



MINUTES OF THE FORESTRY COMMISSION TRADE UNIONS' DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 18TH FEBRUARY, FL1 RM4, IN SILVAN HOUSE, EDINBURGH

Present:	Robert Beaney	FCTU Chair
	Edward Shephard	FCTU Secretary
	Allan Mackenzie	PCS
	Lorraine Adams	Prospect
	Roy Laird	GMB
	Tim Gill	Unite
Minute Secretary	Sam Telford	FCTU Office

1. Introduction

Robert welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for attending.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from Malcolm Currie

3. Minutes of 20th January 2008

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

4. Pay

The group held a confidential discussion on the details on pay 2008/2009 and the potential outcome of the ballot. Edward confirmed that an audio conference meeting had been arranged for Monday 23rd February to discuss the ballot results.

5. Scottish Climate Change Bill

The committee felt that Michael Russell's replacement with Roseanna Cunningham coupled with the closure of the initial consultation period has meant that the FCTU's pace of activity has slowed recently. They agreed however that as recent editorials in the [Scotsman](#) and other newspapers demonstrate, the proposal to lease out some of Scotland's woodlands to private investors remains one of the most controversial elements of the Climate Change Bill. Allan said that that the replacement of the Minister will hopefully give the Scottish Government the opportunity it needs to look objectively at the response to the consultation and to respect views expressed by the overwhelming majority of respondents. Robert reported that the FCTU Office was in the process of arranging a meeting with Roseanna Cunningham.

Edward advised that the Scottish Parliament's Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change committee would be meeting in March and that the FCTU would need to submit a response by 27th February. Allan confirmed that he would submit the response.

Action Required: Allan MacKenzie

Following discussion on how best to maintain activity and pressure, Robert said that he would set up a meeting with Sarah Boyack to agree a way forward.

Action Required: Robert Beaney

6. Grading Maintenance Programme

Edward reported that the FCTU had received an annual request from HR regarding the Job Evaluation Programme 09-10, asking for details of the post(s) that the unions wish to nominate for the programme by 9th March. Edward said that the main purpose of requesting nominations is to provide the opportunity to check that existing posts are correctly graded. The committee discussed the potential posts and groups of staff for nomination and it was agreed that submissions would be sent to Edward by 4th March.

7. T&S

Edward referred to the email he circulated prior to the meeting regarding T&S rates. He expressed concern that the FCTU did not receive a proposal on rates for 2009/10 and that HR had adopted the same approach as in 2008:

- Mileage rates equating to HMRC authorised rates;
- DSA, Meal Rate, Lodging Allowance and Retention of Room rate increased by RPI (as agreed with HMRC, to avoid tax). The RPI rate of 3% was applied from November ONS figures.
- Incidental Expenses £5 and £25 rate- no RPI increase, to avoid tax being applied.

Due to staffing changes within HR Policy, it was **agreed** that FCTU would meet with Janette Hill and Lindsay MacPherson to discuss the future of the T&S system.

8. FR Restructuring

For information, Edward reported that FCTU were in discussions with Forest Research on an Early Severance Scheme for a small proportion of staff within FR. He said that it is a voluntary scheme on compulsory terms and that they had agreed a selection matrix and called for volunteers.

9. AOB

There were no further items to be added to the agenda.