

**MINUTES OF THE ENGLAND STAFF COUNCIL HELD ON
1 OCTOBER 2009 AT NOBEL HOUSE, LONDON**

Present: **Official Side**
Paul Hill-Tout, Chairman
Simon Hodgson
Sarah England
Steve Meeks
Pauline Marchington, Secretary

Trade Union side
Allan Mackenzie, FCTU England Chair (acting)
Mick Hoban, FCTU England, PCS
Stephen Holdsworth, FCTU England, PCS
Ian Everard, FCTU England, PCS
Sue Gillingwater, FCTU England Secretary (acting)
Crispin Thorn, FCTU England, Prospect
Stuart Grainger, FCTU England, PCS

1. INTRODUCTION AND APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Paul Cody, Tom Grimwood and Steve Smith. Paul Hill-Tout clarified that, Sarah England and Simon Hodgson would attend all future ESC meetings. Other EEB members would attend as required for particular papers.

2. MINUTES

On page 4 paragraph 3 the word 'diversity' is to be inserted before the word 'requirements'.

3. MATTERS ARISING

Operational Efficiency Programme

Allen MacKenzie requested an update on the Operational Efficiency Programme.

Simon Hodgson said FC is now preparing for work on this programme with a focus on renewable energy, leisure and timber production.

Paul Hill-Tout said an OEP report was being prepared for the Pre-Budget Report in Nov/Dec and said TUS would be kept fully informed/involved with any developments. The key role of the OEP was to help develop the most cost effective business model for delivering the future remit of the public forest estate. There was no read across to Scotland, which is completely separate and responding to different drivers.

Finances

Crispin Thorn requested an update.

Paul Hill-Tout replied that we have a challenging business plan ahead in which the funding settlement for 2010/11 reduces from 2009/10 and timber receipts are not forecast to reach

the £27M level built into the 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review. FC would have to find the balance and repay Defra for any support provided in previous years.

4. FUTURE NATIONAL OFFICE ARRANGEMENTS

Sarah England provided an update on progress with particular reference to the trawls for the new Heads of Communications and Executive Office. Papers would come to TUS on the planned structure and working arrangements once the team leaders were in place.

Crispin Thorn questioned the procedure for trawling the Executive Office post in going external without engaging TU Side.

Sarah England undertook to check if any procedural error had been made but stressed that:

- external trawls do not exclude internal candidates;
- we must get the best candidates available;
- we cannot address our diversity commitments without broadening our field of applicants

Finance

Steve Meeks introduced the paper on the proposed new finance team, the planned integration and the need to secure new skills to tackle new challenges.

Stuart Grainger asked about the PWC agency staff. Paul Hill-Tout said it was acknowledged that they are expensive but are key to maintaining business continuity during the change.

Allan Mackenzie said he had missed the charts at Annex 1 and requested more time to come back. This was agreed.

5. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

TRA'S

Allan MacKenzie queried the accuracy of some data on TRA's and requested information on externally funded posts.

Sarah England agreed to follow up/ correct queries and add a column on externally funded posts.

Government Targets

Allan MacKenzie asked if the new woodland creation targets were realistic. Paul Hill-Tout said they would need a new team and new ways of working to mobilise others and generate new carbon markets to help fund the programmes. Discussions were underway.

PFE Study

Paul Hill-Tout highlighted the scale of responses to the public consultation and the wide range of support for a public forest estate and FC management. It was agreed that many

colleagues had helped in the process and that their contributions were much appreciated. An early opportunity would be taken to recognise this input.

6. AOB

No items raised.

7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

11 February 2010.