

Minutes

Ayrshire and South Lanarkshire Timber Transport Group

Meeting 4th October 2022 at 10:30

Online

Attendee: Alex Murray, Simon Stuart, Stewart Marshall, Roland Stiven, Alistair Taylor, Robin Taylor, David Hilditch, Neil Dyson, Tom Tryon, Alistair San, Hannah Fisher, James Thomson, Keith Wishart, Kevin Braidwood, Stuart Higgins, Kevin Braidwood.

Apologies: Michael McNulty, Andrew Kitching, Paul Boobyer, Steph Bateman, Malcolm Murray, Iain McMurtie, Bill Tyre, Roderick Leslie Melville, Andy Powell, Issac Adams,.

1. Welcome, Introduction & Apologies

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

2. Minutes of Last Meeting 14th June 2022

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

3. Red Princess

AM added an extra piece of business as breaking news. Troon tugs have just sold the Red Princess. As the only landing craft type vehicle dedicated to timber transport this will have an immediate effect on certain areas depending on it to move timber, especially Arran and areas of Argyll.

Robin Taylor expressed regret that it had come to this but he could no longer afford to keep going with the amount of work available.

4. Chair and Vice-chair positions and Succession

AM informed the group that Stuart Colbron had moved on recently to West Lothian Council and had stood down as Vice-chair. He suggested that as a vote had recently been held for the position and Kevin Braidwood had come a very close second, that the position should be offered to Kevin unless there were any objections. There were no objections and Kevin accepted the position.

AM went on to say that he would be looking to stand down sometime in 2023 and the plan would be for **KB** to take over as Chair. It was hoped that a replacement Vice-

chair would come forward from the private sector and anyone interested in becoming involved should make themselves known.

5. Local Timber Transport Issues

- a. **Police** – No police representatives, no information on any issues. SS mentioned there had been some issues on the C83 Hayhill road. Malcolm Murray the police liaison in Ayrshire is moving on.
- b. **North Ayrshire** – DH no issues apart from the Red Princess.
- c. **ARA** – KB elected members in East Ayrshire unhappy regarding lack of success in STTS bids.
- d. **South Lanarkshire** – No representative from SLC, SS mentioned that the council still adjusting after Stuart Colbron's departure, some difficulties in communication and asked for the groups forbearance and please ask for help if having difficulties.

6. Timber Transport Sub-groups

- a. **Arran** – The loss of the Red Princess will have an immediate impact on timber extraction from Arran and associated jobs. Private forestry work has been put on hold until 2023 due to markets but a solution will need to be found quickly.

AM stated huge energy will be put into finding a long term solution.

- b. **Crawford** – Council still pushing ahead to put a 18 tonne weight restriction on the Crawford Bridge. Forestry companies still trying to extract timber, has come to a head with SPHN. Still no clarification about what the issue is with the bridge.

SS in contact with known forestry companies.

- 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** – Recent Openreach works scheduled for U27 SS concerned he had no notification for works he found on ARA website and will sort that out. In the short term liaising with ARA and Openreach for solution to allow timber extraction to continue during works. KB suggested discussing with Lynne Lyle from ARA.

7. Timber Transport Group Governance

Comments on draft paper submitted at last meeting from David Hilditch, AM suggested circulating to the group for any further comments, deadline 14th October 2022.

8. Consultation Procedures

- a. **Timescales** – AM reminded everyone that there are consultation documents to follow. Timescales are 6 weeks to allow councils to respond, however agreed that a reminder after 4 weeks copied to the project officer to ensure nothing important missed.
- b. **Adjacent Councils** – SS has been in contact with Renfrewshire and East Renfrewshire regarding timber extraction jobs. Some interest in perhaps joining the TTG. Difficult to share details as council officers often move on.

Anyone working in an adjacent council area should contact SS to ask for assistance.

SS to invite adjacent councils to TTG meetings as guests.

9. Timber Transport Officer Updates

a. Complaints.

There have been very few, mainly trucks on excluded routes. Corton Road still causing problems and have agreed with SAC that unsuitable for HGV signs will be installed (also restricted bridge sign for west side of Pinmore Bridge).

Hayhill road has had police intervention.

b. Paul Boobyer Visits.

Timber Transport Forum Project Officer Paul Boobyer is interested in visiting processors and hauliers in the area.

SS to compile list and discuss with Paul before approaching firms.

c. Strategic Timber Transport Fund Update.

RS gave STTS update;

Scheme funding for 2022/23 had all been allocated.

TimberLink now up and running again since August. Contract for three years and could be extended annually for another 2 years.

Expecting STTS to run next year but nothing definite yet and unsure of funding level. TTF is conducting an internal review of the scheme which Scottish Forestry will respond to.

d. ASL STTS bids 2022/23

North Ayrshire projects, Ross Road finished and work ongoing at Sannox. Have been slight delays due to weather but on target to finish in time to make claims.

South Ayrshire Projects, on schedule.

e. ASL STTS bids 2022/23

Need to get them prepared in plenty of time, want to have group input into decision making. This is important after Scottish Forestry auditor asking questions regarding RTTGs.

All current bids coming in from councils, no private bids. Private sector funding may be more important for successful bids going forward.

f. 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.**

Loss of Troon tugs means one more additional funder required, preferably would like 5 or 6 to reduce Scottish Forestry contribution if possible.

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

g. Future Meetings.

Should these be held in person, online or blended?

Perhaps two in person meetings per year, with one being a site visit?

If possible have dial in facilities at in person meetings.

10. Timber Transport Forum Update

SS updated the group.

TTF was held online 30th September 2022.

Items discussed included;

Electric and Hydrogen HGV Infrastructure – High level pilot study being conducted in Argyll and Borders, looking at alternative fuel infrastructure in rural areas.

Good Practise Guide Updates – Making sure guides are up to date and GB wide.

PR Working Group – Promoting the forum and regional transport groups to the industry. Looking at what materials are required and tools available, eg social media.

STTS review and Audit – As mentioned above TTF is reviewing the STTS for possible suggestions to make to SF, SG are undertaking an internal audit of the scheme.

TTF Chair and Vice-chair Positions – Alastair Speedie is looking to stand down as Chair of the TTF after 18 years and nominations or volunteers are being sought for a replacement along with a Vice-chair for successional planning.

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.

New Transport Rules – Including load security which may use TTF strapping guidance.

Next TTF meeting, 9th December 2022.

11.A.O.C.B

AM mentioned three electric trucks on order from Sweden, one each for JST, Fergusons and James Jones. **RS** informed the group that Scottish Forestry was helping fund the project which will look at the practicalities of electric vehicles in the Scottish timber industry.

As the JST lorry will be operating within the groups area it was suggested a visit at an appropriate time was in order.

AM gave personal and professional thanks for all Robin Taylor's Hard work in forestry over the past 25 years.

SS made everyone aware of an upcoming timber technologies meeting in Lockerbie on 5th October 2022.

SS Gave thanks to Malcolm Murray from Police Scotland for his help in the past few years.

Suggested date of next meeting early February 2023. **SS** to investigate venues with **KB**.