



**FCTU WALES COMMITTEE MEETING  
13<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST 2008, 10:00 – 15:00  
FORESTRY COMMISSION OFFICE, WELSHPOOL**

<b>Present:</b>	Antony Griffiths (AG)	PCS (Chair)
	Paul Finch (PF)	PCS
	Mike Kennett (MK)	UNITE
	Eric Williams (EW)	UNITE
	Barbara Anglezarke (BA)	Prospect
	Chris Tucker (CT)	UNITE
	John Williams (JW)	UNITE
	Rhian Evans (RE)	PCS (Secretary)
	Andy Phillips (AP)	UNITE

**1. Introduction**

AG thanked all those present for attending and noted that it was a good attendance for an August meeting. He also highlighted the change of name from NOC to FCTU Wales Committee.

<b>2. Apologies:</b>	Chris Edwards (CE)	PCS
	Bob Griffiths (BG)	Prospect
	St John Ashworth (SA)	PCS

Congratulations are to be extended to St John Ashworth on his recent marriage.

**3. Minutes of Last Meeting – 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2008**

Accepted as an accurate record.

**4. Matters Arising**

**Para 8. – Revised Post Filling Paper (from previous minutes Matters Arising – 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2008).** It is understood that there will be a general release of Key and Non-Key posts, but no individual staff names will be assigned to these. However, it is accepted that it will be possible to work out from many of the posts who the post holder is. Individuals will be able to discuss in more detail with their Line Manager their own particular circumstances. It is

expected that this information will be released to Members and staff in due course. - **Discharged**

**Para 14 – Provision of FC Vehicles (from previous minutes Matters Arising – 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2008).** A discussion with Dai Jones has led to a conclusion that this matter is dealt with on a case by case basis. There are no set rules. – **Discharged**

**Para 6. – Health and Safety.** See item 5 below - **Discharged.**

**Para 8. – Inconsistent travel arrangements/agreements.** It was felt by the Committee that there wasn't a pattern or enough issues being raised to suggest that there was a problem with travel arrangement/agreements for members. It was also accepted that if an issue arose then this needed to be dealt with on a case-by-case basis – **Discharged.**

**Para 9. – Workload Survey.** See item 9 below – **Discharged.**

**Para 11. – Director Wales 5 Point vision for FCW.** Trefor Owen has been offered the services of the TUS as a medium for improved communication with Members and staff, especially on issues affecting them – **Discharged.**

~~12. – Training is offered for completing competency frameworks. CT and PF will attend on behalf of TUS for information.~~ *(Where did this come from as an action?)*

**Para 13. - Greenerways.** Clarification is needed on what the FCTU rep role would entail in the Greenerways programme. Do the TUGB have any policies/views on Greenerways? Clarification to be sought on whether or not there is a TU role at present.

**Para 14. – Pensions information.** This was to be raised at the next FCTU Council Mtg, which at the time of this meeting hadn't yet taken place. This will be clarified at the next FCTU Wales Committee Mtg scheduled for the 13<sup>th</sup> November 2008.

## **5. Health & Safety**

CE is looking for a date to re-organise the meeting for H&S reps. JW noted that OGB 39 should be looked at and used as part of the resumption system. It is for whole body vibration. It should be ascertained if this has been disseminated to all relevant parties. Action: Ensure this has been disseminated to all relevant parties and encourage members to report any symptoms to line managers. EW will ask FCE staff if they are aware of it.

Robert Beaney has spoken to Emily Ramsay about specific Health and Safety training for FC staff.

When Union Reps are reporting on accidents it is necessary to consider if the member of staff responsible for the Risk Assessment is actually experienced/knowledgeable in the area of work that they are managing. This is especially true for Contracts relating to building work i.e. a Rec. Ranger Managing a Building Contractor. This is an issue that should be discussed at the H&S Meeting that CE is organising.

### **6. Maternity Leave**

It has been raised that a Union Member with Ops pay is due to go on maternity leave shortly. She has been informed that should she wish to come back on a part time basis that she would have to be down-graded to a non-ops grade. If it was felt that should she ~~is~~ still be prepared to work flexibly this is wrong, but if she wants fixed hours it could be correct.

**Action:PF will talk to Education Ranger and HR**

### **7. Plans for the Contact Centre and Staff**

6 FTA's posts at pay band 7 will now be trawled for ~~offered to staff in the~~ Contact Centre with the possibility of permanency following the 12 month period. There is concern that the staff are now only supposed to pass calls through without trying to answer any queries themselves beforehand. This was not one of the original objectives of the Contact Centre. AG has been involved in this even though the Contact Centre staff are not union members. However, this issue was taken up by the Union's because the delivery of the Contact Centre does affect Members

**Action: Ask at Staff Council why the original Contact Centre objective has been changed.**

### **8. CYB Visitor Centre Managers post – FTA to permanent before end of FTA period**

This post was FTA for three years originally, which was opposed by the unions at the time – wishing that it was made permanent from the outset. The post has now been made permanent after approx. twelve months, without a trawl taking place. Should Members pick up on this we need to be able to assure them that this was done correctly i.e. that the original trawl/advertisement clearly stated that there was a possibility for permanency.

**Action 1: CT to contact HR to check that possibility of permanency was mentioned in the original trawl.**

**Action 2: Ask Staff Council if the list of new starters/leavers could be started again.**

## **9. Workload Survey**

Due to the imminent FC Staff Survey the Committee felt that sending out a Workload Survey at a similar time would be un-welcomed by Members and staff. It was discussed whether some workload questions are likely to be included in the FC Survey and although this was likely the questions may not answer the specifics intended by an FCW Workload Survey. It was discussed that the Union's should work with FCW HR to come up with a survey that answered questions and concerns to both parties. It was agreed that a Workload Survey would still be considered, but delayed until Spring time.

**Action: Raise at Staff Council that it is still intended for the survey to be done and ask if FCW HR wish to work with the Union's on this**

## **10. Update from meeting with Director on 6 June 2008**

**Key and non-key posts** - AG expressed disappointment at the delay in receiving this information, although he noted that an e-mail had been received this morning. Trefor Owen seemed happy for names to be put to posts but this is not required.

**Action: Circulate to members that they are entitled to ask their unit manager if their post is key or non-key**

**FC Vehicles** – this has been covered. Trefor Owen says that sensible management decisions are essential. He is, however, concerned about home to work mileage.

There are guidelines available but these need to be applied fairly throughout the FC. AP did raise this issue at the last FCTU Council Mtg in Edinburgh as to whether England or Scotland had any similar issues, but none were known of. However, JW said that he is aware of problems in England. This was discharged for the time

**Coed y Cymoedd FDM** – there was an assessment centre format used for the FDM recruitment, but it was IT based rather than the previous 'Team Building' format as used for previous recruitments.

**G&L Operations Manager post– Essential v Desirable** – Trefor Owen agreed that the job trawl was not ideal as it did effectively preclude most members of staff from applying, but hoped that staff weren't put off from applying all the same.

## **11. Update on discussion with Head of Delivery**

The assets review was explained and this clarified the process. All buildings within FC's ownership have to be assessed, this does not necessarily mean that they will be sold or that they are likely to be sold.

There have been some changes made in Coed y Cymoedd Forest District by the newly appointed FDM, Dai Jones. Peter Cloke who was recently successful at attaining the District Forest role at PB3 has been asked, and accepted, a change of role which encompasses much of his former

Communities duties whilst retaining the deputy FDM role and taking on the overall management of the District's LAM's. This role retains PB3 grading. The District Forester role has thus become vacant and will be trawled, however, this will be at PB4 and not PB3. There will also be a number of other staff changes and recruitment's, which will offer promotional opportunities for some staff.

Communication with senior management in Wales is excellent. AG suggested that regular contact should also be made with the head of G&L.

## **12. Update on meeting with Head of HR**

The recruitment of PB 5's was launched at the Royal Welsh show and interviews should be in September. This is to help bring numbers up to the full complement. They are for non-specific roles and locations.

Management postings – more communication on these would be helpful to dispel the “that’s another opportunity gone” by Members. It is accepted that quite often specific reasons can’t necessary be divulged, i.e. compassionate reasons, but it was still felt that there were likely to be advantages and improved understanding as well as acceptance by Members if some reasoning is given.

Job Development – ‘in-job’ development is being looked at as an option. This is vague at the moment but it is assumed that it would be a way of gaining experience in different areas without moving post. This is to be encouraged.

Clare Lewis is keen to carry on meeting regularly with the union. A volunteer is needed for these meetings as AG meets with Director on a regular basis and so struggles to find the time to meet Clare Lewis as well.

CT said that as he is in Aberystwyth regularly he might be able to meet with CL.

## **13. TRA Update**

CT has had a list of TRA's and will circulate it.

**Action: CT to circulate list to Committee Members**

## **14. Key Posts – covered**

## **15. Apprenticeship Scheme**

AG met with Rachel Chamberlain to discuss this scheme, for which she is finalising a report on for the Management Board. Over the next five years, the

numbers should look like this: 6 in 2008, 1 in 2009, 4 in 2010, 2 in 2011 and 1 in 2012. Total 14.

**Action: PF to circulate Report to Committee Members**

**16. Any Other Business**

**PMS Review** – PF is the Wales rep on the PMS Review Board – the board consists of Robert Beaney, Paul Johnson, Fiona Wright, Helen McKae, Keith Black and Kirsty Brady. Robert Beaney offered the FCTU website for use to promote this review and to get feedback. HR accept that the TUS have a role to play and welcome their involvement. Deadline 16<sup>th</sup> December to report on the major principles of a new system. The competency framework is available on the FC Intranet and will provide a base to work from.

No Top Performer bonuses will be paid following the agreement by Head of FC HR to re-look at 'Performance Related Pay'. A questionnaire will be sent out to all staff in early September. The information from this will be used from mid September to October to draw together a steer for a new system. October – November will see focus group meetings for more feedback. There is a possibility that these meetings will be tiered. The new system should be introduced in April 2010. The TUS are to be told where the money goes that was used to pay bonuses. It can't be used in the general 'salary pot' as bonuses were non-consolidated. There may be a possibility to ask that it be put towards other staff benefits.

**Project Staff** – Cydcoed ends in December 2008, but two key members of staff have yet to find other posts. What about priority posting? Does this work?

**Action: Ask HR how many people are in the priority posting pool and how many have found posts through it.**

**Date of next Staff Council Meeting – 29<sup>th</sup> September 2008**

**Date of next FCTU Wales Committee Meeting – 13<sup>th</sup> November 2008**