



Forestry and Land Scotland (FLS) Executive Leadership Team Meeting

25 September 2024

Attendees:

Kevin Quinlan, Chief Executive (Chair)
David Leven, Director of Commercial Development
Jo Ellis, Head of Planning and Environment
Graeme Hutton, Director of Net Zero
Sophia Christopoulos, Secretariat Assistant, Minute Taker

Others:

Donna Mortimer, Chief Financial Officer
Rhondda Salmond, Change Manager
Julie Fitzpatrick, Head of People and Organisational Development
Jennie Smith, Acting Deputy Head of Finance
Gwen Hamilton, Head of Communications
Paul Calderwood, Senior Internal Communications Manager
Alastair Henry, Health and Safety Advisor
Iain MacNab, Scottish Government
Michael Simmonds, Scottish Government
Rob Pengilley, Transformation Programme Director
Jonathan Frost, Coach

Apologies:

Graeme Prest, Director of Land Management and Regions
Michael Hymers, Director of Corporate Services

1. Minutes of last meeting

It was agreed that the minutes from the ELT meeting held on 4 September were a true and accurate reflection. The minutes from the ELT meeting held on 24 July were also approved; this delay was due to staff absence.

2. Action Points and Matters Arising

Ref:	Action:	Who:	Target Date:
4/05	Director of Land Management and Regions and Head of Planning and Environment to provide forecasting on coupe readiness and to incorporate this into the balanced scorecard.	Graeme Prest Jo Ellis	October 2024
2/06	Director of Commercial Development to reinvigorate the 360 Steering Group and establish ownership of actions from the Procurement Action Plan.	David Leven	26 July 2024
14/06	Director of Land Management and Regions, Head of Communications and National Visitor Services Manager to start work on external communications for the Transformation Programme.	Graeme Prest Gwen Hamilton Stuart Chalmers	30 July 2024

Ref:	Action:	Who:	Target Date:
15/06	Chief Financial Officer and Director of Corporate Services to develop clear governance on the management of investments, disposals, and reserves.	Donna Mortimer / Michael Hymers	August 2024
15/06b	Director of Commercial Development to revisit the proposed asset sales. This includes the appropriate segmentation into business streamlining and other categories such as ease of sale and the PESTLE criteria.	David Leven	August 2024
15/06d	Chief Financial Officer to create a Financial Plan for investments, disposals, and reserves.	Donna Mortimer	August 2024
16/06	Head of Communications to provide further information on website re-platforming and the options available at future ELT meeting.	Gwen Hamilton	28 October 2024
17/06	Director of Land Management & Director of Net Zero to revisit and reduce the number of potential investments.	Graeme Prest / Graeme Hutton	August 2024
3/07	Chief Financial Officer to present a Project Plan for the Management Information Dashboard at a future ELT meeting.	Donna Mortimer	31 July 2024
4/07	Directors to nominate a member of staff from their respective directorates to contribute to the Management Information Dashboard Project Plan.	Directors	31 July 2024
6/07	Chief Financial Officer to incorporate feedback from the ELT into the Finance Information report.	Donna Mortimer	July 2024
7/07	Directors, Head of People and Organisational Development and Chief Financial Officer to establish number of agency Full Time Equivalents and present paper to ELT which reconciles this with the staff budget.	Directors/Julie Fitzpatrick/Donna Mortimer	July 2024
4/08	Director of NetZero to provide a brief summary visualisation of the Business Travel Review and Implementation Plan and present at a future Senior Leadership Team (SLT) meeting for consideration.	Graeme Hutton	October 2024
5/08	Director of Land Management and Regions and Head of Sales and Marketing to present a DP Productivity Improvement Programme to include implementation of a new governance and accountability framework to benchmark and improve performance to ELT in September 2024.	Graeme Prest / Mick Bottomley	10 October 2024
6/08	Director of Land Management and Regions and Head of Sales and Marketing to further explore servicing options of FLS's DP fleet and update at future ELT.	Graeme Prest / Mick Bottomley	10 October 2024
7/08	Director of Land Management and Regions and Head of Technical Services to explore ELT feedback for requested investment and present at a future ELT meeting.	Graeme Prest / Doug Knox	September 2024
8/08	Head of Digital Services to integrate ELT's comments into FLS' Digital Strategy and Action Plan and provide and update at October ELT.	Dave Exeter	October 2024

Ref:	Action:	Who:	Target Date:
10/08	Chief Financial Officer to incorporate feedback from ELT into Financial Management Information and Performance report.	Donna Mortimer	October 2024
11/08	Director of Land Management and Regions to examine the viability of contracts.	Graeme Prest	October 2024
12/08	Director of Net Zero to discern whether any potential savings can be applied to the capital budget for Vehicles, Machinery and Equipment in Financial Year 25/26.	Graeme Hutton	October 2024
13/08	Directors to provide directorate objectives to be published on Saltire.	Directors	31 October 2024
1/09	Director of Commercial Development to simplify stratification of disposal assets, including revising current label categories. To include rationalisation of built assets; routine rationalisation of land as part of 'Business as Usual'; land sales for reinvestment in high 'Return on Investments' projects.	David Leven	03 October 2024
2/09a	Investments, Disposals and Reserves: Chief Financial Officer to create a Financial Plan for all investments, disposals, and reserves.	Donna Mortimer	10 October 2024
2/09b	Chief Financial Officer to update and circulate investment Business Case Templates.	Donna Mortimer	10 October 2024
2/09c	Chief Financial Officer to update and circulate investment policy/procedure.	Directors	3 October 2024
2/09d	Directors to arrange for the completion of Stage 1 Business Case templates for all investments listed.	Directors	3 October 2024
2/09e	Director of Corporate Services and Chief Financial Officer to review Stage 1 Business Case templates for all investments and prepare for future consideration by the ELT.	Michael Hymers/Donna Mortimer	10 October 2024
6/09	Head of People and Organisational Development to incorporate ELT's decision and ensure communicated as required.	Julie Fitzpatrick	6 September
7/09	Directors to identify lead and subsequently draft directorate balanced scorecards specific to directorates, to be presented at a future ELT meeting for consideration	Directors	3 October 2024
8/09	Director of Corporate Services and Deputy Head of Finance to finalise draft strategic budget mandate proposal for ELT review.	Michael Hymers/Jennie Smith	9 September 2024
9/09	Director of Net Zero and Secretariat Assistant to rationalise and consolidate actions in the Action Tracker.	Graeme Hutton / Sophia Christopoulos	10 October 2024
10/09	Deputy Head of Finance to include a graph separating timber price from timber volume in the BMR.	Jennie Smith	5 November 2024
10/09a	Deputy Head of Finance and Head of Planning and Environment to examine unit cost performance and feedback to ELT ahead of the next BMR.	Jennie Smith / Jo Ellis	5 November 2024
10/09b	Deputy Head of Finance to allocate income streams to the correct value streams, identifying the current and aspirational positions.	Jennie Smith	5 November 2024

Ref:	Action:	Who:	Target Date:
10/09c	Deputy Head of Finance to review Newton Nursery categorisation, particularly budget and staffing.	Jennie Smith	5 November 2024
10/09d	Deputy Head of Finance to provide visualisation of staff numbers at the next BMR; FTE versus actual and budget versus target.	Jennie Smith	5 November 2024
10/09e	Deputy Head of Finance to validate reserves figures.	Jennie Smith	5 November 2024
11/09	Change Manager to incorporate feedback from the ELT regarding Risk Appetite.	Rhondda Salmond	19 November 2024
12/09	Director of Commercial Development and Head of People and Organisational Development to develop implementation plan and communications for Working Time.	David Leven / Julie Fitzpatrick	29 November 2024
13/09	Head of People and Organisational Development to incorporate feedback from the ELT regarding Mobility Clauses.	Julie Fitzpatrick	31 October 2024
14/09	Head of People and Organisational Development to integrate the Management Postings paper and Temporary Responsibilities Allowance paper and return to ELT.	Julie Fitzpatrick	31 October 2024
15/09	Senior Internal Communications Manager to incorporate feedback from the ELT regarding the Senior Leadership Team meeting agenda outline.	Paul Calderwood	1 October 2024
15/09a	Chief Executive Officer and Senior Internal Communications Manager to develop script for the Senior Leadership Team meeting.	Paul Calderwood / Kevin Quinlan	1 October 2024
15/09b	Transformation Programme Director to liaise with Directors and their delegates to incorporate key talking points into the presentation for the Senior Leadership Team meeting.	Rob Pengilley / Directors	1 October 2024
15/09c	Head of Communications and Senior Internal Communications Manager to develop communications on the role of the Senior Leadership Team members within the context of Transformation.	Gwen Hamilton / Paul Calderwood	1 October 2024
16/09	Head of Communications and Senior Internal Communications Manager to develop a presentation for the next Town Hall meeting.	Gwen Hamilton / Paul Calderwood	3 October 2024

Action points 3/09, 4/09 and 5/09 were discharged. They were superseded to create a single, overarching action on investments, disposals, and reserves. Work has been completed on different aspects of this, with outstanding areas identified and noted for action.

Action point 16/06, 5/08, 6/08 and 13/08 were reviewed and the deadline revised to allow sufficient time for the work to be completed.

The ELT reviewed the actions, highlighting those that were overdue. Kevin Quinlan stressed the importance of establishing realistic timelines and proactively engaging with the work required. He also requested that the action list be consolidated so as to reduce overlap and repetition.

AP 2/09a: Investments, Disposals and Reserves

Chief Financial Officer to create a Financial Plan for all investments, disposals, and reserves.

AP 9/09: Director of Net Zero and Secretariat Assistant to rationalise and consolidate actions in the Action Tracker.

3. Financial Management Information and Performance (P5)

Jennie Smith presented a paper, highlighting key points and figures at Period 5. She explained the current deficit position and the impact of the Annual Subsidy Limit (ASL). The organisation is on target for income, however expenditure remains high, particularly with regards to staff salaries and national cost centres.

The ELT discussed the upcoming Business Management Reporting (BMR), providing the following feedback and requests for information:

- BMR to include timber price in a separate graph from timber volume.
- Increased visibility of unit cost performance.
- Allocation of income streams to correct value streams.
- Review of Newton Nursery categorisation, including budget and staffing.
- Visualisation of staff numbers.
- Validation of reserves figures.

AP 10/09: Deputy Head of Finance to include a graph separating timber price from timber volume in the BMR.

AP 10/09a: Deputy Head of Finance and Head of Planning and Environment to examine unit cost performance and feedback to ELT ahead of the next BMR.

AP 10/09b: Deputy Head of Finance to allocate income streams to the correct value streams, identifying the current and aspirational positions.

AP 10/09c: Deputy Head of Finance to review Newton Nursery categorisation, particularly budget and staffing.

AP 10/09d: Deputy Head of Finance to provide visualisation of staff numbers at the next BMR; FTE versus actual and budget versus target.

AP 10/09e: Deputy Head of Finance to validate reserves figures.

4. Review of FLS Risk Appetite Statement

Rhonda Salmond provided context and background to FLS's Risk Appetite Statement before introducing Iain MacNab and Michael Simmonds from Scottish Government, who have been involved in an advisory capacity.

Iain gave a presentation on risk appetite for the organisation, seeking feedback from the ELT on risk categories and their respective appetite levels. The ELT reflected on how risk tolerance impacts decision making and the need for more agility and innovation within the context of the transformation programme.

The ELT agreed that the overall risk appetite for the organisation should fall within 'Open' as this aligns with the organisation's strategic intention and objectives and will enable decisions to be made with a transformational mindset.

AP 11/09: Change Manager to incorporate feedback from the ELT regarding Risk Appetite.

5. Working Time

Julie Fitzpatrick and David Leven presented a report on Working Time, summarising their findings, methodology and recommendations. A working group was established to explore the impact the reduced working week will have on staff and the business. They stressed the importance of risk mitigation, while maximising efficiency and productivity. For example, more robust guidance is required on various associated policies, such as Flexi Time, in order to ensure consistency of application across the business.

The ELT discussed the need to ensure fairness in the workplace as different teams will be impacted differently by the upcoming changes; certain functions will require more consideration as the organisation has diverse job roles with varying requirements. They considered the timeline for implementation as well as how best to communicate these changes with staff. David agreed he would remain a facilitator for these discussions.

AP 12/09: Director of Commercial Development and Head of People and Organisational Development to develop implementation plan and communications for Working Time.

6. Mobility Clauses

Julie presented a paper on Mobility Clauses, discussing the terms of redeployment, the current challenges around staff mobility and the need for a more agile workforce within the context of transformation. She emphasised staff concerns on the policy and the need for clarity, particularly as it ties in with broader discussions on workforce planning and succession planning.

The ELT provided feedback on the paper, taking into consideration business needs and staff incentives.

AP 13/09: Head of People and Organisational Development to incorporate feedback from the ELT regarding Mobility Clauses.

7. Temporary Responsibilities Allowance (TRA)

Julie presented a paper, providing background and rationale, before outlining the risks associated with how the TRA is currently used and the need to mitigate these.

The ELT considered the recommendations in the paper, discussing the suite of temporary arrangements available, including Management Postings, and how to align these with business needs.

AP 14/09: Head of People and Organisational Development to integrate the Management Postings paper and Temporary Responsibilities Allowance paper and return to ELT.

8. Senior Leadership Team (SLT) Meeting Prep

Kevin outlined the proposed agenda and the objectives of the SLT meeting. The ELT reflected on the purpose of the SLT, noting the importance of encouraging engagement and reinforcing the messaging

from the previous meeting. Each agenda item owner summarised their presentations and workshops, seeking feedback from the ELT.

AP15/09: Senior Internal Communications Manager to incorporate feedback from the ELT regarding the Senior Leadership Team meeting agenda outline.

AP 15/09a: Chief Executive Officer and Senior Internal Communications Manager to develop script for the Senior Leadership Team meeting.

AP 15/09b: Transformation Programme Director to liaise with Directors and their delegates to incorporate key talking points into the presentation for the Senior Leadership Team meeting.

AP 15/09c: Head of Communications and Senior Internal Communications Manager to develop communications on the role of the Senior Leadership Team members within the context of Transformation.

9. ELT Forward Look & Reflections

The ELT discussed the agendas for upcoming ELT meetings, ensuring that these align with action deadlines, and provided their reflections on the meeting.

10. AOB

ELT Location Proposal

Sophia Christopoulos submitted a location proposal for future ELT meetings, which was approved by the ELT subject to some minor amendments.

The date of the next ELT meeting is 10 October 2024.