

Timber Transport Forum Meeting

Apex House

99 Haymarket Terrace

Edinburgh

13.30 22nd September 2011

Approved Minutes

1. Welcome and Apologies

Present: Crispin Thorn, Pam Stott (for SG), Margaret Watson, Fergus Tickell, Andy Leitch, Ian Ross (chair), Richard Scott, Claire Glaister, David Sulman, Simon Oldham, David Eaglesham, Brendan Callaghan, John Paterson, Jamie Farquhar, Roland Stiven, Neil Stoddart, Cameron Kemp. Unfortunately the phone link to Kath McNulty did not work.

Apologies: Alistair Speedie, Chris Edwards, Mike Green, Steven Herriott, James Gilroy, Stan Corcoran, Colin McNicol, David Spaven, Will Anderson, Richard Evans, David Hern, Alasdair Ferguson,

2. Members

Ian Ross welcomed new members

- **John Paterson (Egger)**– Chair of newly formed Northumberland TTG and **Brendan Callaghan** (Director North East England, FC) who also represents Northumberland TTG
- **Crispin Thorn highlighted the fact he was attending on behalf of Jeremy Walker who has recently taken on the role of Chair for the North Yorkshire Timber Freight Quality Partnership** Jeremy was previously the Chief Executive of North Yorkshire County Council and is currently the chair of the Forestry Commission's Regional Advisory Committee for Yorkshire and the Humber.

Also departures: The Forum members noted their appreciation for the contributions of

- **Neil Dyson**, the South Scotland TTG project officer, who has gone to work for Fountains after 4 years in post
- **Emily MacLean** who has moved from RDI and her role as project officer for Stirling & Tayside and Grampian to a new role with SAC in Cumbria. **Claire Glaister** will be taking over her responsibilities for Grampian and Stirling & Tayside.
- **Bill Barker** who has moved positions to run D&G First and will no longer be acting as co-chair of the D&G group.

3. Previous Minutes

The draft minutes of 16th June 2011 were approved.

Outstanding Action Points

- Neil Dyson's action to consider current mechanisms for accessing information on road closures and propose options to other groups will be taken forward by Roland Stiven
- The action to collate information on SRDP grant awards to forest roads is to be carried forward and delivered

4. Funding Update

Pam Stott noted that the previous day's Scottish Government spending review was relatively positive for transport infrastructure given the context of constrained budgets. Freight facilities grant has not been continued but funding for such work may be available through

the Scottish Futures Fund, an element of which is for a Future Transport Fund. Freight revenue grants are continued sufficient to maintain existing projects.

STTS

Andy Leitch noted that the TimberLINK public service contract was being re-tendered with a view to its continuation post March 2012. He also reviewed the uptake of STTS grant awards. Most of the £2m available has been contracted. The floating pier project at Morvern has withdrawn [*as has the multi-user agreement for the haul road at Altnabreac*]. A reserve list application for Laverhay and Boreland is still being considered. An update of all STTS projects to date will shortly be posted on the [FCS timber transport page](#).

Andy Leitch noted that there would be a 3 year budget for the Strategic Timber Transport Fund – amount to be confirmed at meeting with Forestry Minister next week. Once funding is detailed, an STTS round will be proposed for early 2012.

The Forum agreed that the funding available for project officer post continuation in Scotland should be confirmed at the earliest opportunity.

5. Regional Updates

- **Cumbria** Richard Scott noted that the Cumbria ARMS map consultation is going public and there will be a press release in the coming week. The information is on the council website. Andrew Harper has retained his post in the council and will continue with timber transport responsibilities.
- **North Yorkshire** Crispin Thorn reported that the group was recently reconvened with a meeting in August. The group has a new chair (Jeremy Walker) and the initial meeting was supported by a wide range of representatives from the sector as well as senior staff and a Councillor from North Yorkshire County Council. A sub group is refreshing the Terms of Reference and the route map is being consulted on within the group.
- **Highland** Cameron Kemp said that the A871/873 STTS improvement project is now complete, and the road capacity survey on surrounding roads in Sutherland is well underway. Logie Bridge repair work is also underway. Two projects have had to be withdrawn (see STTS update above). The rail demonstration project is continuing with a flatrack log container design being approved by Network Rail. Colin Mackenzie is planning a technical paper on lorry wheel configuration / CTI in relation to public roads. The ARMs map is being updated.
- **Scottish Borders** Simon Oldham noted increased level of public interest in timber traffic in Borders reflecting increased volumes on the move. There has been local press coverage particularly over Tweedsmuir although the local authority has dealt with the issue effectively. The STTS project on the Potburn road is progressing well. Simon and other South Scotland group chairs are interviewing candidates for the project officer post.
- **Grampian, Stirling and Tayside** Claire Glaister noted significant public interest in timber transport issues. Forthcoming joint meeting in Banchory (Roads, routes, responsibilities) will focus on CTI, Agreed Routes and associated protocols.
- **Northumberland** John Paterson said that a meeting of Northumberland timber transport interests was well attended and a group has been established with a forward looking agenda. A [film](#) made for the Woodland Advisory Panel was shown to help brief

local authority interests. Next meeting will be on 3rd November. A sub group will also be looking at winter preparedness.

Brendan Callaghan said that the group has agreed to go down the ARM route but is keen to find out about existing protocols and links to existing consultation procedures. For instance there is currently no trigger through the felling license process to highlight thinning operations

ACTION: Progress with planned workshop to develop consultation procedures /protocols **Roland Stiven**

- **Argyll** Fergus Tickell described work in Argyll to revise the ARM and establish the associated protocols for consultation. Anyone proposing a long term forest plan involving harvesting or new planting is expected to address timber transport issues. Timber Traffic Management Plans have been prepared which set out a tailored plan, agreed by the group, to manage and monitor a level of timber traffic on specific fragile roads. These plans do not replace dialogue but set out the parameters of a workable approach to sustaining the fabric of the road. A recent timber sale from a plantation on a fragile road was able to go ahead once a timber traffic management plan was agreed. The plans are on the council website and in due course it is planned to have links to these from the FCS hosted [timbermap](#).
- David Eaglesham asked if such plans could be applied beyond the timber industry. While the approach is still being trialled it should have wider applications for other heavy traffic on fragile roads. It was proposed that this may be a subject worthy of sharing perhaps through the spring conference, regional transport partnerships or SG freight outlets for best practice.

ACTION: Consider how and when to share the lessons learned from the Timber Traffic Management Plan approach **Roland Stiven, Fergus Tickell, Kirsty Robb, Pam Stott.**

ACTION: Check to see if SRDP support to new planting is being held up by timber traffic issues. **Roland Stiven**

6. TTF Updates

- A [submission](#) was made (and circulated) to the DfT consultation on longer articulated lorries. A report on this consultation is forthcoming.
- Ian Ross noted that a paper providing an update on the timber transport groups and the STTS was tabled at COSLA's Regeneration and Sustainable Development Executive Group on 1st September 11. Although members recognised the impact of timber traffic on roads there was strong positive support for the forum and the fund.
- The Road Haulage of Round Wood Code of Practice 4th version has been finalised and is ready to go to FCS for design and publication.
- Timber Transport Groups to be encouraged to hold haulier events related to the launch of the Code of Practice. These could have an emphasis on safety as industry is keen that hauliers are included in existing measures to ensure safety in the forest industries
- The Forum will have a stand at Scotland's Transport Future in a Changing World" conference in Aviemore 27th September
- A draft of text for a GB leaflet on avoiding convoying of timber trucks has been circulated. A final draft should be circulated after comments received.

ACTION: Comments to Roland Stiven on draft text of Convoy leaflet **ALL**

7. Post election lobbying in Scotland and Wales

- Fergus Tickell and Kirsty Robb met with Mike Russell recently in his capacity as MSP for Argyll. He is most supportive of the work of the Argyll TTG.
- Alistair Speedie and Roland Stiven are meeting with Scottish Forestry Minister Stewart Stevenson on 28th September to press for support for the Forum and continued funding for the STTF
- Forest Industries and FE are meeting with SG ministers at the end of October to discuss timber and biomass supply.
- ConFor has arranged a visit by SG Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Richard Lochhead to BSW Corpach and Ferguson's Transport and maybe Boyd Bros. *[date now shifted to 5th December – TTF will ensure representation]*
- Fergus Tickell said that efforts to inform and influence local councillors had proved particularly worthwhile and all groups should consider how they can do this.
- It was suggested that we ask Confor if there is still scope to influence the Scotland Bill Committee regarding scope for borrowing to invest in rural infrastructure *[Committee has now completed its work for the session and has held its final meeting. The Bill is now at House of Lords]*
- The Forum also has links with the Scottish Government's SCOTFLAG group and with the relevant regional transport partnerships

8. Security of Timber

Jamie Farquhar raised the issue of timber security and noted that with rising timber values, this may be more important than previously. In discussion it was recognised that the volumes likely to be affected are small but some systems – such as overloading sanctions, can create perverse incentives to skim loads.

ACTION: Identify if there are particular issues regarding timber security that could be effectively addressed by the Forum. **Jamie Farquhar, Roland Stiven**

9. Spring Conference

It was agreed that the Forum would hold a spring conference and, given the development of groups in N. England, the location of the venue should encourage their involvement. Newton Rigg was suggested. The tabled list of suggested topics were considered worthy and relevant, if a bit dry. It was suggested we involve one of the major industry players as a keynote speaker to emphasise the importance of timber transport in the supply chain. If we were to hold the event in England there should be a commitment to return to Scotland for subsequent conferences.

ACTION: Develop ideas into a draft conference programme and identify a suitable venue
Roland Stiven

10. SCOTS representation

With Richard Evans and Bill Barker reducing their commitment to the Forum there is a need to ensure we retain effective links with SCOTS. Forum members will discuss with colleagues regarding who could represent SCOTS on the Forum.

11. AOB

- Ian Ross was asked, and agreed, to formally take on the role of vice-chair of the Forum. Ian also noted that he would be standing down as a councillor next year so would not be able to commit to the Forum beyond next summer.
- Pam Stott noted that Transport Scotland was preparing for winter and have a strategy for parking up vehicles in extreme weather should that be necessary. Also there will be a hotline for reporting weather problems on the trunk roads

12. The **next meetings** of the Forum will be held on

- 26th January 2012
- 29th March 2012
- 14th June 2012
- 20th September 2012