

Minutes

Ayrshire and South Lanarkshire Timber Transport Group

Meeting 14th June 2022 at 10:30

Online

Attendee: Alex Murray, Simon Stuart, Stewart Marshall, Roland Stiven, Alistair Taylor, David Galloway, Robin Taylor, David Hilditch, Cameon McLeod, Janice Kelly, Tom Drewett, Stuart McArtney, Sandy White, Roland Stiven, Jamie Dodman, David Stoddart, Stuart Colbron, Ian Downie, Radek Zebrowski.

Apologies: Keith Wishaw, Michael McNulty, Kevin Braidwood, Kenny Mackenzie, Iain McMurtie, Douglas Hyslop, Alan Christison, Bill Tyre, Neil Dyson, Roderick, James Thomson, Mike Yerbury.

1. Welcome, Introduction & Apologies

AM welcomed everyone to the meeting. SS then read out apologies.

2. Minutes of Last Meeting 8th March 2022

Minutes of last meeting approved, SS to post onto website.

3. Local Timber Transport Issues

- a. **Police** – No police representatives, no information on any issues.
- b. **North Ayrshire** – DH no issues.
- c. **ARA** – JK no issues.
- d. **South Lanarkshire** – SC brought up the issue of weak bridges including at Crawford, working group (see below).

The council are working through several woodland creation consultations at the moment.

4. Timber Transport Sub-groups

- a. **Arran** – AM reported Glennons about to start Glenloig extraction on the String road for Tilhill, coming through Brodick. Ceann Reamhar likely to start in 2023, current plan to go around the north of the island to Sannox.

- b. Crawford** – Council about to put a 18 tonne weight restriction on the Crawford bridge. Need to look at how to get Camps reservoir out, Scottish water have right of access for their maintenance works but timber will need to negotiate third party access. Route to north through windfarm 9 owners, reportedly one being unreasonable. Route to south?

Council also struggling to undertake works beyond bridge.

SS to send all members details to make sure everyone included in discussions.

- c. Glentagart** – road still closed for timber traffic while wind farm reinstates it, possibility of timber haulage before works completed has been discussed but felt could complicate things. SPHN currently on hold until plan for extraction can be agreed.
- d. U27** – Dobbington extraction due to start, next planned extraction Daljeburgh in 2023.

5. Timber Transport Group Governance

Draft paper sent out to members for comments, deadline is next TTG meeting.

6. Consultation Procedures

- a. Timescales** – Complaints from both sides about timings.

Six weeks should be sufficient to deal with consultations.

AM suggested if nothing back from councils within six weeks applicant writes final e-mail to council with their intention to carry on as per consultation document, copied to project officer.

DH asked if a reminder could be sent after 4 weeks as correspondence often gets overlooked.

SS to send out update to all members.

- b. Adjacent Councils** – **SS** proposed trying to obtain contact details for adjacent councils not currently members of TT groups. These to be available to members working in these areas.

7. Timber Transport Officer Updates

- a. FISA CPC+ Courses** – These have now started run by Benslie training along with Creel Consulting. Feedback has been good, **AM** encouraged forest and harvesting managers to book as enlightening to all not just drivers. **SS** to book a place.

b. Complaints.

There have been a few, mainly trucks on excluded routes.

One major one is Corton road which is being used as a shortcut, SS and JK agreed to meet onsite.

c. Drivers understanding of agreed routes.

Have drivers going down excluded routes and getting stuck, sometimes after diversions.

Thoughts were that it was difficult to use agreed routes on smartphones (it isn't) but drivers in trouble should be able to call back to the office and be guided out of trouble.

It was pointed out that drivers should be given maps of sites showing approved routes, but often chain of command broken or roads used as shortcuts well away from harvesting sites.

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d. Strategic Timber Transport Fund Update.

RS stated £7 million to be allocated, most contracts have been awarded.

TimberLink contract still to be finalised, now been 3 months without TimberLink.

Slipway at Crossaig in Kintyre, Argyll successful bid, for landing craft.

e. ASL STTS bids 2022/23

11 bids submitted, 6 successful.

NAC – Sannox pier = £199,000 awarded.

- RossRoad = £156,000 awarded.

SAC – Barhill High Street = £74,000 awarded.

- Dailly = £74,000 awarded.

Unsuccessful bids for EAC which council were unhappy about as was

AM about the funding to finish off the A713.

NAC were given tighter deadlines to make sure if works unable to go ahead money could be reallocated in plenty of time.

SS thanked local authorities for finalising bids in a timely manner this year rather than at the last minute, he suggested the group should think about paying for him to go away every weekend before the submission date to make sure this continues.

f. ASL STTS bids 2022/23

Need to get them prepared in plenty of time.

RS mentioned Highland had high levels of private contributions in their bids, this would help going forward. However, as bids come in so late difficult to contact forestry companies to ask for contributions. Need to identify projects further in advance.

JK thanked Roland for the feedback ARA received and it will be taken on board.

Lack of projects from private sector.

AM brought up e-mail criticising ASL bids sent to another project officer, it included allegations of spurious bids and missing much bigger problems within the region. **AM** pointed out that if bigger issues are being missed they should be brought before the group. He then went on to outline the process and issues;

- I. There is usually a time constraint when bids submitted.
- II. The bids are currently exclusively from local authorities.
- III. When bid suggestions are received physical checks are made.
- IV. Some bids are automatically thrown out for not meeting criteria.
- V. Bids meeting the criteria are then ranked when producing letters of support.

DH pointed out that often there is a step before this when discussing potential bids **SS** will tell him when bids unlikely to get funding. **DH** also said that he is happy to receive suggestions, especially about bargaining points on Arran.

g. TTO funding 2022/23

Still some carry over from members subscriptions due to **SS** underspend last year. However, current subscriptions about £1,500 short of sustainable funding at current levels. **Require at least 3 new contributing members.**

AM confirmed at least two companies in the sights for contribution requests, but any others wanting to contribute should contact **SS**.

8. Timber Transport Forum Update

SS updated the group.

TTF was held online 29th April 2022.

Items discussed included;

FLS Ground pressure Policy – Road status check to be complete by 31st December 2022. Bids which can't accommodate LPG systems to be continued until April 2023.

Driver CPC Training days – discussed above.

FISA/ HSE – FISA would like to remind FWMs that signage is appropriate for the works, suitably placed and is removed after works complete. **SC** mentioned SLC do have problems with signage, especially on faster roads.

James England and Iain Catterwell have volunteered to work with FISA to draft guidance on roadside working after several incidents, including offloading machines on a motorway slipway.

TTF Decarbonisation Subgroup – Neil Stoddart preparing document on behalf of the group on the pros and cons of various non-diesel fuels and barriers and opportunities for uptake of new technologies.

Study of Priority Locations for Electric and Hydrogen-Powered HGVs - Paul Boobyer is preparing a consultant's brief for a study that will assess potential locations of electric or hydrogen charging / refuelling infrastructure locations based on timber haulage routes, processor locations, timber volumes, etc. Similar studies have been carried out in Europe. Diesel HGV sales will probably be phased out by 2035 in the UK.

TTF Business Plan Refresh - The TTF's Business Plan is due to be refreshed (the last plan was produced in 2020). A working group has been put together. The group will be chaired by Scottish Forestry Crispin Thorn. **RS** reminded everyone that the forum is there to serve the groups and suggestions would be welcome.

Next TTF meeting, 24th June 2022.

9. A.O.C.B

AM mentioned works being carried out around Allt Darraich slipway and extraction involving Troon Tugs due to start in the summer.

AM informed the group that processors are going to be slowing down over the next few months, with the knock-on effect of less timber lorries on the roads.

SS made everyone aware of an upcoming road closure on the C1 Straiton – Bargrennan road. Details to be sent out when they are received.

SS also in touch with Scottish Forestry teams about timber transport updates, available for other companies as well.

Discussion about next meetings whether in person, online or hybrid. Thoughts varied but perhaps at least one or two in person meetings a year would be appreciated.

Suggested date of next meeting 4th of October 2022. **SS** to investigate venues for in person meeting. **If anyone would like to offer a venue please get in touch.**