



## FOREST RESEARCH : 3<sup>RD</sup> NOVEMBER 2008

<b>Present:</b>	Edward Shephard	Chair /PCS
	Robert Matthews	SC Chair/ Prospect
	Norman Dandy	Prospect
	Mark Oram	PCS
	Steve Osborne	PCS
	Glenn Brearley	Prospect
	Dave Watterson	PCS
	Joan Webber	Prospect
	Jamie Awdry	Unite
	Nick Fielding	Prospect
Vicki Lawrence	Unite	
<b>Minute Secretary:</b>	Lorraine Adams	Prospect
<b>Apologies:</b>	Steve Coventry	Unite
	Mike Perks	Prospect

### 1. Introduction:

Edward welcomed everyone to the meeting, it was decided that we now all knew everyone and that we would move on to the next agenda item.

### 2. Minutes of Last Meeting

The minutes from last meeting were agreed subject to the change of a small typo referring to Steve Osborne as OS rather than SO.

### 3. Matters Arising From Last FCTU FR Meeting

#### a. FR Workload survey

No response was received from Wilma Harper since sending the results to her, James Pendlebury (JP) had said that he had seen a copy of the survey in our first meeting with him therefore resending at this time would be inappropriate. However this is not something to be forgotten and will be raised via Matters Arising at the Staff Council. We shall be asking management what steps they have taken since receiving the data and what was the outcome of PFS' action point under item 27 of the SC minutes.

There was agreement that this information should be systematically included in the Efficiency and Delivery Review. The Time Recording System is now in place after a 6 month lag period however there should now be robust data available. It is important that staff are including all hours worked on TRS and it was thought that staff were adhering to this.

SC Agenda Item Action: Secretary

#### b. Distribution Lists

All the unions had replied with their member lists and a distribution list for all FR

members has been updated. A resumption needs to be set up to maintain the accuracy.

Action: Secretary

#### 4. Matters Arising From Last SC Meeting

##### a. Minutes

The minutes for this meeting contain factual inaccuracies and action points that were not agreed to during the meeting. The minutes took a while to come out and we have not committed enough time early enough for checking these so it will be difficult to piece together usable minutes. Item 5 and the action point need to be removed. RM and ND agreed to set aside time to complete these changes. LA to re-raise our original request for a permanent member of staff to minute SC meetings as written in our letter to PFS.

Action: RM/ND, Secretary

It was agreed that it would be useful to have Chris Quine present at SC meetings in their new Joint format. This is an action point for the SC minute secretary. LA to confirm.

Action: Secretary

#### 5. Efficiency and Delivery Review EDR and FR 3 Centre Restructuring

**EDR:** PFS had reported to FREB that the EDR would be delivered on time (end November) and that the proposed savings should be £1-2 million however this has since been changed to £500K to £1 million. There has been no response from JP to our letter regarding the FCTU FR not joining the EDR. ES said that he would check with JP that he had received our letter. When last discussed with JP it was said that the 3 Heads of Centre (HOC) and the Head of Operations would make a new FREB. The TRS was slow to be in place but that there was a push to get this up and running asap, charge out rates were being looked at and recruitment requests were all being looked at on a case by case basis, a science strategy is being built and unrealistic business planning was being addressed. JP is awaiting the results of the EDR and would not be making sweeping changes until he had this information, and he could still reject the whole report. It was also said that staff that JP had met were positive in responding to him.

**Restructuring:** FCTU FR gave an informal gut reaction to the 3 centre proposal as set out by JP in September. There was no information at that stage what the process would be or what schedule or transition period might follow. Therefore at this stage we could not say how we wanted to be involved or consulted. It was questioned how long we would remain an agency. The FCTU FR are waiting to be engaged further in this process after JP has done his proposed all staff meetings.

**Both items are to be brought up at the SC and an information note to members will be drafted and sent.**

Action: Secretary

#### 6. Post filling procedures

Details about the Head of Operations post were circulated to RM and LA, RM responded to this questioning the role and the apparent overlaps in current jobs and also questioned that another Pay band 1 job was being funded and how exactly was this justified and funded. Answers received were not adequate. The Head of Wales post has significantly differed from the Pay band 3 post that was originally advertised and has now been filled at Pay band 1 level. We are at this time unsure how the job description has changed to account for the change in grading. The Head of Centre role had been sent out today and shows significant

overlap between this function and the function of a programme leader. There is confusion as to why the need to bid for external funding has been removed from these posts, therefore what will Centre heads be doing that is so very different or elevated when compared to programme leaders. LA to send initial feedback for HOC post and resend our queries regarding HOO and HOW.

Action: Secretary

Questions were raised about the blurring of FCTU consultation on new posts when they are based in or part funded by FC Wales but are seconded or working directly for FR. This is to be tabled at the next SC.

SC Agenda Item Action: Secretary

## **7. Inventory and Forecasting**

There is a battle going on between FR and FC over staff movements and transfers to the new unit and the budget for I&F tasks. Staff in Biometrics who have been left behind feel like a lost division and morale is at rock bottom. Some people who have been transferred are now feeling as though their career development has been affected because they are now small fish in large ponds, it has to be said though that physical relocation is not a worry. ES is to write to Wilma Harper and JP to request an update on the I&F Unit's progress.

Action: ES

## **8. Promotion Procedures**

We said that we would bring this subject up again with the new Chief Executive in post. It was decided not to discuss the issue further today but to raise it at the SC. It was thought that an open meeting to all members in early December would be appropriate to gain their thoughts on all the subject discussed so far.

SC Agenda Item Action: Secretary

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## **9. PMS Review**

There is nothing for us to involve ourselves at this level yet because the review group is looking at other possible systems before testing any for efficacy. This item will remain on our agenda to ensure that FR involved themselves as fully as the rest of the FC.

## **10. Alice Holt Water supply**

The reception received by FCTU representatives during this issue was felt to be inappropriate, as was the level of action taken by management. It was decided that a formal letter of complaint would be written and sent to Ken Charles.

Action RM and LA

## **11. FCTU FR organisation and structure**

Edward will be staying on as Chair at least until the next FCTU Fr meeting, communication papers will be going out to members to inform them of our roles and decision in the EDR and restructuring. In the interest of greater communication and to encourage trade union interest and activity it was thought that now may be a good time to resurrect the old process of all member meetings and that meeting 3 times per year might be appropriate. This is to start in December and members will be consulted at the first meetings to find out their wishes.

## **12. Pay**

It was queried whether all the unions would be balloting for action in regard to pay as PCS had already done with its members. It was reported back that each union has its own national pay campaign and ideas on action and balloting, as yet the

other unions have no plans to though Prospect did pass a successful remit to ballot on industrial action should there minimum pay threshold be breached.

**13. Date of Next Meeting – will be confirmed after the SC meeting.**