



MINUTES OF THE FORESTRY COMMISSION TRADE UNIONS' CORE GROUP MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 28TH MARCH 2007, ROOM 3, 1ST FLOOR, IN SILVAN HOUSE, EDINBURGH

Present:	Robert Beaney	FCTU Chair
	Allan Mackenzie	PCS
	Roy Laird	GMB
	Marcus Sangster	Prospect
	Tim Gill	TGWU (Item 5 by Audio Conference)
	Edward Shephard	FCTU Secretary
Minute Secretary:	Sam Telford	FCTU Office

1. Introduction

Robert Beaney welcomed the Core Group and thanked everyone for their attendance.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from Glen Dobson, Prospect F/T Official.

3. Minutes of 18th January 2007

The above were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting.

4. Pay

The Core Group noted that the direction of pay negotiations for 2007 and management's position would be greatly affected by the CSR07 settlement. However, it was **agreed** that forming the basis of a claim could still be carried out prior to the settlement date, as legitimate claims would not be dependent on the size of the settlement.

The group considered previous FCTU pay claims and it was **agreed** that elements of the 2005 claim were relevant to upcoming negotiations, in particular general pay increase, progression arrangements, overtime and TOIL. The possibilities of seeking significant improvement in these areas were discussed and Allan asked the group for thoughts on aiming for a pay increase above inflation. It was **agreed** the group would acquire feedback on this from constituent unions for a definitive standpoint and fallback position.

Action Required: All Core Group members

5. Efficiency Review Update

Tim gave an outline of the current position in England and advised the group that due to local financial issues, there were two staff at Northwest England FD being made redundant and that further redundancies in England could not be ruled out. Tim reported that he would be meeting with the two individuals concerned and Norman Trollope (Personnel Manager) to seek a manner of handling the redundancy procedure fairly. Tim would report back to Edward following this meeting.

Action Required: Tim Gill

6. Communication Meetings

The group re-visited the plan of organising discussion sessions with staff and Edward presented an updated spreadsheet, detailing target locations and meeting dates already confirmed for Robert and Edward to attend. The Core Group endorsed the plan being put together, offering assistance in arranging and attending meetings over the year as the plan developed.

Allan said that he would confirm availability with Edward for attending various meetings at a later date.

Action Required: Allan MacKeznie

7. FC Disposals

Allan referred to his paper on FC disposals, which questioned if joint unions needed a central policy when dealing with the disposal of land assets, and how it would operate if required. Allan was concerned that joint unions did not have an overall perspective of the current programme and that decisions were only being viewed at a local level.

Edward advised that since devolution, disposals were country issues and confirmed that there was no GB monitoring. Edward said that country estates were required to provide details of areas available for disposal to National Organising Committees and Staff Councils. Following discussion, the overall feeling of the group was that there was no clear need for a GB overview and that the group should ensure NOC's were content with the current procedure and the information given to them. Edward said that he would write to NOC's, asking for feedback, any information on disposal policies they may have and if there is a follow-up process on disseminating information out to union members and activists.

Action Required: Edward Shephard

8. HR Strategy

Robert referred to the draft HR Strategy circulated prior to the meeting. It was noted that TUS had several invitations to attend meetings and work with other departments as the strategy developed. Edward welcomed suggestions on which elements of the strategy trade unions should be actively involved in. Marcus volunteered to sit on the succession-planning group and Allan expressed interest in being involved in competency framework. In response to a question from Marcus, Edward said that he would seek clarification on the role on trade unions in diversity.

Action Required: Edward Shephard

The group **agreed** to re-visit the strategy at the next meeting.

9. Grievance Procedure

Edward reported that since the FCTU Council meeting in February, he had raised the concerns of Council over difficulties with HR implementing the Grievance Procedure and tensions between SN9 and PM4 systems. The Core Group **concluded** that grievances would tie in with the HR Strategy and that the working group would be taking the issues forward with the joint unions actively involved.

10. A.O.B

10.1 Meeting with Lord Clark

Robert and Edward provided a brief summary of their meeting with the Chairman on 27th March. Robert stated that they had raised concerns with the implications of CSR07 and that the discussion had been both positive and productive. The group discussed ways of directing influence towards RDAs to raise the profile of the Commission as an effective delivery body. Marcus offered to liaise with Edward on forming and leading a sub-group to organise a plan and report back to the group in April.

Action Required: Marcus Sangster

March Core Group Meeting Action List

Name	Action Required
All Core Group members	Acquire feedback from constituent Unions on a standpoint and fallback position for 2007 pay negotiations
Tim Gill	Report back to Edward following the meeting with Norman Trollope
Allan MacKenzie	Liaise with Edward over communication meeting dates
Edward Shephard	Contact NOC's to obtain feedback on disposal processes.
Edward Shephard	Seek clarification from HR on the role of FCTU in diversity (HR Strategy)
Marcus Sangster	Report back to Edward, updating on any progress with forming a group to contact RDAs.