

Timber Transport Forum Meeting
FC, Silvan House,
10.30 19th April 2013
Agreed Minute

Expecting: David Sulman, Iain Peddie, Claire Glaister, Ken Sinclair, James England, Roland Stiven, Alistair Speedie, Simon Oldham, Colin Mackenzie, Robin Pope, Kirsty Robb, Crispin Thorn, Andrew Harper, Andy Leitch, Jamie Farquhar, Fergus Tickell, Margaret Watson

Apologies: Neil Dyson, David Hern, Victoria Hutchinson, Hazel Newman, Kath McNulty, David Eaglesham/Phil Flanders, Richard Scott, Steven Herriott, Margaret Horn, Neil Stoddart

1. Welcome and Apologies
2. New Members Alistair Speedie welcomed to their first Forum meeting: Robin Pope as chair and council representative on Highland TTG taking over from Cameron Kemp; Iain Peddie (Highfield Forestry Ltd) as chair of Stirling and Tayside TTG taking over from Colin McNicol; Andrew Harper (Cumbria CC and secretary to Cumbria TTG).
3. Previous Minutes
The minutes of the previous meeting on 18th January 2013 were accepted as accurate.

Matters Arising

- Type Approval Exemption for Timber Lorries
A response is still awaited from the Department for Transport but there is continuing contact.
 - Opening of Annandale and Ae Haul Road
This took place on the 4th February 2013, with a ribbon cutting by Paul Wheelhouse, MSP, Minister for the Environment and afterwards at Raehills House courtesy of Lord Annandale. John Miller Ltd provided a timber lorry for the occasion. Alistair Speedie provided background to the haul road and the work of the Forum and the minister recognised the importance of the work of the Forum and the role of the Strategic Timber Transport Fund. The event was well attended and received. A letter of thanks has been sent to the Minister. Alistair thanked everyone involved in organising the event.
4. Access Leases for In-Forest Haul Routes
Andy Leitch introduced the paper prepared by Forest Enterprise Scotland Head of Estates Laurie Tyson. The paper sets out proposals for long term access leases for timber haulage across FES land with a view to the Forum agreeing this as another option for shared use of haul roads. Discussion recognised the need to take account of the market and the contribution of access to land values but highlighted the perceived 'moral' expectation of FCS as a public body to support shared access to forests particularly where this provides wider public benefit as recognised by the Strategic Timber Transport Scheme. It was recognised that while upfront capital payments for servitudes are eligible for support by STTS, future payments resulting from a lease would not be eligible. It was also felt that it was inappropriate for a shared document on access leases to include figures based on the current market as this will change over time. It was agreed that Forum members would reflect on this proposal and provide feedback allowing the Forum to respond to FES.
ACTION ALL to provide comment on this paper to Roland by 10th May; Roland to prepare a response to FES.
 5. Funding
 - STTF
Andy Leitch reminded the Forum that the £9m budget had been profiled over three years at £2m, £3m, £4m. Year 1 has seen a £240k shortfall but it is hoped that this can be carried forward into year two. Taking account of money spent, contracted, and offered to existing projects there remains around £1m to allocate and spend prior to March 2015. A call for bids will be made immediately with a deadline to be set for the end of the summer. Andy reiterated that the panel would be looking for clear additionality in projects and would not

support forestry operations that would anyway be required. Fergus Tickell noted that Argyll TTG would be holding a workshop for applicants to share this advice and to ensure that projects brought forward have a good chance of success. Alistair Speedie noted that with limited funds remaining in this round we should be looking to identifying future needs from the fund.

ACTION Andy Leitch to announce a call for STTS bids.

ACTION Alistair Speedie, Andy Leitch and Roland Stiven to consider preparation of document for future funding.

- Funding for Grampian Agreed Routes

Claire Glaister introduced the paper 'Maintenance for Agreed Routes and Council Budgets' noting the experience of recent damage to the U108H in Moray. This is one of several minor roads improved for timber haulage using EU funding in the 80s and 90s which the council expected to maintain but have been constrained in doing so by available funding. The paper proposes lobbying for specific funding for maintenance of such agreed routes.

Kirsty Robb noted that while the road is categorised as an agreed route it was already subject to conditions typical of a consultation or severely restricted route. Fergus Tickell felt that Agreed Routes ought to be 'copper-bottomed' and not require restrictions on use and Alistair Speedie re-iterated that agreed routes status should only be applied to robust strategic roads which indeed should be maintained for use by all. Roland Stiven noted the tendency in some parts of the country for industry to push for agreed routes status of minor roads believing it will make haulage more reliable whereas, in his view, the partnership approach works best where there is a realistic categorisation based on the capacity of the road. Margaret Watson noted that future planting opportunities were increasingly being linked to agreed routes status indicating long term reliable access. Alistair Speedie asked whether local councillors had been involved or expressed any views on the situation in Grampian. So far, not.

The view of the meeting was that while there is a general expectation that improved roads given agreed routes status will be maintained by the council, the routes maps must take account of ageing and changing road conditions and levels of use over the long term. The exit point data being collected on forecast volumes will help in this. The Forum felt that lobbying for a distinct fund for maintenance at a national level was unlikely to be constructive but it was noted that the existing STTS already supported priority work on public roads taking timber traffic and that this could include preventative works (such as drainage) to sustain the network.

Jamie Farquhar noted that the current political climate was more industry-friendly than when the fund was set up and that in rural areas in particular, social and economic benefits were strongly inter-linked. When making the case for retaining a future STTF budget from national government the Forum could focus more strongly on the demand for sustaining timber-strategic parts of the public road network.

- A Timber Transport Fund for England

Roland Stiven introduced this paper suggesting the need for concerted action at various levels to press for a timber transport fund for North England. The benefits of such a fund in cementing local partnerships were highlighted at the recent meeting of the NE England group where Alistair Speedie had addressed the group and Highways department staff members.

The Independent Panel on Forestry in England has suggested that the sector should be liaising with local enterprise partnerships (LEP) ensuring they are well informed of the needs of the industry. Crispin Thorn reported that the Forestry Commission in England had met recently with the LEP in the North East to brief them on the sector and that there is scope for the timber transport groups to engage directly. The North Yorkshire group is currently preparing a factsheet on timber transport for their LEP outlining the impact the industry has on the wider economy, how many jobs it supports, key priorities for the industry and barriers to growth. The nascent 'Grown in Britain' campaign was mentioned. This aims to increase demand for homegrown timber with a view to enabling investment in the supply chain. This

may help strengthen the calls for investment in public roads used for timber haulage. It was agreed the Forum would continue to co-ordinate effort towards achieving funding for England.

6. Regional Updates

- Ireland

The Forum exchanges minutes with the Forestry Industry Transport Group in Ireland. Roland Stiven summarised points of interest.

- A 46 tonne limit on GVW for 6 axle artics has been introduced in the ROI (up from 44t) from 1st April 2013. Some conditions apply.
- A Coillte-led project is fitting over 200 timber lorries with vehicle tracking and engine management systems at a cost of Euro 2500/ lorry. Such systems would allow for improved timber security, real-time information, vehicle security, route management etc.
- The group is developing a Good Practice Guide –currently going out to tender.
- There have been discussions around, and encouragement of, tyre pressure control systems.

- Wales

Kath McNulty (had reported earlier) that she no longer has paid time allocated specifically for timber transport. Others in the Wales timber transport group will be encouraged to take on more responsibility.

There has been good uptake of tyre pressure control systems since the demonstration in 2011 with 22 lorries based in Wales now equipped.

A cabinet reshuffle before Easter has put Edwina Hart Minister for Economy Science and Transport Minister in charge of Transport. It would be a very good idea to write to her introducing the Forum, the work of the group in Wales and the on-going issues.

ACTION Send letter of introduction to Edwina Hart (Roland Stiven, Kath McNulty, Alistair Speedie)

- North Yorkshire

Crispin Thorn said that the group met at the end of January. The Agreed Routes Map is online together with a local guide to good practice. The group are undertaking a survey of timber hauliers on the resources of vehicles and equipment available in the county – and compliance with Driver CPC requirements. Some contentious haulage-related cases are being addressed effectively by the group and the rail haulage from Ribbleshead continues. See also item 8 regarding factsheet to Local Enterprise Partnership.

- North East England

James England said that around 40 people attended the recent meeting of the group along with Highways engineers. The input of Alistair Speedie was seen as constructive and was appreciated. There has since been a meeting of an Agreed Routes working group involving highway inspectors for the west of the county and another will be held for the north of the county at a date to be arranged. See also item 8 regarding sector meeting with Local Enterprise Partnership.

- Cumbria

Andrew Harper said that the Cumbria ARM has now been online for 12 months and led to increased partnership working, good communication and genuine benefits. Changes continue to be made to the map as experience is gained. There are still cases of road damage and use of restricted routes. Road condition generally is an issue and needs continued engagement with elected members regarding economic benefits and impacts.

- Scottish Borders

James England said there were no current STTS bids or projects from Scottish Borders in part due to lack of council co-funding. There is a recognised need to keep the Agreed Routes Map under review and two roads have recently been changed from agreed to consultation status. The group are still working on mechanisms for co-ordinating multi-

access onto restricted routes. Kirsty Robb noted that in Argyll the management plan is open for all to see and those involved are asked to discuss and agree usage amongst themselves.

The B711 from Craik is closed to HGVs while work is being undertaken on St Martin's Bridge.

- Ayrshire
An agreed routes map for South Lanarkshire has been drafted.
- Dumfries & Galloway
The A708 Selkirk Moffat road has had a section washed out closing it to all traffic while it is repaired. Good relations with SEPA have benefited the swift repairs.
- Stirling & Tayside and Grampian
Claire Glaister said that both groups are keen to adopt a protocol as the basis for consultation (see item 9 below). Data collection on production forecasts for exit points is being reviewed in Stirling and Tayside. The group is investigating possibilities of retaining sections of access developed for the Beaully-Denny power line where these could offer timber transport solutions - for example to serve a new large scale woodland creation project.

Bidwells are developing a project for rail haulage from Rannoch and may be looking for grant support from Freight Grants or STTS. This is distinct from FCS plans for rail haulage from the Barracks plantation.

The failure of the U108H (see item 5) has triggered a review of agreed routes in Morayshire.

There has been effective contact with Fife council over consultation on a long term forest plan.

- Argyll
Kirsty Robb reported that Stuart Clark will be the new council representative on the group taking the role of vice-chair. Callum Robertson will remain involved in operations. The group aims to maintain engagement of councillors, MSPs and others through a regular e-newsletter covering timber transport issues. Ten Timber Traffic Management Plans have been prepared over the last two months.

A pre STTS workshop is planned in May to ensure STTS bids have a good chance of success.

Andy Leitch reported on-going discussions regarding the proposed use of large landing craft (500 tonnes) for sea-transport from Argyll.

- Highland
Colin Mackenzie noted the £5m worth of current projects receiving STTS funding including an offer of support for Strathrail which it is hoped will demonstrate lineside loading from the flow country in Sutherland. Robin Pope has prepared a report on timber transport for the council committee.

The Highland TTG is also helping deliver a £5k Hitrans-funded project looking at timber traffic on the roads – especially in the Moray Firth area. Data on traffic movements in and out of the processing mills will be collected on three days. Alistair Speedie encouraged others to engage with their regional transport partnerships.

7. Biosecurity and Timber Transport

Roland Stiven reported his attendance at a Forestry Commission meeting considering the role of timber transport in managing biosecurity – particularly in connection with the spread of

Phytophthora ramorum. Several hauliers had provided feedback to Roland on current practices. Discussion focused on the relative risk of timber haulage in spreading the pathogen (which was generally considered to be low) and how this should be managed. No significant change in measures was put forward. The Forum agreed that it would be helpful to maintain engagement with this issue.

8. New Agreed Routes Map Website

A link to the trial website was sent out on 25th March 2013 - somewhat later than planned - asking for feedback by 18th April. Feedback has been generally positive but highlighted some queries and suggesting improvements. A training event for administrators is being held after the Forum meeting and will develop the user guidance. There are plans to add main processor sites to the map and to produce downloadable pdfs of agreed routes maps for each area. The new website will replace the current FCS-hosted map in due course.

9. Improving the web presence of timber transport

Claire Glaister introduced the Timber Transport Management Protocol paper initially prepared for Stirling and Tayside and Grampian groups and based on the work done in Argyll. The idea is to produce agreed text on timber transport issues for local authority websites describing the consultation process expected from the Agreed Routes Maps and covering other issues. The Forum is invited to provide comment on the draft by the end of April 2013. It is envisaged that the developed text could be adopted by other groups and integrated into the information on the Forum website. Jamie Farquhar stressed that the 'typical traffic management solutions' needed to be presented as options.

ACTION ALL provide comment on Timber Transport Management protocol paper by 30th April 2013

10. Guidance on reduced ground pressure vehicles in timber transport.

Colin Mackenzie reported that this was in development and the next step is talk directly to some of the hauliers operating such systems prior to preparing a draft for wider consultation. Ken Sinclair noted that FES is looking to reclassify its forest road network to include a restricted class that would require use of low ground pressure vehicles in order to preserve the asset. David Sulman said that the guidance is vital as there is currently misunderstanding on the value of the technology and what it can be expected to achieve. Colin noted that the guidance could not be expected to provide precise prescriptions for different roads. Ken Sinclair noted the potential for confusion with 'tyre pressure monitoring systems' which simply indicate tyre pressure rather than enable it to be altered automatically.

11. Truckfest 2013

Roland Stiven noted interest from the previous exhibitors in repeating the Truckfest forestry stand but highlighted the £3k cost. There was discussion on whether this represented value for money and reached the right audience. It was agreed that if it was to go ahead the industry should be asked to co-fund the stand.

12. Conference 2014

Roland Stiven introduced the previously circulated paper outlining ideas for the national conference in spring 2014 – suggesting Dumfries as a location. Kirsty Robb asked if the idea, raised at the project officers' meeting in Nov 2012, of instead holding a series of regional events or a 'road show' had been considered. Crispin Thorn recognised that regional events were important but said that the biennial national conference is well attended and received and should be continued. Fergus Tickell suggested regional events in the alternate years and noted the success of a previous Argyll event aimed at councillors. It was agreed that the Forum should encourage and support regional groups in developing locally-targeted timber transport events. Roland Stiven outlined the proposal for a book of case studies of timber transport projects including both STTS supported infrastructure works and other examples from England and Wales. This would form the basis of some of the conference presentations.

ACTION Timber Transport Groups to propose regional timber transport events
ACTION ALL Provide comments on the style of the draft case studies circulated.

13. England Woodlands and Trees Partnership Forestry Climate Ready Action Plan
Roland Stiven noted his attendance at the first meeting of this group. The Forum has committed to sharing best practice on timber haulage in England and to share relevant guidance material including the carbon footprint of timber transport report. The group expects to meet in London. David Sulman is also on the group and is likely to be able to represent the Forum at future meetings.
14. Forestry Industry Safety Group
David Sulman reported that the steering group is meeting next month and that the workstreams are making progress. Canadian logging contractors and a representative of the BC Forest Safety Council are featuring at four FISA events across Britain in June (17,18,19,20th) which may cover issues relating to safety and timber haulage. [see www.ukfisa.com]
15. Driver CPC
Roland Stiven noted the latest information from Skills for Logistics indicating that only 19% of the professional driving workforce has so far obtained the full Driver CPC qualifications required for the Driver Qualification Card. David Eaglesham of RHA had emailed to say there was 'general recognition that training was lagging behind target levels and that pressure needs to be kept up on hauliers/drivers to undertake the necessary courses. However there is some debate about the robustness of current data and we [RHA] are seeing an increase in requests for training. In general we don't think the position (in Scotland) will be as dire in September 2014 as is being painted in some quarters but pressure needs to be kept up to ensure training take up is maximised.'
16. AOB
 - Timber Transport Toolkit. Roland Stiven noted that elements of the timber transport toolkit have been taken forward in other documents such as the good practice guide and may warrant review.
 - **ACTION ALL to provide comments at next meeting on the need to review the timber transport toolkit.**
 - The Forum has been asked to provide a speaker for a joint ICF Confor and Scottish Land and Estates event on 'Managing local conflict through better communication' on 12th or 13th June. Alistair Speedie offered to cover this if his diary allows.
 - Alistair Speedie asked the timber transport groups to note any changes to police input to timber transport arising from the restructuring of the police to Police Scotland.
17. Dates of next meetings
 - 28th June
 - 4th October