



Forestry and Land Scotland (FLS) Executive Leadership Team Meeting

21 January 2025

Attendees:

Kevin Quinlan, Chief Executive Officer (Chair)
 Graeme Prest, Director of Land Management and Regions
 Michael Hymers, Director of Corporate Services
 David Leven, Director of Commercial Development
 Graeme Hutton, Director of Net Zero
 Kate Moffat, Senior Internal Audit Manager

Others:

Julie Fitzpatrick, Head of People and Organisational Development
 Fiona Dundas, Senior HR Manager
 Rob Pengilley, Portfolio/Change Director

1. Review of Minutes

It was agreed that the minutes from the ELT meeting held on 7th January 2025 were a true and accurate reflection.

2. Summary of Action Points from Meeting

Ref.:	Action:	Owner:	Target Date:
5/01	Head of People and Organisational Development to establish timescales required for analysis of further data on staff grade / age / profession / succession / turnover.	Julie Fitzpatrick	06/02/2025
6/01	Head of People and Organisational Development to present opportunities & challenges within Workforce Planning to ELT.	Julie Fitzpatrick	18/02/2025
7/01	Directors to establish the potential impacts of reduced operational capacity, (-10% headcount) and which roles are business critical, as a future-proofing exercise.	Directors	18/02/2025
8/01	Results of People Survey to be published to the wider agency to be shared by Head of People and Organisational Development.	Julie Fitzpatrick	24/01/2025

9/01	Directors to have detailed discussion with their directorates around implications of People Survey, actions, and priorities at a team level.	Directors	21/02/2025
10/01	Change Manager to amend the Governance Map in light of the ELT's discussions on 21 January 2025.	Rhondda Salmond	28/01/2025
11/01	Director of Corporate Services to revise the protocol and associated timeline for the agreement of ELT/SLT agendas and the subsequent issuing of papers.	Michael Hymers	06/02/2025
12/01	Director of Corporate Services to draft a proposed remit for 'The Week Ahead' – FLS Leadership Weekly Check-in (a replacement for FLS 'Hot Issues').	Michael Hymers	28/01/2025

Action points 8/08, 2/11, 6/11, 3/12b, 3/12c, 3/12e, 6/12, 9/12, 10/12, 3/01 and 4/01 are discharged.

Action Point 13/10 is progressing after investments were previously approved by the ELT, with deer larders currently in focus. The Action is ongoing and the ELT are expected to receive an update by 31 March 2025.

The ELT will also be updated on directorates' scorecards as part of Action Point 18/10 by end of February.

3. Workforce Planning

Julie Fitzpatrick and Fiona Dundas provided an update on Workforce Planning which detailed characteristics – such as age, gender and staff turnover – of FLS' workforce, highlighted the importance of understanding its priorities, and recommended a course of action.

The ELT discussed key factors including costs of training, succession, culture, and colleague intentions with regards to term of service that could influence the future direction of FLS workforce development. It was acknowledged that budget was an influence, however that there was a need to harness further data to understand the impacts on, and value of, both office and operational business areas before finalising a plan to achieve a preferred future-state model.

AP 5/01: Head of People and Organisational Development to establish timescales required for analysis of further data on staff grade / age / profession / succession / turnover

AP 6/01: Head of People and Organisational Development to present opportunities & challenges within Workforce Planning to ELT

AP 7/01: Directors to establish the potential impacts of reduced operational capacity, (-10% headcount) and which roles are business critical, as a future-proofing exercise

4. People Survey Outcomes

The ELT held an in-depth discussion on the results of FLS' most recent People Survey. The board acknowledged that discussion and focus is required to understand the feedback from colleagues on the theme of bullying and harassment, and that those in leadership positions must be seen to be actively discussing these issues.

It was agreed that, at an organisational level, the focuses will be on leading change, managing performance and bullying and harassment hotspots, with an overarching message of *One FLS, Fit for the Future* which will reinforce the core values of the agency on the foundations of the Civil Service Code of Conduct.

AP 8/01: Results of People Survey to be published to the wider agency

AP 9/01: Directors to have detailed discussion with their directorates around implications of People Survey, actions, and priorities at a team level

5. Reflections on Governance

Kevin presented the Governance Map and led discussion on boards and meetings related to both major projects and governance processes.

After establishing that these could fit under three separate headings (Core Governance, Organisation-Wide Governance and Major Projects), the ELT discussed how FLS' current structure could be improved to maximise leadership and management of the organisation.

It was agreed that regularly scheduled functional meetings should be absorbed where possible by Directorate Leadership Team meetings.

- The **Land Transaction Appraisal** Meetings are to be absorbed by the Commercial Development Directorate Leadership Meeting as a usual business function, whereas;
- The **Strategic Acquisitions Board** is to be absorbed into the ELT;
- The **Climate Biodiversity Partnership Board** is also to be absorbed into the ELT, as is;
- The **Climate Change Assurance Group**.

AP 10/01: Change Manager to amend the Governance Map in light of the ELT's discussion.

6. Preparation for Senior Leadership Team Meeting (27 Jan 2025)

The ELT discussed the Senior Leadership Team's standard meeting structure, finalised its agenda for the upcoming meeting, and reviewed the relevant materials.

The ELT agreed to revisit the protocol and associated timeline for the agreement of agendas and the associated issuing of papers. It was recommended that Directors share the ELT Forward Look, agendas and papers (as appropriate) with their respective Leadership teams in advance of meetings.

The ELT also agreed to revisit the format, content and attendance at the weekly 'Hot Issues' call, maximising the benefit of the opportunity to the organisation.

AP 11/01: Director of Corporate Services to revise the protocol and associated timeline for the agreement of ELT/SLT agendas and the subsequent issuing of papers.

AP 12/01: Director of Corporate Services to draft a proposed remit for 'The Week Ahead' – FLS Leadership Weekly Check-In (a replacement for 'Hot Issues').

7. Transformation Programme Update

Rob Pengilley gave a presentation on the Transformation Programme, noting that its name had updated to "Fit for the Future Change Portfolio", and touched on the ways that FLS will benefit from portfolio management, such as improved decision-making and more successful project outcomes. He noted that FLS need sufficient information of sufficient quality, and that we need an incremental approach to determining what is 'sufficient'.

He outlined the organisational chart of the new Portfolio and Change area of FLS and mapped its planned capabilities.

8. ELT Forward Look

Looking forward to the next meeting's agenda, the ELT agreed that it should include:

- **Workforce Planning**
- **Financial Update(s)**
- **Fit for the Future Change Portfolio Update**
- **Value Stream Categorisation, and;**
- **Aspen Critical Milestones and Timeline**

9. ELT Reflections

The ELT provided their reflections on the meeting.

10. AOB

The date of the next ELT meeting is 6 February 2025.