**SCOTTISH FORESTRY EXECUTIVE TEAM**

**Minutes (Draft - Official)**

**3 March 2023, Silvan House, Central Meeting Room 1 and Teams Meeting**

**To discuss Edinburgh Office Relocation and decision on preferred office location**

**SET Attendees:**

Dave Signorini (DS)

Zahid Deen (ZD)

Jonathan Taylor (JT)

Brendan Callaghan (BC)

Alan Hampson (AH)

**Apologies:**

Ross MacHardie (RM)

1. **Decision on the preferred location of the new Edinburgh Office**

Following the February SET meeting which considered the options appraisal prepare by RM, the SET shortlisted two locations, Meadowbank House and Saughton House. Furthermore, it was decided that visits should be undertaken to both locations to further explore the buildings and scrutinise the arrangements at each in more detail. The scoring of the options appraisal was left unchanged, as this was undertaken by RM to inform the short listing.

Following that shortlisting, the project group and the Senior Executive Team undertook some further assessments and visits and have decided that the preferred location is Saughton House.

SET members fed back views from their teams. The SET collectively decided that the location, share spaces, customisation of the space, catering, continuity for our staff and travel/parking facilities were better at Saughton. To note that it was recognised that Meadowbank had many positive aspects, including good collaboration spaces and IT.

It was acknowledged that the Saughton lease whilst two years initially, there were at this time no formal plans by the SG to change the designation of Saughton and therefore it was agreed the level of risk of a requirement to move in the near term was low.

The next steps will be to complete the business case for Saughton House and have it approved by Scottish Government property control. In parallel the project group will work on the logistical arrangements, space planning and the move of our furniture, files and equipment from Silvan House

1. **Next steps**

Arrangements would be made to inform all staff as soon as possible the following week. The FAQ will also be updated, and a staff engagement session will be scheduled in the coming weeks.

The SET acknowledged that staff will be interested in the decision-making process and that details of the options scoring would be made available.

The timeframes and logistics to complete the move by August are challenging and will place pressure on the business; consideration will have to be given to prioritise the basic functionality, while longer term aspects (e.g., design work or bespoke furniture items) may take longer to install.

The project group would meet to take the actions forward and we will start work with SG property to complete the business case and the associated arrangements for occupancy.

We will also start the formal consultation period with staff and the Trade Union side.

**END**