



Forestry and Land Scotland (FLS) Executive Leadership Team Meeting

10 June 2025

Attendees:

Kevin Quinlan, CEO (Chair)
Graeme Prest, Director of Land Management & Regions
David Leven, Director of Commercial Development
Tom Greenan, Director of Corporate Services & Transformation
Graeme Hutton, Director of Net Zero

Others:

Michael Hymers, Head of Corporate Office (Item 3)
Andrew Hunt, Regional Manager West (Item 3)
John Dougan, Regional Manager South (Item 3)
Julie Fitzpatrick, Head of People & Organisational Development (Items 3, 4, 5, 6 and 11)
Ian Considine, Head of Procurement (Item 3)
David Exeter, Head of Digital Services (Items 3 and 8)
Mark Wilcock, Head of Fleet & Buildings (Item 4)
Paul Calderwood, Senior Internal Communications Manager (Item 8)

1. Review of Minutes

It was agreed that the minutes from the ELT meeting held on 29 May 2025 were a true and accurate reflection.

2. Summary of Action Points from Meeting

Ref.:	Action:	Owner:	Target Date:
01/06	To provide outcome-focused statements linking business areas/value streams to 'Outcomes for Scotland' on the Corporate Plan (as per slide 10 of the presentation).	Directors	20 th June 2025
02/06	To provide a further People Survey update and to propose themes for the next survey.	Julie Fitzpatrick/ Directors	19 th August 2025
03/06	To circulate via correspondence a summary on hybrid working.	Julie Fitzpatrick	30 th June 2025

Action Points (AP) 8/05, 10/05 and 11/05 were closed.

AP 1/04 deadline amended to 1st July 2025.

APs 13/05 and 14/05 deadlines amended to 24th June 2025

Tom Greenan highlighted that the Annual Report & Accounts will need to be prioritised over actions 10/04 and 11/04 on business planning as the former is due at the end of June 2025. Further updates will be provided in due course.

3. Corporate Plan Development

Kevin Quinlan gave a presentation, introducing the revised draft Corporate Plan framework which aims to set out FLS's internal and external direction and reaffirm its mission. The plan will also articulate core commitments and provide the basis for stakeholder engagement. He welcomed comments from the Senior Leadership Group (SLG) Strategy Sub-group.

Key discussion points included:

- Distinguishing between FLS's "core" functions and "more" though there was consensus to move away from this framing in favour of clearer articulation around value streams and public outcomes.
- The need for clearer, outcomes-focused statements and compelling narrative that demonstrates impact and resonates with the Scottish public.
- Ensuring strong alignment with Balanced Scorecards and the Fit For the Future (FFF) programme.
- The role of stakeholder consultation, with a lighter-touch and more targeted approach proposed by Michael Hymers.

The ELT agreed to revisit the framework and progress at the 24 June ELT meeting.

AP 01/06: Directors and teams to provide outcome-focused statements linking business areas/value streams to 'Outcomes for Scotland' on the Corporate Plan (as per slide 10 of the presentation).

4. Apex 1 High Level Options

Mark Wilcock presented a paper, which outlines potential future options for National Office accommodation, focusing specifically on Apex 1. The ELT noted that space and location planning is closely tied to the hybrid working policy.

The ELT discussed the methodology for evaluating the different options, highlighting the importance of accessibility and operational impact. They provided guidance on preferred options and endorsed further exploration of contingencies, acknowledging that this is time-sensitive and some aspects are out with FLS control.

5. Hybrid Working

Julie Fitzpatrick presented a paper on hybrid working, advising that a formal consultation will be required with the unions once updated. She stressed the importance of consistency, clarity and setting expectations particularly with new recruits.

The ELT discussed current hybrid working arrangements, recognising the diverse working contexts across FLS. Discussion focused on the intention behind in-person presence, including the need to support collaboration, team cohesion and organisational culture, rather than mandating a fixed number of office days. They also acknowledged the importance of aligning the organisation's approach with SG.

The ELT agreed that further information is required before a decision can be reached.

AP 03/06: Head of People & Organisational Development to circulate via correspondence a summary on hybrid working.

6. People Survey Update

Julie provided an update on ongoing follow-up to the People Survey. She highlighted that the next survey will be issued in October and that the themes will need to be chosen by September.

The Directors each provided an update on staff engagement and how actions are being taken forward for their respective directorates.

AP 02/06: Head of People & Organisational Development and Directors to provide a further People Survey update and to propose themes for the next survey.

7. Prep for Townhall Meeting

The ELT reviewed the agenda for the upcoming Townhall on 26 June. It was agreed that relevant leads for each of the below topics are responsible for preparing slides ahead of the Townhall and for fielding questions during the meeting itself.

Key items to be presented include:

- CEO overview.
- Cyber security and emergency communication planning.
- Financial performance highlights for FY 24/25 and outlook for FY 25/26.
- Updates on the FFF programme, including delivery examples from Land Management.

8. ELT Forward Look

The ELT reviewed and discussed the agendas for their next meeting.

9. ELT Reflections

The ELT shared their reflections on this meeting.

10. AOB

Leadership Module

Kevin confirmed that he will attend the Leadership Module on 24th June and will share the presentation content and themes with the Directors as prepared by Julie.

Government Procurement Cards (GPC)

The ELT reviewed current GPC usage, supporting Tom's proposal to reduce the number of cards and improve financial oversight.

The date of the next ELT meeting is 24 June 2025.