

Minutes for GTTG meeting

Date: 13 November 2013

Location: Forestry Commission Scotland, Grampian Conservancy Office, Huntly

Present:

Will Anderson – Seafeld Estate (WA)

Ian Cowe – Forestry Commission Scotland (IC)

Claire Glaister – GTTG Project Officer (CG)

Stuart McFarlane – Aberdeenshire Council (SMcF)

Johnny Morren – Moray Council (JM)

Neil Crookston – Scottish Woodlands Ltd (NC)

Graeme Ralph – Euroforest (GR)

Andrew Nicol – DWP

Roland Stiven – Timber Transport Forum

Alastair Young – Forest Enterprise Scotland (AY)

Apologies:

Sandy Hogg – James Jones & Sons (SH)

Steve Conolly – Cawdor Forestry (SC)

Agenda Item	Action	Appointed person/s
9. (11/12/12)	Members to put forward additional names for new group members	All
3. (07/03/13)	Status change of U108H to be made on ARM	CG/RS
5. (18/07/13)	Update ARM website with changes agreed for U140E, U14E & C45H	CG
6. (18/07/13)	Update ARM website to show Consultation Routes	CG
2.	Work with FISA Working Group 6 to develop programme for haulier liaison days	CG
3.	Establish timber production forecasts for local blocks served by the C13E	CG
3.	Investigate inclusion of any timber traffic management plans in Planning Application for Estover CHP Plant at Craigellachie	JM/CG
3.	Review timber production figures and prepare list of proposed TTMP conditions for C13E	JM
3.	Circulate proposed TTMP conditions in advance of next GTTG meeting	CG
3.	Agreed TTMP conditions and methods of dissemination at next GTTG meeting	All
3.	Review list of potential Consultation Routes in Aberdeenshire	SMcF
3.	Advise UPM of permitted use of U108H	CG
4.	Draft information flyer for dissemination to forest managers/agents	CG
4.	Approve content of flyer and dissemination methods	GTTG
5.	Consider development of pre-emptive drainage programme for Aberdeenshire	SMcF/CG
7.	Add SCOTS project to agenda for future GTTG meetings	WA/CG
9.	Members to provide FCS with Purchase Order numbers for match funding contribution invoices	GTTG

1. Welcome, introductions and apologies

WA welcomed all those present and confirmed apologies received

2. Notes of last meeting on 18 July 2013 & matters arising

Minutes of the last meeting confirmed as correct.

Action table below reviewed and amended to reflect current status (those now completed shaded); carried forward actions added to current action table

Agenda Item	Action	Appointed person/s
9. (11/12/12)	Members to put forward additional names for new group members	All
3. (07/03/13)	Status change of U108H to be made on ARM	CG/RS
3. (07/03/13)	Timber production data collection exercise to be initiated	CG
2.	Post Timber Transport Consultation Protocol onto S&TTTG (& GTTG web pages	RS
2.	Circulate Report on HTTG/HITRANS timber flow data collection project	CG
3.	Forest managers/agents to provide list of priority roads to CG	Industry members
3.	MC engineers to provide list of priority roads for drainage works	JM
3.	Draft Letter of Support for Pre-emptive draining programme STTS proposal	CG
3.	Chair to sign Letter of Support for inclusion with application	WA
3.	Prepare and submit STTS Pre-emptive draining programme bid	JM/CG
3.	Circulate STTS reminder email to all members	CG
5.	Update ARM website with changes agreed for U140E, U14E & C45H	CG
6.	Contact FISA Working Group 6 Chair to investigate involvement options	CG
6.	LAs to provide list of routes where previous consultation has taken place	JM/SMcF
6.	Update ARM website to show Consultation Routes	CG
8.	Follow up lorry overturn trends with police	SH
8.	Dates for Spring & Summer 2014 meetings to be sought and confirmed	WA/CG

Follow up lorry overturn trends with Police

CG confirmed that SH had received a response from Police Scotland confirming that there has only been one other recorded incident of a vehicle overturning at the A96 Forres Enterprise Park roundabout and that this was when an agricultural vehicle had overturned during June 2007.

FISA Working Group 6

CG had contacted Mick Bottomley, Chair of FISA Working Group 6, to ask if they would be interested in running any future haulier liaison events in conjunction with the GTTG. Mick has responded to say that members of the Working Group thought this joint approach was a good idea and would like to be involved and support such an initiative. He did however think that the demand/programme for such event should be canvassed first but that the work of FISA and safety improvements in the sector would be good subjects to promote.

3. Agreed Route Maps

3.1 C13E Dallas to Knockando

WA referred members to the summary (see attached – **Summary of C13E Agreed Route change request for GTTG members**) provided in advance of the meeting and confirmed that the C13E is a strategic route for the industry; not just for local timber traffic, but also in terms of a significant projected increase in timber traffic heading south to feed the planned CHP plant in Craigellachie.

JM confirmed that at present, the volume of traffic using this route was manageable but that surface water was causing some problems on the section between Tapps and the U144E. He also explained that there has been limited widening of the road at the top of the hill but that no strengthening has been carried out.

GR advised that as a result of the condition of the road, haulage was currently being planned to take place over summer months only.

AY confirmed that FES & Scottish Woodlands SRW currently travels north to Norbord and Gordon's etc.

Given the importance of this route to the forest industry, GTTG agreed that its status as an Agreed Route should be maintained, wherever possible. In order for the industry to work closely with the Moray Council and to seek to ensure that timber movements were scheduled at manageable levels, WA suggested that this route be considered for a Timber Traffic Management Plan.

GTTG members agreed that this would be a useful means of controlling traffic along the route and should be progressed as follows: -

- Establish timber production forecasts for local blocks – FES, SWK, Fountains Forestry and Cawdor Forestry (CG)
- Investigate inclusion of any timber traffic management plans in Planning Application (JM & CG)
- Review timber production figures and prepare list of proposed conditions (JM)
- Circulate proposed TTMP conditions in advance of next GTTG meeting (CG)
- Agreed TTMP conditions and methods of dissemination at next GTTG meeting (GTTG members)

3.2 Consultation Routes

Following agreement at the July GTTG meeting that key consultation routes should be highlighted on the ARM website, in addition to the GTTG Agreed Routes, JM had identified all those roads on which consultation has been sought previously (see attached **Agenda item 3.2. Consultation Routes (Moray)**). GTTG members agreed that these should now be added to the ARM website.

SMcF confirmed that there was not such a history of recording consultation routes in Aberdeenshire but that he would review the network and bring any routes he would wish to be highlighted on the ARM website to the next GTTG meeting.

3.3 C4L & U47L (Seafield Estate)

Members were shown the roading network on part of Seafield Estate (see attached ***Proposed route changes at Seafield Estate***) and discussed the proposal to declassify a section of the U47L from an Agreed Route to a Consultation Route and, in exchange, upgrade a section of the C4L from a Consultation Route to an Agreed Route.

WA, SMcF and JM confirmed that they were in agreement over these proposed changes and GTTG members had no objections to these changes being made.

3.4 U108H Gownie Road

Following discussions regarding the downgrading of the U108H earlier this year, the Moray Council had requested that only unloaded lorries use this road. SWL have recently submitted a request that this restriction be lifted to enable the harvesting of a small block of timber to which there was no alternative access.

JM recognised that by restricting the use of the U108H to unloaded lorries only, its status was effectively a Severely Restricted Route. He had therefore spoken to the local roads engineer with a view to allowing loaded lorries to use the road again and is happy for UPM and SWL to work on this basis **provided that no more than 2 loaded lorries per day use that road and that all use CTi. The Moray Council would also require regular liaison with the harvesting/haulage managers.**

The Moray Council will monitor the road before, during and after any extraction operations and will report back to the GTTG at the next meeting.

CG to advise Alasdair Cameron (UPM) of this decision and request that they liaise closely with SWL and The Moray Council to implement this arrangement.

4. Good Practice in Timber Haulage

Members were shown photographs of a harvesting/haulage operation on a minor Council road in South Scotland which had neither followed agreed industry best practice nor showed the sector in a particularly good light.

CG reminded members of the range of Good Practice Guides that have been produced to try to prevent such a situation from happening; these including: -

- [The Timber Transport Management Protocols](#)
- [The Road Haulage of Round Timber Code of Practice](#)
- [Managing Timber Transport: Good Practice Guide](#)
- [The Timber Transport Toolkit](#) and [Road Design Annex](#)
- Tread Softly; Lower impact vehicles for timber haulage (under development)

IC suggested that this situation highlights that the availability and/or content of current guidance is not sufficiently enough known/promoted and requested that the GTTG produce an A5 flyer to distribute to all forest managers/agents.

CG to draft information leaflet for GTTG review and approval.

5. GTTG pre-emptive draining project

CG confirmed that the GTTG-supported STTS application for a range of works to be undertaken on key strategic (Agreed) routes in Moray had been one of five approved for funding. RS advised GTTG members that the panel were impressed at the level of collaboration that had been demonstrated in the determination of which roads to target in the bid and was scored accordingly.

JM discussed the range of work to be undertaken (see attached **Agenda item 5. GTTG STTS project summary**), the routes concerned and timescales involved.

Members were encouraged to see that this sort of project was considered eligible for STTS support and would welcome a similar approach for priority routes in Aberdeenshire (and any additional roads in Moray). SMcF advised that as funding has been secured for roads in Moray, Aberdeenshire Council may now wish to consider a future bid (subject to a continuation of the STTS) but that they would need to balance the time input required to develop such a bid with its likelihood of success.

SMcF and CG to meet to discuss options further.

AN asked if unadopted roads were eligible for support. RS confirmed that such roads can be considered, as has been demonstrated with the support for a number of in-forest haul routes in other RTTG areas.

6. The Future of the Strategic Timber Transport Fund

RS confirmed that the current budget (up to March 2015) has now been allocated but whilst there is no certainty of continuing support, they would hope to secure a further 12 months support after this time. He advised that it was very unlikely that a longer funding programme could be supported at this stage as elections are due to be held in 2016 which could result in a different political focus.

7. SCOTS Timber Forecasting project

CG updated members on the funding secured through the SCOTS Scottish Roads Research Board to undertake a timber data collation/presentation project (see attached **The Future of Timber Transport project application**). GTTG members were asked if they would be happy for CG to become more involved in this pan-Scotland project as part of her existing RTTPO contract.

WA confirmed that as the project is complementary to the GTTG data collection exercise, CG should be involved.

GTTG members requested that any outputs be Council friendly; CG advised members that two Councils – Perth & Kinross and Argyll & Bute – are represented on the project working group and have been instrumental in setting out their requirements in terms of IT platforms etc.

IC requested that updates are provided at future GTTG meetings.

8. Timber Transport Forum Conference

RS confirmed that next year's Conference is being held on 13 March at Easterbrook Hall, Dumfries. Details of the event, including the special B&B offer at the conference hotel, can be found by [CLICKING HERE](#).

9. Project Officers and GTTG member updates

RS provided an update on TTF activities (see attached ***TTF November 2013 update***) and also discussed current discussions in connection with Access Leases on the NFE.

TTF have been in discussion with FES Land Agents with a view to adding the option of an Access Lease for Third Parties to use FCS land. Such an Access Lease would provide an alternative to a Servitude Agreement in which an upfront payment is charged.

RS explained that under scheme rules, STTS funding can be sought to cover a proportion of the lump sum paid under a Servitude Agreement option but would not be able to support on-going revenue costs charged through an Access Lease.

FES have confirmed that the Access Lease Agreement is NOT intended to replace the previous Servitude Agreement option and that the most appropriate Agreement will be determined through discussion with the Third Party.

RS also drew members' attention to the newly published FCS Practice Guide, [Managing woodland access and forest operations in Scotland](#).

JM provided update on technology trial of (see attached). JM advised that the trial is taking place on an A road so may not be appropriate for use on minor C and U class roads and that the jury is still out on the effectiveness of the technology.

SMcF confirmed that such materials will be appropriate for some locations but not others.

AN advised that he using sawn off cuts covered with aggregates in forest situations which appears to work well in terms of road stability.

IC advised GTTG members that the 2014 RTTPO match funding contributions are now due so FCS will be issuing invoices in December/January. IC requested that where applicable, it would be useful if members could provide him with Purchase Order numbers so that these can be included on any invoices.

10. Date of next meeting/s

WA confirmed that the dates of our 2014 GTTG meetings have been set as: -

- Thursday 20 March 2014
- Thursday 17 July 2014
- Thursday 20 November 2014