



Thu 13/01/2022 14:12

Dear Colleagues,

The 2020-2025 Strategy

In my last catch up I wrote about our Strategy and that over the coming weeks the catch up will unpack it a little, take a closer look at the four quadrants (Optimise, Protect, Diversify and Promote) and what this means in reality. However, to help refresh memories and introduce new staff to the strategy there are two versions a  [Short Version](#) which takes just 5 minutes to read and the  [Full Version](#) which has lots of detail on the individual areas of work if that's more your thing. Either is useful and certainly the short document gives a good overview. So do please take a few minutes over the next week and help put yourself and what you do into the bigger picture of the charity. Next week we will kick off with Sam's ever popular finance infographic to set the scene.

Central Services Review

When the consultation and restructure took place in 2019/20, I made a commitment to review the central services structures including the SLT. I originally intended that this review would take place in the early part of 2022 but with the post of Director of Infrastructure vacant and the Head of Group (N) Tim Foster making me aware of his intention to retire in February 2022 the conditions appeared to be right to bring the review forward. You are all well aware of the operational environment and the impact that the pandemic has had upon us.

Against that backdrop my overarching principle has been to:

- maintain business continuity whilst addressing weaknesses that I perceived in the structure
- set a target that any changes would be cost neutral at worst, and
- make savings where at all possible.

All affected posts are currently being formally reviewed to ensure terms and conditions are appropriate for the responsibilities of the role but whilst that is being done I wanted to give you a sense of what has been agreed, and to nip any rumours in the bud. The first thing I would like to address is that whilst the next formal review of central services will not occur until late 2023/early 2024 the dynamic nature of the operational environment means that fine tuning at all levels is likely to occur throughout the intervening years to ensure that we remain agile and effective. Next, the changes: We are an education charity and I felt more emphasis was needed on education both at the SLT and through a dedicated Education Manager's post. Given that managing the risks associated with delivering education outdoors is core business I believe that a dedicated Health and Safety manager's post is required. Finally I sense that the challenges of working to meet our carbon net zero target would require a dedicated role.

To enable these additions I have reduced the SLT by two posts. With Tim Foster's departure the two Heads of Group will merge into one Head of Education and Operations role to be filled by Andy Pratt and the Deputy Heads of Group will report to that role. The Director of Infrastructure role will be removed and the infrastructure team, currently line managed by Head of Group South, will in future be line managed by the Director of Finance and Business Administration, Sam Dhadwar, who will also line manage the as yet untitled role responsible for our net zero carbon activity. Both the Health and Safety and Education roles will be line managed by the Education and Operations role. Fine tuning will continue over the next couple of weeks while job descriptions are refined. The new wiring diagram will be published by HR in the coming weeks.

Get Your Green Fund Applications In

Back in November, the new Green Fund was launched with a new format. Sustainability Coordinators at all FSC locations can apply to the fund. Its purpose is to develop projects that directly support our new Carbon and Nature Plan. That gives a lot of scope because the plan includes carbon reduction, enhancing biodiversity and encouraging sustainable behaviours. Projects can of course aim to cover a combination of all three. £12,000 is available and we are anticipating supporting about 6 projects but locations can collaborate if they find that they are working on similar ideas. Please note that this Green Fund has much bigger focus on measuring success, replicating and scaling up projects and engaging with visitors. All the details, background information and the scoring matrix which gives some pretty hefty clues about what the assessors are looking for can be found [here](#). The deadline for applications is 1pm on 21st January 2022.

You can choose from FSC's 187 biodiversity training courses

What are liverworts? How do I read wildlife tracks? Can I sketch birds or uncover beetles? Right now, there are 187 biodiversity training courses you can choose to attend for your personal interest and professional skills. FSC courses combine the best of natural history tuition with bespoke course materials. Courses are delivered online, at FSC centres, and other learning locations like Bristol and Manchester. Book your place online at <https://www.field-studies-council.org/fsc-natural-history-courses/>.

Many courses are free for staff to attend. Proceeds from other courses fund FSC's charity. For exclusive discounts, please sign to FSC's biodiversity newsletter (<https://www.field-studies-council.org/sign-up-to-our-biodiversity-newsletter/>). For the chance to get your free place, in exchange for writing a blog/review about the course, please email ecoskills@field-studies-council.org (first come, first served!). Thank you

A bit of tax relief

You can claim tax relief for a whole year, even if you have only had to work from home for just one day of that year. The scheme has been extended for 2021/22 as well. Anyone would think that Rishi Sunak is wanting to be popular. Those who are facing the looming self-assessment deadline can claim via the form. If you have swerved that particular horror, HRMC have set up a microsite to help you claim instead. This is very ably explained by moneysaving expert Martin Lewis in an article which we have posted on the staff [Health and Wellbeing Pages](#). With an Omicron wave and January blues a distinct possibility, please do have a look at the wealth of tips and ideas that staff from across FSC have gathered since the start of the pandemic. If you think that there is anything missing, or you come across some good advice please let me know. Westfield Health renewal letters have gone out, so do make the most of the treatments on offer.

Stay safe and keep well

Mark