

Forestry England Board Meeting Agenda

7 July 2021 9:20 - 12:20 @ The Sill, National Landscape Discovery Centre,
Hexham NE47 7AN

Attendees

Forestry England Board: Julia Grant, Tristram Hilborn, David Hodson, Peter Latham, Jennie Price, Gurch Randhawa, Mike Seddon, Chris Simpson, William Worsley (Chair)

In attendance:

In person: Chief Executive (item 7)

Online: Clare James (Item 5), James Simpson and Chris Hardy (Item 6), Hayley Skipper Bruce Rothnie and Sam Jones (Item 8)

Secretariat: Rachel Mackintosh

NO. / TIME mins	Start time	ITEM (Materials)	OUTCOME REQUIRED	LEAD
Welcome				
1. 15 mins	09:20	Chair's Welcome and Update Declarations of Interest Approval of minutes, matters arising and action log	Approval	Chair
Management Accountability				
2. 30 mins	09:35	CEO report	Discussion & note	Mike Seddon
3. 15 mins	10:05	Finance report	Discussion & steer	David Hodson
4. 10 mins	10:20	ARAC report	Discussion & steer	Julia Grant
Items for Approval				
5. 15 mins	10:30	Commercial Sensitive item	Discussion & steer	Clare James
	10:45-10:55	10 min Break		
6. 15 mins	10:55	Commercial Sensitive item	Discussion & steer	Chris Hardy, James Simpson

7. 25 mins	11:10	Commercial Sensitive item	Discussion & steer	Chief Executive
8. 20 mins	11:35	Commercial Sensitive item	Decision	Tristram Hilborn, Hayley Skipper and Bruce Rothnie
9. 15 mins	11:55	Board self-evaluation	Discussion & steer	Chair / Rachel Mackintosh
10. 5 mins	12:10	Annual review of TORs	Approval	Chair
Concluding items				
5 mins	12:15	AOB		Chair

Future meetings:

20 - 22 Sept 2021	Tour and meeting - New Forest, South District (tbc)
7 Dec 2021	Virtual
3 Mar 2022	Virtual
9 - 11 May 2022	Tour and meeting - (Location tbc)
20 July 2022	Virtual
19 - 21 Sept 2022	Tour and meeting - (Location tbc)
6 Dec 2022	Virtual

All proposed visits are subject to Government guidance in place at the time.

Forestry England board meeting minutes

21 April 2021 9:30 - 12:30

Teams Meeting

Attendees
<p>Forestry England Board: Ian Gambles, Julia Grant, Tristram Hilborn, David Hodson, Peter Latham, Jennie Price, Gurch Randhawa, Mike Seddon, Chris Simpson, Sir William Worsley (Chair)</p> <p>In attendance: PK Khaira-Creswell (item 6)</p> <p>Secretariat: Rachel Mackintosh</p>

Agenda items

1. Welcome | Item Lead: Sir William Worsley

The Chair welcomed members to the eleventh full meeting of the Forestry England board, held via Teams video call.

The Chair provided an update on:

- his recent meetings with ministers, Defra, and Natural England
- following Ian’s decision to step down, the recruitment for a new FC CEO was progressing well, and he hoped to be in a position to make an announcement the following week.
- Highlights from Forest Services: including progress of the England Tree Action plan, recruitment, and pressures on delivery of core business.
- Highlights from Forest Research: including, the new biosecurity lab and 7 cross-border research projects.

The Board noted the following:

- The ambition for growth in Forest Services was welcomed.
- It was noted that there was no FC family involvement with ‘Race for Nature’, a movement to tackle the lack of diversity in the environmental movement.
- Questions were asked about the implications on the organisation of the government’s announcement to bring forward net zero targets. It was noted that there are no immediate benefits in terms of funding, but we are engaged in Defra’s developing plan for this through a member of staff being seconded to the Defra team.

Action Items	Person responsible	Deadline
Investigate FC family participation in Race for Nature with Forest Services colleagues	Mike	7.07.21

There were no apologies.

Declarations of Interest

There were no new declarations of interest for the meeting.

Approval of Board minutes

The minutes and the confidential minutes of the Forestry England Board meeting held 4.02.21 were agreed as a true record.

Actions

The updated action log was reviewed and agreed as written.

2. CEO report

| Item Lead: Mike Seddon

Mike drew the Board's attention to the following:

- Formal consultations with trade unions were now underway on the proposals for Wykeham. Informal conversations have also taken place with those most directly affected. Formal discussions would follow if the proposals were confirmed.
- Discussions are taking place with potential large corporate partners.
- Launch of the Woodland Partnership for woodland creation had taken place.
- Completion of the purchase of the "Hat Case" site near Hamsterley was anticipated to take place this week.
- Exploration of golden eagle reintroduction had begun following an approach from Defra reflecting our growing reputation in this area.
- H&S culture project is underway - Peter will be the Board link into the project.
- Changes in the assessment levels of corporate risks, particularly noting that the risk rising in severity currently was the loss of expertise of staff due to the competitive market conditions seen at present.

The following issues were raised by members and discussed:

- Partnerships
 - The potential for corporate partnerships with fund managers. Mike confirmed we need to understand the scope and our capacity to support this as demand could be high.
 - A request that a holistic approach to Partnerships is considered offering more than tree planting, also considering nature work, volunteering, visiting. Mike agreed that some potential partners were asking for this wider offer.
 - Mike's attendance at EcoSikhs conference was much appreciated- there could be more approaches from other faith groups.
 - It was noted that partnerships presented further opportunity to engage in the diversity agenda.
 - The continued investment in the Sport England partnership was welcomed.
- Mike confirmed the Go Ape closure was due to lockdown requirements.
- Clarity was sought over the severity that Ips posed due to an apparent difference in view between Forestry England and Forest Services. Mike confirmed that for Forestry England, the current location in South East was being managed in line with our policies and procedures so not posing a heightened risk. It would be a different magnitude if it ever got north.
- IT developments - are we taking people with us? It was noted that people were enthused by the developments, and the current connection improvements meant staff would be better connected. The collaborative approach taken by the Business Engagement team was noted.

- In response to a promotional video there was a need, in line with other sector organisations, to be aware of portraying a woman exercising on her own in an isolated environment considering the heightened awareness following the Sarah Everard murder. Mike confirmed that we are involved with the countryside recreation network group to join our thinking up with the wider sector.
- As the Woodland Partnership had only just been announced, the appropriateness of a 1 June deadline for expressions of interest was questioned. Tris explained that this is just the first round, but this deadline was needed to be able to plan and plant our year one targets. There were encouraging levels of interest to date.
- There was a query about allowing camping with no facilities and if this posed problems. Tris confirmed its for people who bring their own, the opening up of campsite facilities will follow.
- Clarification was sought on the civil engineering contract of £24m. Tris and David explained it was a framework agreement which allows districts to pull down services when they need them.

Health and Safety report

Tris reported that:

- the culture project was underway,
- we are delighted with a successful visit from Ofsted on our apprentice offer, which gave two findings at the highest level, and the third at reasonable level. There were a few recommendations to work on.
- 2 major systems were now embedded: Airsweb and lone working,
- RIDDOR incidents:
 - Update provided on the previously reported chainsaw incident.
 - A new incident to report involving a forest ranger caused by poor maintenance of a rifle moderator. Actions taken included replacement of all moderators, and refresher training for the team.

Performance report

Tris drew attention to the staff efforts that resulted in being able to report:

- Visitors to the whole estate number up
- Visitor hub numbers showing recovery
- Timber production met pre-covid targets.

The Board discussion included:

- Further clarification on the new RIDDOR incidents.
- Scorecard was welcomed, a question was asked if there are awareness targets? Mike to take forward.
- The need for greater authentic diversity in images on the website. Mike confirmed the team are actively seeking diverse images.

Action Items

Person responsible

Deadline



Investigate the holistic nature of the offer to corporate partner the Corporate Partnership Team	Mike	07.07.21
Investigate awareness targets with JL	Mike	07.07.21

3. Finance Report M9

| Item lead: David Hodson

David led the Board through the finance report and a supplementary report providing comparison to the pre-covid budget. He drew attention to the following headlines:

- M11 is continuing to see improvement from M9:
 - Income remains strong.
 - Cost control continues to be maintained.
 - The cash balance is up, this will go into deferred and investment programmes.
- Supplementary report
 - This tells the story of the organisation's covid experience, with a lot of uncertainty at first, followed by change of behaviour and flexibility of approach.
 - Biggest income impact from cancellation of Forest Live and rent deferrals, balanced by more visitors so car park income is up, plus a rise in timber income.
 - Pay was controlled, which did place pressure on staff but who still delivered the income gains.
 - Efforts were made to reduce costs with lessons being embedded through changing the way we work.
 - However, a lot of work was stopped which needs to be carried into the next year, which will be possible due to the government funding received.

The following issues were raised by members and discussed:

- It was noted there was no mention of Brexit. Mike and Tris explained that as a trading organisation the biggest impact came from the exchange rate and currency markets. These adjusted to Brexit at the time of the referendum.
- The supplementary report was welcomed as providing an evidence base to the shifts seen.

4. ARAC report

Item Lead: Julia Grant

Julia, Chair of ARAC, reported on the February ARAC. She reported that the main items of discussion were:

- The choreography of the annual report audit process across all parts of FC, with a clearer model for approvals being developed.
- The valuation of the estate gave Forestry England a high materiality level, the appropriateness of this level and steps to take were under review.

The Board noted:

- The concerns around level of materiality balanced against the level of focus on the valuation of the estate, and the proportionality of these relative to the business.
- The relative level of assurance these provided to the Accounting Officers and ARAC.
- There was discussion on the comment that the current language used around audit assurance did not, and could not match, the ambition to be an outstanding organisation as risks could never be eliminated from the business. Julia noted some of

this was structural, and some semantics, but would be picked up in the upcoming ARAC away day.

5. Confidential Item

6. 5-Year plan - communications and engagement Creswell

Item Lead: PK Khaira-

PK led the Board through this item, following on from Board approval of the content of the 5 Year plan through correspondence and confirmed at this meeting. PK took the Board through the plans for internal and external communications of the 5-year plan, including development of the website, a pdf version, staff videos and a Q&A session for staff. She invited the non-executives to be involved in communicating the plan.

The Board discussion included:

- Confirmation that the launch would be tied into the England Tree Action Plan. PK confirmed that the launch had been deliberately held back, additionally with both launches impacted by the pre-election period, so that our plan was aligned and responsive.
 - The imminent launch of the England Tree Planting Programme by FS was noted and agreed that these would not be on the same day.
 - There was enthusiasm and momentum from people wanting to be part of the Tree Action Plan, we need to harness that momentum.
 - The non-executives confirmed they wanted and were willing to be involved. It was suggested that advantage was taken of the geographical spread of board members.
-

7. Confidential Item

AOB

It was noted that the next two Board meetings were planned to be in North and South Districts respectively.

The Chair extended the Board's thanks to Ian for his hugely valuable contribution to the Forestry England over a long period, and particularly for the time when he stood into the Chief Executive role.

The meeting ended at 12:35



07 July 2021

Paper Title: CEO Report

Under the freedom of information act 2000, exempt information this paper has been withheld from publication as per Section 43(2): Prejudice to commercial interests.

If you wish to request this paper please contact Rachel Mackintosh at
Rachel.mackintosh@forestryengland.uk

Forestry England Risk Reporting Dashboard

May 2021



Forestry England Risk Reporting Dashboard

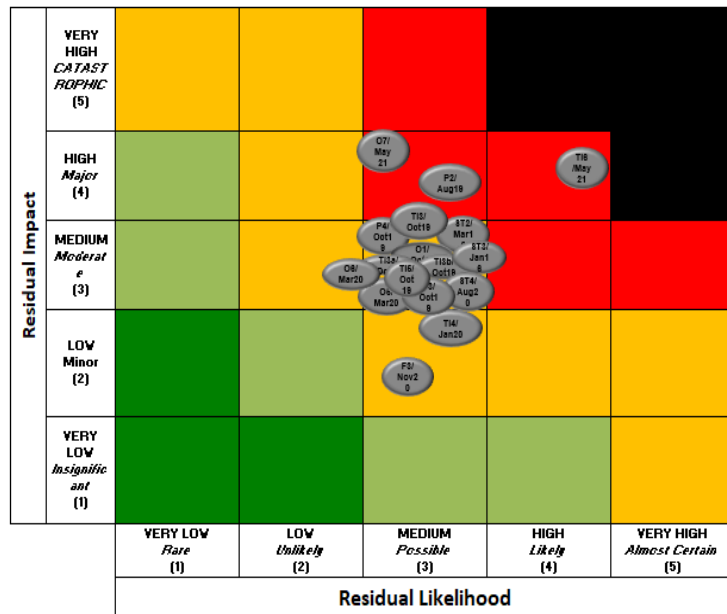
Forestry England Active Risks - at a glance

<p>People Loss of expertise and experience due to an aging workforce and competition from the marketplace (12) P2/Aug19</p>	<p>People Pensions Case (12) P3/Oct19</p>	<p>People Offer 2020 (9) P4/Oct19</p>	<p>Strategic & Business Reputational Damage (9) St3/Mar18</p>	<p>Strategic & Business CITF (9) St4/Aug20</p>
<p>Operational Timber Demand (9) O1/Oct19</p>	<p>Operational: Nature for Climate Programme (9) O5/Mar20</p>	<p>Operational: C-19 Recovery (9)</p>	<p>New: Operational Future legislation change likely to bring more of Forestry England's reservoir assets within the scope of The Reservoir's Act 1975 (12) 07/May21</p>	<p>T&I Poor Information Security Culture (9) TI3/Oct19</p>
<p>T&I Compliance to Information Legislation (9) TI3b/Oct19</p>	<p>T&I Poor information management and ineffective and inefficient working (9) TI4/Jan20</p>	<p>T&I Connectivity (9) TI5/Oct19</p>	<p>T&I Cyber Security (16) TI6/May21</p>	<p>Financial Recreation income from ticketed activity on the estate (6) F3/Sept20</p>

Forestry England Risk Reporting Dashboard

Risk Matrix of active risks

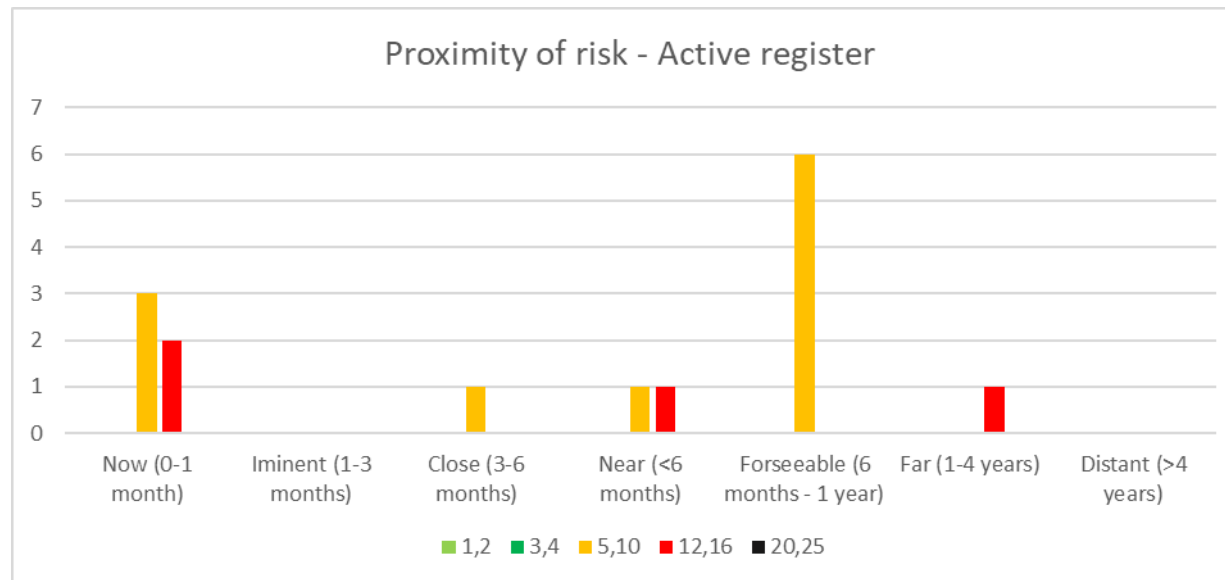
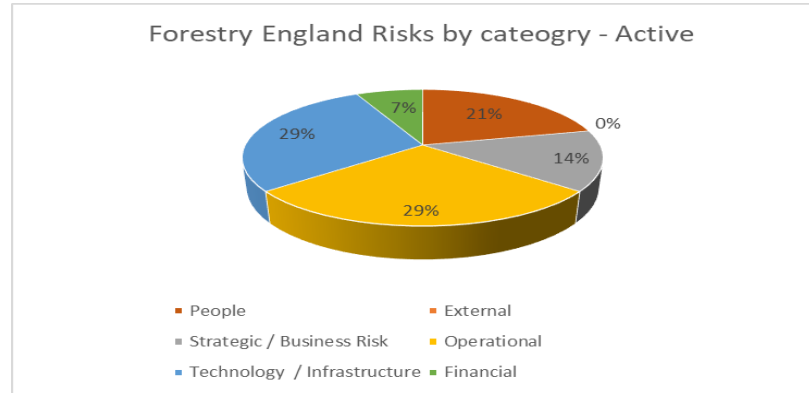
Forestry England Risk Management Matrix



Risk Categories	
<u>External</u>	<u>Operational</u>
	O1/Oct19 - Timber Demand O5/Mar20 - Nature Based Solutions/ Nature for Climate O6/Mar20 - C-19 Recovery O7/May 21 - Impact of legislation ch.
<u>Financial</u>	<u>Strategic / Business Risk</u>
F3/Nov20- Recreation Income from ticketed	ST3/Jan16 - Reputational Damage ST4/Aug20 - CITF
<u>Technology / Infrastructure</u>	<u>People</u>
T13/Oct19 - Information security T13b/Oct19 - Information legislation compliance T14/Jan21 Poor information management and ineffective and inefficient working T15/Oct19 - Connectivity T16/May21 - Cyber Security	P2/Aug19 - Aging workforce P3/Oct19 - Pensions Case P4/Oct19 - Delivery of Offer 2020

Forestry England Risk Reporting Dashboard

Assessment of risks



Forestry England Risk Reporting Dashboard

Forestry England Active Risks Profile

Risk ID & Strategic Objective	Risk description (in terms of event, cause and impact)	Risk owner(s)	Inherent risk score	Residual risk score	Target risk score	Risk Trend
P2/Aug19 People	Loss of expertise and experience due to an aging workforce and competition from the marketplace.	Paul Johnson	16	12	9	Worsening
P3/Oct19 People	Pensions Case, greater number of staff may opt for early retirement feeding into red risk P2/Aug19.	Paul Johnson	16	12	6	No change
P4/Oct19 People	Failure to deliver some element of the Offer 2020 business case with a positive result.	Paul Johnson	16	9	4	No change
St3/Mar18 Strategic and Business	Reputational Damage that will result in loss of public/stakeholder support and loss of confidence from Defra.	Josephine Lavelle	12	9	4	No change
St4/Aug20 Strategic and Business	CITF. Given Camping and Caravanning Club's intent to sell their interest in CITF, risk of not opening in 2021 and of longer term sub-optimal financial and delivery outcomes associated with a new partner.	Mike Seddon	12	9	4	Improving

Forestry England Risk Reporting Dashboard

Risk ID & Strategic Objective	Risk description (in terms of event, cause and impact)	Risk owner(s)	Inherent risk score	Residual risk score	Target risk score	Risk Trend
O1/Oct19 Operational	Falling demand for Forestry England timber could destabilise our financial position.	Tristram Hilborn	12	9	9	Improving
O5/Mar20 Operational	Nature for Climate programme has three main areas of delivery risks.	Tristram Hilborn	12	9	6	No Change
O6/Mar20 Operational	Further waves of the C-19 virus or new variants would represent a risk on staffing levels, wellbeing and resilience, operations, and finances.	Tristram Hilborn	12	9	6	Improving
O7/May21 Operational	Future legislation change is likely to bring more of Forestry England's reservoir assets within the scope of The Reservoir's Act 1975	Josh Howe	16	12	9	New
T13/Oct19 Technology/infrastructure	Poor Information Security Culture risks leading to a loss of trust in Forestry England's ability to protect information, increased risk of cyber security attack and an inability to conduct core business leading to reputational damage, commercial loss and significant fines.	PK Khaira-Creswell & Eleanor Shipley	12	9	4	Improving

Forestry England Risk Reporting Dashboard

Risk ID & Strategic Objective	Risk	Risk owner(s)	Inherent risk score	Residual risk score	Target risk score	Risk Trend
T13b/Oct19 Technology/infrastructure	There is a risk of non-compliance with information legislation potentially resulting in reputational damage and significant fines	PK Khaira-Creswell & Eleanor Shipley	12	9	4	Improving
T14/Jan20 Technology/infrastructure	There is a risk of ineffective and inefficient working practices due to poor information management.	PK Khaira-Creswell & Eleanor Shipley	16	9	4	No change
T15/Oct19 Technology/infrastructure	Poor networks speed and inadequate connectivity risks those new technologies and ways of working to be embedded, because they cannot be used by everyone in the business.	Andy Goodsir	9	9	4	Improving
T16/May21 Technology/infrastructure	There is a high likelihood of a cyber security event. The impact could be a loss of data, financial loss and reputational damage.	Andy Goodsir	16	12	9	Improving
F3/Sept20 Financial	Recreation income from ticketed activity on the estate due to enforcement of national or local restrictions.	Hayley Skipper	9	9	4	Improving

Forestry England Risk Reporting Dashboard

Main changes since ARAC 25 February 2021

Closed risk:		
F2/May20	C-19 Impact on Sustainable Finances	The risk has been substantially mitigated and the financial performance has been better than expected with the assumed impacts from lockdown not being as severe on operations as first thought or envisaged, allowing a carry forward of delayed programmes and increased investment programme.
New risks to the active register:		
07/May21	Future legislation change is likely to bring more of Forestry England's reservoir assets within the scope of The Reservoir's Act 1975	Within the next 5 years it is likely that the Reservoirs Act will be updated to include smaller reservoirs within the scope of the legislation, due to a reduction in the volume threshold from 25,000m ³ to 10,000m ³ . This change will bring a much greater number of Forestry England's reservoirs within the scope of the Act and therefore place specific legal obligations on requirements for maintenance and upgrades/repairs. The additional costs and resource of meeting these requirements are likely to be significant and may require in the order of £5-£10m of initial investment, as well as a continuing increase in maintenance costs.
Risks moved from active to tolerated register:		
St2/Mar18	Forest Holidays	This risk has moved to the tolerated register due to minimal ministerial concern, however there could be sensitivities around new proposals and so a watching brief is needed. Risk assessment and mitigation levels have reduced: Inherent levels: reduced from MH=12 to MM=6 Residual levels: remain the same ML=6



07 July 2021

Paper Title: Forestry England Finance Report

Under the freedom of information act 2000, exempt information this paper has been withheld from publication as per Section 43(2): Prejudice to commercial interests.

**If you wish to request this paper please contact Rachel Mackintosh at
Rachel.mackintosh@forestryengland.uk**

ARAC Chairs note

Board Paper

Agenda Item 4

Forestry England ARAC Chairs note

Paper 4.1/Jul 21

Paper Title: FC ARAC Chair Report to Boards

Under the freedom of information act 2000, exempt information this paper has been withheld from publication as per Section 43(2): Prejudice to commercial interests.

If you wish to request this paper please contact Rachel Mackintosh at
Rachel.mackintosh@forestryengland.uk



07 July 2021

Paper Title: H & S Report

Under the freedom of information act 2000, exempt information this paper has been withheld from publication as per Section 43(2): Prejudice to commercial interests.

**If you wish to request this paper please contact Rachel Mackintosh at
Rachel.mackintosh@forestryengland.uk**



07 July 2021

Paper Title: Commercial Sensitive

Under the freedom of information act 2000, exempt information this paper has been withheld from publication as per Section 43(2): Prejudice to commercial interests.

**If you wish to request this paper please contact Rachel Mackintosh at
Rachel.mackintosh@forestryengland.uk**



07 July 2021

Paper Title: Commercial Sensitive

Under the freedom of information act 2000, exempt information this paper has been withheld from publication as per Section 43(2): Prejudice to commercial interests.

If you wish to request this paper please contact Rachel Mackintosh at
Rachel.mackintosh@forestryengland.uk



07 July 2021

Paper Title: Commercial Sensitive

Under the freedom of information act 2000, exempt information this paper has been withheld from publication as per Section 43(2): Prejudice to commercial interests.

**If you wish to request this paper please contact Rachel Mackintosh at
Rachel.mackintosh@forestryengland.uk**

BOARD PAPER

Paper Title: Forestry England Board Self-evaluation 2021

Author/Presenter: Rachel Mackintosh

Paper Requirement:

Decision Required	For Approval	For Steer	Official/Commercial Sensitive
X			

Executive Summary of key points and action required

All Board members completed the 2021 self-evaluation form in June. This paper summarises the results and suggests areas for action for improvement over 2021-22. This is supported by the combined feedback report attached at Appendix 2.

The questionnaire is the NAO questionnaire, and is the same one used as last year for comparative reasons.

This paper reports on:

1. The actions taken following 2020 self-evaluation; these focused on providing strategic direction, improvement of relationship with ARAC and looking at the wider context in which Forestry England operates through relationships with key stakeholders. Appendix 1.
2. The results of the 2021 self-evaluation exercise: this has seen overall improvement in each category. Appendix 2.
3. Proposals for the 2021 Board action plan

The Board is asked to discuss and agree the actions for the 2021 action plan.

Core messages for the non-executives to promote

The Forestry England Board is still a relatively new board and is committed to the continuous improvement of its performance with the aim of being a highly successful board.

Content
1. Purpose and context

The Forestry England Board is committed to ensuring that it provides the highest levels of corporate governance. It does this through:

- Reviewing its performance through an annual self-evaluation exercise using as a basis the NAO questionnaire for successful boards. This exercise was carried out for the first time in June 2020 which established the baseline against which future exercises can be compared.
- Agreeing an action plan for priority areas for improvement in the following year.

The Forestry England Board members have completed the tailored NAO self-evaluation questionnaire for the second year, which enables a comparison to be made against the 2020 baseline results. The summary report of all responses received is attached as Appendix 2.

This paper sets out:

- a) Review of the progress made on 2020 actions and learning for developing and management of the 2021 action plan.
- b) The results of the 2021 self-evaluation exercise
- c) Proposals for the 2021 action plan for the Board to discuss and determine.

2. Discussion

a) Review of 2020 actions

A detailed review of the 2020 actions is contained in Appendix 1 to this document.

In summary,

- The three strategic actions have been taken forward and seen positive impact:
 - Setting strategic direction and measuring performance: through the development of Growing the Future, as well as other current live discussions that are taking place on Board agendas. Work on measuring the performance against Growing the future is underway and the Board will be able to see and input on the development of this later in the year.
 - Strengthening the relationship between Board and ARAC: ARAC Chair's report and availability of minutes and papers on the SharePoint site
 - Taking wider world view, including stakeholder relations. The pandemic has shaped the response to this. Strengthened relations with Defra and key stakeholders has been seen, but more actions are proposed.
- Of the six specific actions,
 - 2 have been completed: annual review of ToRs, and establishment of SharePoint site.
 - 3 that relate to development of the Board, and its understanding of the organisation have been taken forward but impacted by the pandemic and need to be continued.
 - 1 on risk appetite discussion has not come to the Board as we are aligning the approach with Defra and the wider FC, but this has delayed this action. To be carried forward.

Further learning points have been taken from the 2021 self -evaluation responses. A formal action plan has not been regularly circulated to the Board for action and monitoring throughout the year. It is proposed that this regular review is introduced and shared at each Board meeting going forward.

b) The results of the 2021 self-evaluation exercise

Board Self-evaluation 2021

Benchmarking against 2020 results

The responses to the 2021 self-evaluation have been collated and compared to the 2020 benchmark with the detailed responses attached in Appendix 2.

A high level summary of the overall results at section level benchmarked against the 2020 results is below. There were nine board members responding in both 2020 and 2021.

Overall Board member feedback is indicating improvement in top scores across all areas, but it does highlight areas requiring further work in section 4 and 5. This is a very positive view of how the Board is working and developing and gives us a strong base to move forward in 2021 / 22.

Key

(x) = 2020 score

Section	1 = Strongly Disagree	2 =Partly Disagree	3= Partly Agree	4 = Strongly Agree	Overall movement
1. Terms of Reference, strategic direction and remit		1 (4)	23 (31)	38 (28)	Improvement
2. Performance Management	0(3)	6 (11)	31 (24)	26 (25)	Improvement
3. Relationship with key stakeholders		4 (5)	13 (10)	9 (7)	Improvement
4. Propriety, fraud and other leakage	1 (0)	4 (7)	9 (12)	12 (7)	Split opinion
5. Risk management	1 (0)	10 (8)	29 (36)	41 (37)	Split opinion
6. The audit committee, internal audit and corporate reporting	(3)	2 (5)	8 (5)	25 (18)	Improvement
7. The boardroom		5 (9)	16 (22)	33 (22)	Improvement

2021 results

The table contained in Appendix 2 gives the more detailed and nuanced picture of responses, together with the free text comments of Board members that build a more informative picture.

Some of the key messages and themes that come out are:

- Very positive reaction to the work and development of the Board, particularly through the pandemic and the move to meetings on Teams.
- The high quality of executive reporting, papers and discussions is recognised and welcomed.

- There is a lot of looking forward to meeting in person and the more informal discussions that can take place around formal meetings.
- The strategic level of papers and agenda items are welcomed, and particularly the work in developing Growing the Future 2021 - 2026 together.
- There has been progress in developing and reporting on stakeholder relations, but more work especially on key stakeholders is requested. It is recognised the governance of the FC as a whole, including the Commissioners and ARAC, is still in its early days and continues to develop.
- There are some of the more technical asks around reporting compliance and risk that need consideration and strengthening.

c) **Proposals for the 2021 action plan for the Board to discuss and determine.**

The following areas are being proposed for development over the coming year, the Board is asked to consider these and propose alternatives for inclusion in the 2021 action plan:

- Board development
 - Create informal space for face to face discussions.
 - Consider Board development days.
- Performance management
 - Continued development of measures, particularly for the monitoring of progress of Growing the Future, but also for other key areas of work programmes.
 - Benchmarking against other organisations
- Stakeholder
 - Develop a stakeholder map
 - Bring a Board item on stakeholder relations review to the Board twice a year
- Risk management
 - Board discussion on risk appetite
 - Consider strengthening some of the other reporting reflected in this section
 - Consider scheduling horizon scanning discussions (part of development days)

3. **Recommendations**

The Board is asked to consider the results of the self-evaluation and prioritise the areas for development for the 2021 action plan.

The Board is asked to agree the proposal that the Board receive a mid-year report of progress against the 2021 action plan.

4. **Resource implications**

The resource implications are not known until the 2021 action plan is agreed. The resources required to implement this will then be identified.

5. **Risk management**

Consideration of the results of the self-evaluation exercise and the development of the 2021 action plan will enable continued improvement in the functioning of the Board, mitigating risks of poor /weak governance and compliance.

6. **Equalities analysis**

Board Self-evaluation 2021

An EIA of the 2021 action plan will be considered once the action plan is agreed.

7. Communications

It is proposed that the action plan is shared with the Executive Team so they can support and participate in the continuing development of the Board.

8. Attachments

Appendix 1: 2020 Action Plan review

Appendix 2: Summary report of the 2021 Forestry England Board self-evaluation.

Author Rachel Mackintosh

Title: Corporate compliance, risk and parliamentary lead (CEO office)

Date: 27.06.21

BOARD PAPER
Paper Title: Annual review of Board Terms of Reference
Author: Rachel Mackintosh
Paper Requirement:

Decision Required	For Approval	For Steer	Official/Commercial Sensitive
X			

Executive Summary of key points and action required

The Board is asked to review the Terms of Reference (ToR) and recommend any amendments for approval by the Board of Commissioners.

Core messages for the non-executives to promote

The ToR set out the Forestry England Board's role, its responsibilities, make up, its required committees and how it will conduct its business.

Content
1. Purpose and context

The Forestry England Board's TOR and scheme of delegation set out the powers and responsibilities that have been delegated to it by the Forestry Commissioners. The ToR reference set out the Forestry England Board's role, its responsibilities, make up, its required committees and how it will conduct its business.

In June 2020 the Board agreed to annually review of its Terms of Reference in July each year, in conjunction with the self -evaluation exercise.

The current ToR are attached at Appendix 1.

2. Discussion

In preparation for this review, the ToR have been circulated in advance to Board members for proposals for update and amendments. The following comments were received:

- A suggestion that the Board be charged with ensuring that the corporate governance of Forestry England is maintained at the highest level. At the moment certain responsibilities are mentioned but what is perceived now as "good governance" may not always remain so or be comprehensive enough (for instance around diversity).

Annual review of Board Terms of Reference

- A suggestion to make explicit the required inclusive nature of the working and recreational environment.

3. Recommendations

The Board is asked to consider the suggested amendment and any others that arise in the discussion and determine the recommendations to be made to the Board of Commissioners.

4. Resource implications

None.

5. Risk management

- Lack of clarity in roles and responsibilities will lead to unclear and muddled leadership for the organisation.
- Decisions made by the Board would be open to challenge if it is not clear that the power to make the decision is within their ToR.

These risks will be managed through having clear ToR that are reviewed annually.

6. Equalities analysis

The ToR have been reviewed to ensure there is no adverse direct or indirect E&D impact.

7. Communications

The ToR is on the Board SharePoint site for easy access to Board members at all times. The ToR is a public document and is available on request.

8. Attachments

Appendix 1 Forestry England Board Terms of Reference

Author Rachel Mackintosh

Title Compliance, Risk and Parliamentary lead (CEO Office)

Date 26.06.21