

Cumbria & North-East England Timber Transport Group Meeting Agreed MINUTES

06th October 2021 at 10:30 am via Microsoft Teams

Present (24 people)

James England, South Scotland Timber Transport Officer
Paul Boobyer, Timber Transport Forum Project Officer
Jim O'Neill, Forestry Commission
David Biott, Tilhill
Cameron Smith, Sheffield & Co
John Lees, Tilhill
Andy Powell, Kerr Timber
Mark Child, Northumberland County Council
David Stoddart, AWJ Transport
Mike Yerbury, EGGER
Colin Binnie, Forestry Commission
John Tunnicliffe, AW Jenkinson
Marcus Wright, Clark Mactavish
Michael McNiven, Holmen
Robin McCartney, Northumberland County Council
Michael Hall, Scottish Woodlands
David Conway, Tilhill
Lynne Ryan, Northumberland County Council
Thomas Coates, EGGER
Victoria Upton, Cumbria County Council
David Bewley, James Jones
Rob Lewis, Cumbria County Council
James Richards, Northumberland County Council
James Harrison-Moore, Tilhill

Apologies

Ian Everard, Forestry Commission England; Cllr John Riddle, Northumberland County Council; Max McLaughlan, Forestry England; Hazel Newman, Egger; Richard Pow, Forestry Commission; Tim Barratt, Bidwells; Robert Scott, SGS Timber; Kris Westerby, Northumberland County Council

Agenda

1. Welcome

Paul Boobyer welcomed all to the meeting.

A discussion on ash dieback followed. Although there are no formalised regional approaches that deal with dead or dying roadside ash trees, the new North-West England Tree Health Scheme contains a collaborative element (this pilot scheme will be open to about 100 people and groups in

target areas of the Northwest, West Midlands, London and the Southeast of England); however, there is a budgetary issue to managing large numbers of dead and dying ash trees.

Mike Yerbury suggested that a project officer for the new group will be required (re Project 2 of the Borderlands Growth Deal).

2. Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed.

Outstanding Actions from Previous Meeting

Outstanding Action – Rob Lewis to set up an email address, specific for timber transport consultations: timbertransport@cumbria.gov.uk.

Outstanding Action – Lynn Ryan to locate the form used to inform NCC of planned timber extraction and new planting. Paul Boobyer will send the form to all group members.

New Actions

New Action – James England to share the ash dieback toolkit with members of this group.

New Action – Paul Boobyer to investigate funding opportunities for a project officer.

New Action – Mike Yerbury to update Paul Boobyer on the potential forestry innovation centre.

New Action – Robin McCartney to make contact with the Borderland Growth Deal Forum.

New Action – Paul Boobyer to update the TTF's website regarding the merging of Cumbria and Northumberland timber transport groups.

3. Appointing Chair and Secretary roles of the merged group

Mike Yerbury and Paul Boobyer had previously volunteered to be chair and secretary, respectively, of the merged group. Mike asked if there were any objections to this. No objections were raised. These roles are now formalised.

4. Borderland Growth Deal: opportunities for timber transport/forest innovation centre

Mike Yerbury reported that there is an aspiration to develop a Forestry Innovation Centre within the Borderlands Area. This project is currently at the scoping stage and was one of three projects that forestry professionals within the Borderlands area wished to see established (Forestry Investment Zone / Innovation Centre / Timber Transport Fund). Sector representatives will continue to look into ways that this could be achieved and will report back on developments at the next meeting.

5. Investigating central government funding for an English version of the STTS (possibly through the Borderlands Growth Deal)

This project was put forward as potential within the Borderlands Growth Deal. It was noted that the locus of an English STTS would need to be teased out. It was suggested that the scheme could reside with Northumberland County Council NCC and Cumbria County Council. The scheme may even be

able to fund a part-time Timber Transport Project Officer? Agreed that Robin McCartney will make contact with the Borderlands Growth Deal Forum.

Addendum: Rob Lewis made some enquiries about obtaining STTS funding from the Borderlands Growth Deal with the project group in Cumbria but has been told that 'the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal is not a funding pot that is open to applicants with funding bids'. Paul Boobyer will discuss this matter with Confor colleagues and report back to the group.

6. Draft timber transport form for the Forest Investment Zone (FIZ)

Form presented by Jim O'Neill. Purpose of the form was to gather in information to support the infrastructure requirements relating to New Woodland Creation projects within the FIZ.

Michael Hall asked how this form would improve on the current system of informing councils on planned forestry operations. Michael also noted that councils are notified of timber movements via the current process of scoping for forest management plans and suggested that timber transport could feature in a revised felling licence application form. Jim O'Neill replied that this form is a more direct way of contacting councils' highways departments. James England added that the form would mostly feature future access to new woodland sites.

7. Timber Transport Forum update

Paul Boobyer provided an update from the Timber Transport Forum, which is included with these minutes as a separate item.

8. Regional updates & local timber transport issues (including timber HGV traffic through Ponteland, Northumberland)

Rob Lewis reported that the new Southern Development Route for the south of Carlisle had received full planning consent and work had already started.

Rob Lewis also noted that average speed cameras will be installed on the A689 between Brampton and Carlisle North (M6 J44).

Lynne Ryan reported that there was nothing worthy of note to report in the Northumberland region and discussions surrounding timber transport through Ponteland had ceased.

9. Any other business

Paul Boobyer will update the group in due course on the progress of the trial of auto-tensioning timber straps.

10. Date of next meeting and agenda items for the next meeting

A Doodle Poll will be sent by Paul Boobyer to determine the date of the next meeting. Venue TBC.