



**MINUTES OF THE FORESTRY COMMISSION TRADE UNIONS' CORE GROUP
MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 4TH JULY 2007, ROOM 3, 1ST FLOOR, IN SILVAN
HOUSE, EDINBURGH**

Present:	Robert Beaney	FCTU Chair
	Allan Mackenzie	PCS
	Tony Cousins (sub for Marcus Sangster)	Prospect
	Edward Shephard	FCTU Secretary
	Glen Dobson	Prospect F/T Official
Minute Secretary:	Sam Telford	FCTU Office

1. Introduction

Robert welcomed the Core Group and thanked everyone for attending.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from Roy Laird and Tim Gill. The group passed on their best wishes to Sue for a full recovery from sick absence.

3. Minutes of 2nd May 2007

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

4. Pay

Robert advised that the claim had been formally submitted to management.

Edward reported that he had written to HMT in late June, highlighting members concerns with the implementation of the FC's pay system and asking to enter discussions to attempt to resolve the issue. The group noted that Council had endorsed the proposed approach to HMT and recognised that the remit to the FC was a significant limiting factor to negotiations with management in 2007. Edward added that he would circulate the letter sent to HMT to the group following the meeting.

Action Required: Edward Shephard to forward letter to HMT

Tony advised the group that he was in the process of devising an action plan for calling members to take action if necessary.

A meeting with HR has been arranged for mid-July to begin discussing a process on agreeing the FC's future pay and reward strategy, Edward asked the group to submit any key issues in need of addressing prior to this meeting.

Action Required: Core Group

5. Efficiency Review Update

Edward advised that each of the England regions were in discussions over individual regional efficiency plans and summarised the key points that were discussed with the England NOC in June. It was noted that there would be an update from management at the England Staff Council meeting on 18th July.

Edward reported that SNH were expected to move into Silvan House in August/September and that restructuring of accommodation had begun to free up the 3rd floor east.

The group noted that MES was undergoing structural changes with the potential closure of Chapelhall Workshop, (which might result in redundancies) and the possible relocation of Chirk Workshop. Edward said that a meeting had taken place with TUS and MES management to discuss the implications of the changes and that a sub-group had been formed to discuss the reviews further.

Tony reported that Marcus was in the process of seeking ways of influencing the funding decisions of Regional Development Agencies in England and that Marcus would report back to Edward with any progress.

Action Required: Marcus Sangster to report back to Edward

6. FCTU Website

The group reflected on previous discussions on the possibility of setting up a website promoting Joint Unions to replace the current Intranet site which was **agreed** to be limiting and difficult to maintain. The group **endorsed** the idea of setting this up, however they felt that discussions with management were likely necessary to determine limitations in terms of content and design.

Action Required: Edward Shephard

7. Health & Safety Reps

The group felt that H&S should remain a priority element for joint unions; in particular health such as environmental health and welfare issues. Robert concurred and said that H&S department had altered their main focus to include more health and welfare issues and that joint unions should consider doing the same. Robert added that he had discussed with H&S FC, asking for assistance in setting up training courses for reps and that the discussion had been positive. It was noted that Robert would continue to liaise with H&S.

Robert said that he had written out to NOC H&S Co-ordinators, requesting details of training that reps had received previously and suggestions of how TUS could improve the delivery of H&S to members. Robert would advise of feedback when received.

Action Required: Robert Beaney to liaise with H&S

8. Communication Meetings

The group re-visited the plan of organising discussion sessions with staff and Robert presented an updated spreadsheet, detailing target locations and meeting dates already confirmed. Robert said that he had found discussions with staff very positive so far and that the union presence in districts and conservancies had been highly appreciated with staff having the opportunity to learn about the functions of joint unions and give provide feedback on issues of concern.

Edward added that they had received several more invitations from FDMs and Conservators and that more meetings were in the process of being set up at various workplaces across GB.

9. AOB

There were no further items to add.