

Minutes for GTTG meeting

Date: 21 November 2018

Location: James Jones & Sons Ltd, Burnroot Sawmills, Aboyne AB34 5PN

Present:

Will Anderson – Chair (WA)

David Leslie – Host (DL)

Ian Cameron – Moray Council (IC)

Angela Funk – Aberdeenshire Council (AF)

Cameron Gillies – Euroforest (CG)

Tim Gordon-Roberts – FCS (TGR)

Lee Grigor – James Jones (LG)

Dan Johnston – James Jones (DJ)

Andrew Nicol – DWP (AN)

Sandra Perez – RTS (SP)

Roland Stiven – TTF (RS)

Simon Stuart – Ayrshire & South Lanarkshire TTG (SS)

Frank Tomlinson – Tilhill (FT)

Harry J Wilson – RTS (HJW)

Alastair Young – FES (AY)

Apologies

Mark Atherton – Moray Council

Jim Cargill – Nestrans

Steve Conolly – Cawdor Forestry

Neil Dyson – Lansdown Allen Management

Claire Glaister – GTTG Project Officer

Oli Hands – RTS

Chris Little - RHA

Derek Murray – Aberdeenshire Council

Derek Nelson – Forestry Commission Scotland

Jonathan Ritchie – James Jones

Agenda Item	Action	Appointed person/s
7. (19/11/15)	Confirm minimum tonnage thresholds for consultation on felling licences at meeting with FCS	IC/DM
7. (17/03/16)	GTTG to discuss/agree requested change to ARM classification of U144H	All
6. (14/07/16)	Pull together events programme for discussion with members	RS/CG/LAs
3. (12/12/16)	Discuss potential planning permission conditions for road improvements at Conyachie Road end	DM
9. (12/12/16)	Confirm Prior Notification situation with Confor	RS
3. (16/03/17)	Discuss potential for STTS application for an in-forest route through the Gownie road forest complex	NC/CG
3. (15/11/17)	Contact industry representatives for production data and priority roads	CG/industry
6. (15/11/17)	Discuss STTS eligibility/Prior Notification requirements with RS	CG/RS
3. (21/11/18)	GTTG members to come forward with potential STTS projects	All
4. (21/11/18)	Circulate the draft RTTG Governance document for comment	CG/All
4. (21/11/18)	Circulate the draft Timber Transport Management Protocols for comment	CG/All
6. (21/11/18)	Review ARM status of the Duthil-Glenferness road	All

1. Welcome, introductions and apologies

David Leslie gave an introduction to James Jones & Sons and to the Burnroot Sawmill.

2. Notes of last meeting on 14 March 2018 & matters arising

Action table below has been amended to reflect current status (those now completed have been shaded; carried forward actions added to current action table above.

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7. (17/03/16)	GTTG to discuss/agree requested change to ARM classification of U144H	All
6. (14/07/16)	Pull together events programme for discussion with members	RS/CG/LAs
3. (12/12/16)	Identify roads where potential STTS works would be beneficial	All
3. (12/12/16)	Discuss potential planning permission conditions for road improvements at Conyachie Road end	DM
8. (12/12/16)	Discuss effectiveness of internal circulation of consultation invitations – confirmed during meeting	DM
9. (12/12/16)	Confirm Prior Notification situation with Confor	RS
3. (16/03/17)	Discuss potential for STTS application for an in-forest route through the Gownie road forest complex	NC/CG
4. (12/07/17)	Approve revised GTTG protocols – actioned during meeting	All
3. (15/11/17)	CG to contact STTS admin team to clarify issue or remittance advices	CG
3. (15/11/17)	IC to advise CG of completed works and arrange site inspection	IC/CG/RS
3. (15/11/17)	CG to circulate details of overall STTS funding figures	CG
3. (15/11/17)	Contact industry representatives for production data and priority roads	CG/industry
3. (15/11/17)	Attend FFG workshop and report back to GTTG	CG
4. (15/11/17)	Finalise managing timber transport protocols, post on GTTG web page and circulate to GTTG members and industry colleagues	CG
5. (15/11/17)	Circulate copy of timber haulage questionnaire to members	CG
6. (15/11/17)	Discuss STTS eligibility/Prior Notification requirements with RS	CG/RS
7. (15/11/17)	Circulate Transport Scotland contact details to CG	ICo
7. (15/11/17)	Request higher profile of new ARM website on TTF website	CG/RS

- **Confirm minimum tonnage thresholds for consultation on felling licences at meeting with FCS:** To be carried forward.
- **Wider benefits project:** Put on hold and replaced by recently announced investment in transport infrastructure analysis project (see also **3.3 Opportunities for future investment in transport infrastructure** below).

3. Strategic Timber Transport Scheme update and future GTTG projects

3.1 Update on current projects

3.1.1 Aberdeenshire Council:

AF advised that 7 schemes are 95% finished, spending all allocated funds, and that claims have been submitted. Looking to the future there is scope for new projects next year subject to funding covering Marr and Kincardine and Mearns. Aberdeenshire Council are keen to hear from industry regarding specific road/s or issues.

3.1.2 Moray Council:

IC advised that one of the Darnaway recycling site was too steep for the recycling machine so was resurfaced instead. He also advised that the drainage improvements on the Torbay road (U77H) weren't carried out as works had been undertaken at the forest access by the forest owners in advance of harvesting operations. Claims will be submitted in January.

3.1.3 Regional Timber Transport Advisory Service:

RS highlighted that STTS support is expected to continue for Project Officers. GTTG members confirmed their commitment towards the role.

3.2 Emerging plans for 2018-19

WA requested that industry comes forward with potential projects. AN described situation at Coynachie road end on A97 Rhynie to Huntly Road where a school bus coming from the south met a timber lorry on a narrow bridge and suggested that this was an accident waiting to happen. AF advised that as there have been no accidents to date, the Council are not able to prioritise and that location would have to be on long list. GTTG members suggested that STTS could consider safety more.

3.3 Opportunities for future investment in transport infrastructure

RS introduced the work that Claire is currently undertaking. WA noted the underinvestment in rural roads and whilst IC agreed that 70% funding from the STTS is good, he advised that match funding is being squeezed and that Moray Council is not clear in earmarked match funding. AF agreed and confirmed that they had used all money available for this year. She also advised that most of the council's budget is for surface dressing which has little impact; roads need resurfacing and strengthening.

4. To be on not to be – standardised

4.1 Governance

RS introduced the work he was tasked to do by the TTF in response to queries from some stakeholders as to purpose, authority, membership, functioning etc. of the RTTGs; a draft Governance document has been produced and comments sought; CG to circulate to members for information/comment. WA suggested that informality is good and that he is not aware of any problematic questions. The consensus of the group is to set out a clear bullet point remit of the group but not to formalise membership or roles as proposed.

Members thought it would be useful to standardise road definitions (ARM classifications) across council boundaries where appropriate e.g. the A939 which is a default Agreed Route in Grampian turns into a coloured up Consultation Route in Highland.

On the subject of Consultation Routes, AF highlighted that the Council is not being consulted on most Consultation Routes – e.g. on Suie Hill where improvements have encouraged a greater use by timber lorries and slight widening has encouraged vehicles to try and pass in areas where there are no passing places resulting in further verge and drainage damage; she advised that significant expenditure would be required to make the road an Agreed Route. Industry members noted that some additional use of Suie Hill by timber lorries has been caused by the road works at Rhynie.

4.2 Guidance

RS introduced the guidance and draft protocol that has been developed for circulation at a national scale; GTTG members noted that these were already in place for Grampian. There was some discussion about the limits of responsibility e.g. of harvesting sector for haulage etc.. CG to circulate draft protocol for information/comment.

4.3 Accesses

AF has evidence of new accesses/alternations to existing accesses being done without planning permission (on A, B and C-class roads). WA reinforced the point that we need to be clear on this - it is the landowner's responsibility and agents need to be responsible and not land hauliers in a position of operations being halted because they are using an unapproved – illegal - access. Members noted that responsible agents are pricing against those who are willing to avoid their responsibilities.

In terms of unclassified (U-class) roads, these require prior notification and a road opening permit. Members all agreed that unclassified roads are not classified.

5. Under the spotlight

5.1 Public perception/expectations

5.2 Industry response

5.3 Consultation and engagement

This item was combined to reflect on previous email correspondence to GTTG and wider industry colleagues about a complaint that had been received regarding timber lorries using the C12E & C13E (Dallas Moor area). IC relayed the background to the complaint which involved STTS-funded roads on which signage has been erected acknowledging support from the Strategic Transport Scheme. This had caused concern that these roads were now considered as strategic timber transport routes, thereby encouraging them to be used by timber lorries as a rat run in preference to using more major routes. Complaints had also been made regarding driver conduct and speeds on the narrow roads.

GTTG members discussed how comments like this should be brought to the Group but that it is important to be proportionate in any response and not raise expectations as to what can/should be done. Ideally, lorries should travel on higher-class roads but it was noted that, compared to the whisky industry, for example, forests are at fixed locations and so have limited choice in some circumstances.

6. GTTG members updates

6.1 Round table updates and topical discussion

- Members discussed the current consultation on the Scottish Forestry Strategy. WA confirmed that the GTTG is not submitting a response directly but would contribute through the Forum response. All members were encouraged to provide comment before 29th November and for individual organisations to respond directly. RS advised that responses should recognise the value of rural road improvements to all rural industries, including, IC suggested, the whisky industry.
- AN noted the Duthil-Glenferness road has been upgraded for big windfarm vehicles which may allow its re-categorisation to an Agreed Route and requested that this be reviewed by Moray Council/GTTG. IC suggested that other road uses should be taken into account at the consultation stages for windfarm development. RS noted that windfarm improvements had been used as co-finance for STTS.
- WA confirmed that the process for changes to an ARM classification is to bring the proposal/s to the GTTG for discussion/approval.
- IC highlighted the lack of notification by agents of planned haulage operations.

- RS advised that STTS signs should stay up for 5 years.
- LG noted that there is a clear difference in perception between those in industry and general public with regard to timber lorries which was very apparent at the APF. Scotland has made some progress.
- TGR advised that he has replaced Ian Cowe on the GTTG.
- SS welcomed the opportunity to attend the group and highlighted that there is an interest in Ayrshire and South Lanarkshire for clarifying the reasons/justifications for Consultation Route status.
- Members discussed convoying and agreed that what constitutes a convoy depends on context – e.g. fragile road or disruption to other users.

7. Date of next meeting/s

7.1 Wednesday 13 March 2019

8. Lunch – kindly provided by James Jones and Sons

9. Haulage in practice

9.1 Lorry tracking systems

DJ gave a presentation of the Navman system used by James Jones to track timber lorries; this is used across the James Jones fleet and in the lorries of their full time sub-contractors. The system enables the location and speed of the vehicle to be recorded at 2 minute intervals and has been used to clarify questions from members of the public regarding lorry speeds etc.. From a safety point of view, sensitive areas (e.g. OPLs) can be “geofenced” so that an in-cab warning system is triggered when a lorry enters these locations.

9.2 High Vision lorry

DL and LG gave a tour of the Volvo (best practice) lorry with High Vision crane which enables the driver to load timber from the passenger seat in the cab. Members were then taken on a tour of the mill and provided with the opportunity to see the significant investment that has been/is being made in state of the art machinery, equipment and processing capacity.