

## Communication

### Purpose

- 1) The purpose of this paper is to advise of and discuss with the Staff Council members' concerns surrounding the Forestry Commission's apparent loss of status within the media and wider public service as the leading voice in tree and woodland issues.

### Background

- 2) Over recent years there has been much discussion between the FCTU and the FC on this subject and many of our members are still questioning why they feel that the FC is not being given the prominence via the media in responding to forestry issues.
- 3) This is a motion from the 2009 PCS Forestry Group conference in which it states:  
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*This conference regrets the FC's loss of status within the media and wider public as the leading voice in tree and woodland issues, therefore we instruct the GEC to demand that the FC at a GB level work to re-establish its position especially with regards to NGOs and other Government departments.*

- 4) Many of our members feel that communication is the biggest issue for them, whether it is at a local, regional, National or International level they feel that the profile is all wrong and want for something better.
- 5) Internally there are many media outlets; however what seems to be missing is a sense of completeness. Many good things are going on across the organisation but these appear only to be celebrated locally, if at all. We understand that it may be a question of scale that prevents some of our successes being applauded to a wider audience.
- 6) We also understand that there exists a culture of reluctance to seek information and to be kept informed. Again we would have to question why that is. Is it that the information is poor, the medium is inappropriate or that the context is wrong? If it is poor information, then what can be put in place to ensure that what is provided meets the expectations of the recipient? If we are using the wrong medium, then what information suits the right type of medium and if the context is wrong, are the skills in place to make sure that the message going out will find a resonance with the audience?

### The Proposal

- 7) We would ask that the FC takes account of the concerns expressed by our members and offer some practical solutions to this issue. The FCTU would be more than willing to engage in any appropriate process that can lead to an improvement in how we communicate within the FC.

Action

- 8) The Council is asked to **discuss** the content of this paper.

**Allan MacKenzie**  
*FCTU Secretary*  
21<sup>st</sup> October 2009