above has been of assistance, however, the Trade Unions will be most welcome to raise any other points at the FBU Staff Council meeting on 24 March 2010.

Yours sincerely



Michael Ansell
Director, Forestry Business Units

cc: FBU Review SG