



Forestry and Land Scotland (FLS) Executive Leadership Team Meeting

13 May 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:

Rhondda Salmond, Change Manager (items 3, 4, 5 & 9)

Jason Liggins, Head of Health, Safety & Wellbeing (item 7)

Alison Forbes, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Advisor (item 8)

1. Review of Minutes

It was agreed that the minutes from the ELT meeting held on 01 May 2025 were a true and accurate reflection.

2. Summary of Action Points from Meeting

Ref.:	Action:	Owner:	Target Date:
5/05	To incorporate feedback and update the Risk Register ahead of the next ARC meeting.	ELT / Rhondda Salmond	27 May 2025
6/05	To engage with Directors individually on the H,S&W report.	Jason Liggins	30 June 2025
7/05	To establish a lead from the LMLT for the Keela contract (tick-proof clothing).	Graeme Prest	31 May 2025
8/05	To explore HR policy on secondary employment.	Tom Greenan / Julie Fitzpatrick	30 June 2025
9/05	To incorporate feedback and liaise with Chief Executive and Director of Corporate Services & Transformation.	Alison Forbes	31 May 2025

Action Points 8/03 and 1/05 have been closed.

3. Audit & Risk Committee (ARC) Preparation

The ELT reviewed the agenda for the ARC meeting on 27 March 2025. Given the number of substantial items, they agreed to extend the meeting by 30 minutes.

Tom Greenan stressed the importance of collective ownership of audit actions and noted that ELT input is required on the commentary for the draft Annual Report & Accounts FY 24/25. As many of the audit actions fall within the remit of Land Management & Regions, Graeme Prest will attend the ARC going forward, sending a suitable delegate in his absence when necessary.

4. Quarterly Risk Review

Rhondda Salmond presented a revised version of the Corporate Risk Register, which has been reformatted and condensed to improve usability. Risks are grouped thematically, with the net risk aligned to the organisation's risk appetite.

The ELT provided feedback on the format, before discussing each risk category. They agreed the following:

- David Leven and Rhondda to incorporate an additional risk category 'Stakeholder Management'.
- Risk category leads and risk action owners to review their respective risks and ensure they are accurately captured and graded.

AP 5/05: ELT and Change Manager to incorporate feedback and update the Risk Register ahead of the next ARC meeting.

5. Quarterly Audit Review

Rhondda outlined the purpose of the Quarterly Audit Review, highlighting the importance of holistic approach in addressing ongoing actions in the Annual Assurance Statement from Internal Audit. Kevin Quinlan echoed this, adding that engagement with auditors throughout the process is paramount.

The ELT discussed the outstanding audit actions, verifying whether the associated activities and deadlines accurately reflect the work required, as well as exploring how to encourage accountability and proactive advancement of these actions. Tom noted that he will incorporate the Internal Audit Action Tracker into the balanced scorecard.

The ELT thanked Rhondda for the papers, acknowledging both the quality of her work and continued efforts.

6. Quarterly Health, Safety & Wellbeing (H,S&W) Review / FY 25/26 H,S&W Priorities

Jason Liggins gave a presentation, providing an update on H,S&W. He compared statistics from FY 24/25 to FY 23/24, highlighting key areas and trends; outlined how data is reported, monitored and analysed, noting the themes that emerge; and identified the actions required to mitigate risk in FY 25/26.

The ELT explored a few areas of concern in more detail, including:

- The increase in Lyme disease cases and the importance of inclusive, specialised clothing.
- The risks associated with secondary employment.
- Equipment maintenance, age and overall safety.
- Mountain biking accidents and their underlying causes.

Jason advised that options for an electronic Health & Safety system are being investigated so as to standardise reporting across regions, with Doug Harvey, East Regional Manager, championing this. Jason also provided an update on technical training and upskilling the workforce, noting that this will be captured in more detail at the next quarterly update.

The ELT discussed safety critical responsibilities, namely ensuring linkage between Corporate (e.g. Risk Register, dashboards), the Land Management Leadership Team (LMLT) and the Regions. Jason agreed to engage with Directors individually to discuss the report in more detail for each directorate. The ELT also agreed to ELT representation at regional H,S&W days in order to reinforce the criticality of H,S&W.

AP 6/05: Head of Health, Safety & Wellbeing to engage with Directors individually on the H,S&W report.

AP 7/05: Director of Land Management & Regions to establish a lead from the LMLT for the Keela contract (tick-proof clothing).

AP 8/05: Director of Corporate Services & Transformation and Head of People & Organisational Development to explore HR policy on secondary employment.

7. Bullying & Harassment / Gender Balance in Workforce

Alison Forbes presented a paper focusing on reducing bullying and harassment (which has increased according to the People Survey from the previous year) and improving the gender balance (particularly within certain pay bands). She outlined her observations since joining the organisation, offering anecdotes from members of staff to illustrate challenges, and explored the underlying causes and possible implications.

Kevin thanked Alison for the paper, emphasising the importance of this work. He requested that further quantitative and qualitative research and analysis be conducted so as to better understand the scope and root causes of these issues, enabling more targeted action. He also added the need to establish desired outcomes before creating an action plan.

The ELT agreed to make Engaging the Bystander training mandatory; to ensure consistent messaging through channels such as the Townhall meeting; and to include Equality, Diversity & Inclusion KPIs in the balanced scorecard.

AP 9/05: Head of Equality, Diversity & Inclusion to incorporate feedback and liaise with Chief Executive and Director of Corporate Services & Transformation.

8. Forward Look

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

9. Reflections

The ELT shared their reflections on this meeting.

10. AOB

There were no AOBs raised.

The date of the next ELT meeting is 29 May 2025.