

Minutes for GTTG meeting

Date: 11 December 2012

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)
Iain MacKenzie – James Jones (IMacK)

Johnny Morren – Moray Council (JM)
Andrew Nicol – Andrew Nicol Chartered
Forester/Deeside Woodland Products (AN)
Alastair Young – Forest Enterprise Scotland (AY)

Apologies:

Morven Bridges – Forest Engineering Services
Rab Dickson – NESTRAN
Sandy Hogg – James Jones
Andy Leitch – Forestry Commission Scotland
Stephen MacDonald – Fountain Forestry

Douglas Murray – Fountain Forestry
Graeme Ralph – Euroforest
Roland Stiven – Timber Transport Forum
John Thomson – Forest Enterprise Scotland

Agenda Item	Action	Appointed person/s
3.	Match funding invoices to be raised and issued	IC
3.	Match funding arrangements and schedule to be circulated	IC/CG
4.	Issue of data collection to be raised at TTF and request made for TTF and ConFor to issue Letters of Support to encourage return	CG
4.	Current route classifications to be reviewed and changes submitted to CG	All
4.	Paper on Timber Transport on the Internet website to be circulated for review/information	CG/All
6.	Members to review new ARMs website and feedback comments to RS/CG	All
	Comments on Access and Forest Operations publication to be highlighted to Local Access Forums	IC
6.	Members to suggest potential case studies for 2014 Conference to RS	All
6.	Potential STTS applicants to contact CG for guidance and advice	All
6.	Check to be made on decision timescales for Consultation on Planning Consent and circulated to members	CG/RS
9.	Members to put forward additional names for new group members	All
9.	Police to be notified of GTTG for information purposes	CG
10.	Date for next meeting to be confirmed	WA/CG

1. Welcome, introductions and apologies

WA welcomed all those present and confirmed apologies received

2. Notes of last meeting on 27 February 2012 & matters arising

Action table below reviewed and amended to reflect current status

Item	Action	Appointed person/s	Status
3.	Circulate data collection contact list to members	AK	Complete
3.	Circulate Timber Transport Forum update	CG/AK	Complete
4 & 5.	Circulate copy of the RTTPO STTS bid	CG/AK	Complete

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3. RTTPO contract administration

IC confirmed that RTTPO tender was issued and awarded in accordance with Scottish Government procurement rules and that Claire Glaister was appointed as the successful contractor. The project now runs for 3 years from the end of September 2012. IC also confirmed that FCS is now able to hold funding over the 3 year period so can act as project bankers. They therefore propose to raise invoices in Jan/Feb for the Sept 2012 – August 2013 period.

STTS funding will end on 31 March 2015 but if match funding still available, project can be continued for a further maximum 6 month period. IC asked if all match funders happy to pay this financial year – no objections raised. IC to organise invoice issue and IC/CG to confirm payment schedule to members.

4. RTTPO priorities for 2012/13 & beyond

These have been highlighted as: -

Priority	Comments
MAIN PRIORITY: Review location of timber harvesting	
Data collection	The most recent review of exit point data saw a low response rate with additional information being required to generate a useful picture. Issue to be raised at next TTF and request submitted to TTF and ConFor asking them if they could issue Letter of Support for the process as a means of encouraging forest managers and agents to submit returns. Query raised about minimum threshold for data collection (1000 tonnes minimum was previously applied). Members suggested that consideration be given to the purpose of the data collection and minimum tonnages applied accordingly.
Review ARMs	A new ARMs website is being developed which will have more functionality and flexibility in terms of the information it can store – see also 6.i. below. In order to make sure the new ARMs are up to date, routes in GTTG to be reviewed and any requests to amend submitted to CG for circulation to the group.
Adopt GTTG standard protocol	Link to ATTG website and paper on timber transport on the Internet to be circulated to provide ideas for potential template/s. Aim is to standardise information and give consistent message across all RTTGs. Proposed protocol to be drafted and discussed at future meeting
Promote underutilisation of funding mechanism	
Provide support to members with STTS applications	
Consider long term implications of timber harvesting (including biomass installation resourcing)	This item to be taken in conjunction with data collection and review of ARMs above

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5. Roads, routes and responsible haulage

This item was included as a reminder about the Banchory workshop and the suggestion that a standardised approach be taken in the promotion of the management of timber transport on the Internet and to various audiences.

6. Project Officers updates (including STTS update) – see TTF Update December 2012

- i. Agreed Routes Maps – the ARMs website is being redeveloped. RS/CG will send out link to the website for comment. Gaist Ltd., the website developers, will incorporate all relevant suggestions and once live, individual RTTGs will be able to carry out administration to their sites following a training workshop. Members asked to review link once circulated and feedback comments/suggestions to RS and/or CG
- ii. Type Approval for Timber Lorries – see attached Timber Transport Forum update December 2012
- iii. Access and Forest Operations – see attached Timber Transport Forum update December 2012. In addition, members considered that the draft document was a bit light on the timber industry and could be seen as being targeted at the wrong audience (i.e. land owners/managers rather than access users). IC to feedback comments from GTTG to Local Access Forum
- iv. Revisions to Scottish Planning Policy – see attached Timber Transport Forum update December 2012
- v. Guidance on road friendly lorries - see attached Timber Transport Forum update December 2012
- vi. TTF Conference 2014. Members asked to consider ideas for potential case studies to present at the Conference and in marketing material
- vii. Health & Safety and Timber Haulage - see attached Timber Transport Forum update December 2012. In addition, members discussed how the emerging Forest Industry Safety Accord would impact on timber haulage – would, for example, gritting of minor roads become a requirement before timber haulage can take place? SMcF and JM confirmed that with finite resources, gritting programmes are based on a priority route system (e.g. highest around hospitals, schools etc.) and only once these have been treated, will other priority routes be addressed. Queries also raised regarding the practicality of notifying neighbours as to their safety responsibilities.
- viii. Climate Change National Adaptation Programme - see attached Timber Transport Forum update December 2012
- ix. Strategic Timber Transport Fund – potential applicants are encouraged to contact CG so she can provide guidance and support
- x. Consultation on planning consent for hill tracks (Scottish Government) - see attached Timber Transport Forum update December 2012. Check to be made on decision timescales and notified to the group

7. Previous Project updates

- i. Aberdeenshire Council were successful in securing STTS funding for a number of projects where road works had been identified but where no budgets were available. The STTS funding acted as a tipping point whereby schemes would could not have gone ahead previously could be given the green light.

The Council always seeks to secure additional sources of funding and schemes such as those supported by the STTS have provided huge benefits to the community and the wider public and can also be reported to local Members so that their knowledge of the STTS and wider forest and timber industry can be enhanced.

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8. Update from GTTG members

- i. Both SMcF and JM confirmed that there had been no reported issues in connection with timber transport on their road networks
- ii. AY advised that felling coupes were being reviewed at the Clash in preparation for windfarm developments. FES to discuss with the LA
- iii. Members discussed the current communication process for timber haulage operations and wider industry developments (e.g. planning permission for recent biomass installation proposals). SMcF and JM confirmed that communication has improved and they now receive information on such schemes directly
- iv. AN advised the group that AW Jenkinson are now transporting SRW into Kinnoir; timber traffic on the surrounding roads has therefore increased. He also highlighted that the wet weather conditions throughout the year are causing deterioration to the public road network
- v. Members were asked to suggest additional members for the GTTG in order to ensure the group is fully representative. It was agreed that the Police should be contacted to notify them of the group and of the ARM system used by the industry; this so that should they have any queries, they have a point of contact and can also access to the ARMs website.

9. Date of next meeting

Next meeting proposed for early March; potential date/s to be sought and circulated