

North Yorkshire Timber Freight Quality Partnership (NYTFQP)

Notes of Meeting at Sutton Bank Visitor Centre 16.08.2011 1500

Summary of Actions

Terms of Reference / Memorandum of Understanding

Review the terms of reference and look to condense these in to 4-5 key themes.

Lead – Roland Stiven

Meetings of the FQP are to be held at least quarterly to ensure that momentum in the discussions is maintained. Next Meeting is to be held 3rd November 2011. Venue is to be confirmed.

Lead – James Gilroy

A task Group is to be established to develop a memorandum of understanding between stakeholders. This is to include how information is shared, the implementation on preventative measures and how issues can be resolved.

Lead – Guy Warren with support from NYCC and FC. James Gilroy is to assist in establishing this group.

Industry Involvement

All members of the FQP to make hauliers aware of the partnership where ever they can.

Lead – All

Hauliers are to be made aware of the FQP at the Northwoods haulier event in Bellingham Northumberland.

Lead – Will Richardson

Timber Map

All contributors to the timber production study are to be asked to comment on the map in its current form. This will involve looking at the overall usefulness of the map and also the data that is contained within it. This is to be completed and the comments taken in to consideration and imputed in to the map where required by the next FQP meeting. (November 2011)

An updated version of the map is to be presented to the FQP at the next meeting in November ready for a wider consultation exercise (Parish Councils etc).

Lead- James Gilroy

Communication between Stakeholders

NYCC and the industry are to look at organising site visits and improved information sharing regarding programming of works and extraction operations.

Lead- Mike Roberts, James Gilroy and Will Richardson

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Driver Training

Develop proposals for a haulier training in North Yorkshire

Lead- James Gilroy / Will Richardson

Identify all active hauliers in North Yorkshire

Lead – James Gilroy / Will Richardson

County Councillor & Parish Council involvement

Presentation to County Council members as part of the member seminar sessions is to be made.

Lead – James Gilroy

Site visits by members / local parish representatives to help improve understanding of specific operations and improve a working relationship between stakeholders.

Lead – James Gilroy to coordinate as required

Timber FQP Webpage

The existing North Yorkshire page on the GB TTF website is to be reviewed and updated.

Lead – All to review the page and supply comments to James Gilroy

Summary Notes

1.0 Introductions and apologies

Attendee List

Jeremy Walker (Chair)	FC Forestry Advisory Committee
Cllr Gareth Dadd	NYCC Executive Member for Highways and Transportation
Mike Roberts	NYCC
James Gilroy	NYCC
Will Richardson	Yorwoods
Crispin Thorn	Forestry Commission
Jon Bates	Forestry Commission
Roland Stiven	GB Timber Transport Forum
Jane Karthaus	ConFor
Russell Porter	Land Factor
Guy Warren	UPM Tillhill
Ian Austerhulme	UPM Tillhill
Brian Nugent	UPM Tillhill
Steve Dresser	Euroforest
Thomas Coates	Egger
Geoff Garrett	YDNPA
Barry Hearsey	NYMNPA

Apologies

David Bowe	NYCC
Alan Eaves	NYCC

2.0 Review of FQP terms of reference

These were discussed in detail. It was felt that 11 terms of reference was too many and that it would better if the terms were condensed in to 4-5 key themes for the partnership. It was suggested that there should be a strong focus on facilitating the sector in North Yorkshire.

It was also suggested that the role of the partnership should be to avoid the industry and NYCC getting in to a conflict.

Dispute resolution was also discussed; however it was felt that the FQP was not the ideal forum for this to take place. However the FQP could assist in developing a memorandum of understanding for all stakeholders for dealing with issues relating to extraction, which could include guidance on resolving disputes.

Actions

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Lead – Roland Stiven

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Lead – James Gilroy

A task Group is to be established to develop a memorandum of understanding between stakeholders. This is to include how information is shared, the implementation on preventative measures and how issues can be resolved. Lead – Guy Warren with support from NYCC and FC. James Gilroy is to assist in establishing this group.

3.0 Aims of the FQP

3.1 What does the industry want to achieve form the FQP?

It was felt that there needs to be more involvement form hauliers in the partnership. At this time there is no haulier representation as part of the FQP.

It was felt that the industry is after a degree of certainty on how NYCC highways will approach issues. Issues such as extraordinary use, and claims for damages can have an impact on investment in the forests.

Improving communication with the County Council was seen by the industry as being integral to developing the partnership.

From a wider perspective it was felt that by establishing a strong partnership, and aligning with other partnership areas in the North of England, (Northumberland and Cumbria) to lobby for funding for improvements to rural routes and more recognition at a national level of the issues that face timber extraction.

The industry would like to see some real progress and some tangible outcomes coming form the partnership. It was felt that it did not become solely a talking shop and instead provides a real benefit to both the industry and the County Council.

Actions

All members of the FQP to make hauliers aware of the partnership where ever they can.

Lead – All

Hauliers are to be made aware of the FQP at the Northwoods haulier event in Bellingham Northumberland.

Lead – Will Richardson

3.2 What does the County Council want to achieve form the FQP

NYCC wants to achieve the following – text from talk by James Gilroy

- Work closely with the timber industry to facilitate responsible timber extraction
 - Ensuring that the impact on our communities and residents is minimised
 - The impact on our existing infrastructure is minimised

We recognise that timber needs be extracted- and that much of that extraction will involve using many smaller rural roads to access the A/B network.

However it is important that the condition of the road network is preserved in a safe manner, allowing access for all road users, and that damage and disruption, over and above what would normally be expected on these roads is kept to an absolute minimum.

This is done against the backdrop of severely reduced funding for highways across the County.

We are not in a position to repair damage that has been caused by HGV activities related to timber extraction/ agriculture / other types of HGV traffic on rural routes. Typically many rural routes would require minimal if any expenditure per year. Therefore we need to work closely with partners in the timber industry to focus on preventing damage and disruption, so that any disruption and repairs is kept to an absolute minimum.

Where repairs are required- NYCC are not seeking betterment- just simply a return to the condition prior to extraction.

NYCC would seek understanding from the industry that they may at times be required to assist in facilitating and or contributing to repairs to the highway network pre, during and post extraction.

An example of how this could be achieved would be to look at formalising the inspection routine throughout the extraction. Regular inspections can help to reduce damage and disruption, identifying issues before they become severe and have the potential to halt timber operations and the operation of other transport users.

Some other specific points that NYCC wish to achieve include;

- Increase our understanding of the timber industry
- Improve the working relationship between timber industry and NYCC both on a strategic and an operational level.
- Gain and improved understanding of the felling licence process and how this can impact on NYCC and timber transport as a whole.
- Improved coordination of our activities with the industry's activities.
- Implementation of the timber routes map

Whilst the FQP has not formally met for a period of time we have been working with the timber industry on a number of issues across the County. Some have been successful, others less so. However we feel that it is important to continue to develop the partnership.

It was recognised that there may be instances where highways works programmes and improvement to routes could help to benefit timber extraction. NYCC are not in a position to prioritise timber routes as there are a range of maintenance priorities and constraints on expenditure that need to be taken in to consideration.

From a political perspective, NYCC confirmed their commitment to support the forestry sector as a result of the significant role it plays to the local rural economy. There was however a need to balance this against other priorities, particularly in terms of the level of available funding.

3.3 What does the Forestry Commission want to achieve from the Partnership?

The FC wished to gain a better understanding of the issues that were being faced by the sector in relation to timber transport across the County.

It was also important that there was a step change in the level of partnership working with the focus being on facilitating the sector to deliver sustainable woodland management across the area.

3.4 What do the National Parks want to achieve from the partnership?

It was felt that the partnership provided a useful opportunity for the parks to gain a better understanding of issues related to timber transport in their areas. Additionally it was hoped that their involvement could help to protect the special qualities and characteristics of the parks.

Additionally by developing improved communication and a framework for dealing with issues, it would help to reduce officer involvement from the parks on site specific issues.

4.0 North Yorkshire Timber Routes Map

4.1 Review of the map – online demonstration.

www.northyorks.gov.uk/timbermap

JG provided a short presentation on the NY timber routes map. It was outlined that the map was draft at the moment for consultation and that the final map would be open for change. A key principle of the map was to ensure that all woodlands should be accessible although it was recognised that some restrictions would be appropriate in certain cases.

It was recognised that there needed to be industry input in to the map otherwise it would be seen as an instruction from NYCC to use these routes, when actually it is a map owned by the partnership for all stakeholders to use.

It is important to get input from the industry prior to a wider public consultation, so that the map put forward is a map that both the industry and NYCC can “defend” if questioned on certain routes. The partnership needs to be able to explain the logic and decisions that were made when assigning and identifying possible routes, prior to future community involvement.

It is important that it is recognised that the use of the map is voluntary, although it is hoped that it is adhered to. It is not going to change the legal status of the route in any way, although it could be used to highlight any issues on the network.

Actions

All contributors to the timber production study are to be asked to comment on the map in its current form. This will involve looking at the overall usefulness of the map and also the data that is contained within it. This is to be completed and the comments taken in to consideration and imputed in to the map where required by the next FQP meeting. (November 2011)

An updated version of the map is to be presented to the FQP at the next meeting in November ready for a wider consultation exercise (Parish Councils etc).

Lead- James Gilroy

4.2 Distributing the map to the wider industry / stakeholders

This item is to be discussed in more detail at the next FQP meeting.

5.0 Improving communication between area offices and the timber industry

Throughout the meeting communication was increasingly seen as one of the most important ways of dealing with timber transport issues. NYCC identified that at times their communication could have been better, however they were looking at ways in which they could improve this. Several area managers and area team staff attended a site demonstration by UPM Tillhill at Greenfield Forest in May 2011. This was found to be very useful.

It was suggested that holding other visits (demonstrations) may help to increase understanding what the timber industry actually does and could help to improve working relationships.

Action

NYCC and the industry are to look at organising site visits and improved information sharing regarding programming of works and extraction operations.

Lead- Mike Roberts, James Gilroy and Will Richardson

6.0 Possible Future Measures

6.1 Driver training

The possibility of holding a timber haulier driver training session was discussed. This will contribute to the CPC training hours for HGV drivers. This is now a legal requirement. It was advised that Yorwoods could provide some funding for the training as part of their landskills training budget, however some cost may need to be borne by the hauliers / drivers attending the training.

Identifying all active timber hauliers working in North Yorkshire was also identified as being important, both in terms of training but also looking wider at developing improved links between the partnership and hauliers.

Actions

Develop proposals for a haulier training in North Yorkshire

Lead- James Gilroy / Will Richardson

Identify all active hauliers in North Yorkshire

Lead – James Gilroy / Will Richardson

6.2 Improving understanding of timber transport by local members and parish councils

It was felt that it was important to improve the understanding of the timber industry by County Council members. As the industry is a significant part of the rural economy, it was felt that it would be beneficial to increase member awareness and understanding of the industry as a whole and also the transport implications.

It was felt that the consultation exercise as part of the routes map would assist in developing links with Parish Councils and improving communication. As part of any consultation information on the FQP and its role could be supplied.

Actions

Presentation to County Council members as part of the member seminar sessions is to be made.

Lead – James Gilroy

Site visits by members / local parish representatives to help improve understanding of specific operations and improve a working relationship between stakeholders.

Lead – James Gilroy to coordinate as required

6.3 Timber FQP webpage

The principal behind the FQP webpage was supported, however it was felt that this should be hosted independently and not by NYCC as this would help develop industry support for it. The GB TTF website would be the best place to host this information. The site is www.timbertransportforum.org.uk

Additionally it was felt that developing an identity through branding of the partnership would be important.

Action

The existing North Yorkshire page on the GB TTF website is to be reviewed and updated.

Lead – All to review the page and supply comments to James Gilroy

7.0 AOB

No further points were raised

8.0 Date and venue for next meeting

It was agreed that a venue in a similar area would be beneficial. A date of 3rd November 2011 was proposed. James Gilroy is to confirm details with FQP members in due course.