



Forestry and Land Scotland (FLS) Executive Leadership Team (ELT) Meeting

27 August 2025

Attendees:

Kevin Quinlan, CEO (Chair)
David Leven, Director of Commercial Development
Graeme Prest, Director of Land Management & Regions
Graeme Hutton, Director of Net Zero
Maf Smith, Non-Executive Advisor
Therese O'Donnell, Non-Executive Advisor
Calum McNicol, Corporate Development Assistant (Minutes)

Others:

Michael Hymers, Head of Corporate Office
Gavin Falconer, Head of Renewables
Colin Buchanan, Senior Finance Manager

Apologies:

Tom Greenan, Director of Corporate Services & Transformation

1. Review of Minutes

With minor amendment, it was agreed that the minutes from the ELT meeting held on 19th August 2025 were a true and accurate reflection.

2. Summary of Action Points from Meeting

Ref.:	Action:	Owner:	Target Date:
8/08	Produce second version of Renewables Commercial Strategy to align with feedback from ELT & further conversation with Maf Smith.	David Leven	2 Sept 2025
9/08	Discuss Coire Glas option fee income recognition and whether it can be allocated to FY25/26.	Gavin Falconer & Colin Buchanan	16 Sept 2025

3. Estates & Renewables Commercial Strategy

David Leven led the discussion of key foci for the Estates & Renewables team necessary for strengthening the approach to energy and estate development vital to FLS' financial sustainability, framing these as:

- The 'Case for Change' and its ongoing narrative;
- Renewables Commercial Strategy, and;
- Improvement Projects

It was put to the ELT that all three are essential to outlining strategic aims and enhancing FLS' efficacy when dealing with its energy infrastructure, and it was emphasised that organisation-wide effort will be required to fully integrate Estates & Renewables into FLS.

Existing operational models and their rationales were discussed, and the ELT took time to consider the merits of both active and passive approaches to site development in short- and long-term contexts. It was agreed that timelines and dependencies would be mapped out in coming weeks.

AP 8/08: Director of Commercial Development to produce a second version of the Renewables Commercial Strategy to align with feedback from the ELT and further conversation with Non-Executive Advisors.

4. Finance Update; Review of Income/Expenditure & Disposals (Period 4; FY25/26)

Colin Buchanan delivered an executive summary of Period 4's Budget Monitoring Report (BMR), outlining operational performance in addition to actual and forecasted figures, including projections for the full year outcome. There was particular focus on timber operations, regional spending, and the need to understand drivers of cost variance between financial years.

The ELT examined these figures both in overview and in-depth through the BMR itself; it was acknowledged that FLS must continue to both control costs and stabilise reserves in coming years.

AP 9/08: Head of Renewables and Senior Finance Manager to discuss Coire Glas option fee income and whether it can be allocated within Financial Year 2025/26.

5. Business Planning

Michael Hymers presented the Business Planning documentation and templates to the ELT. A discussion followed, centring on changes made to the framing and contents of these documents and timelines prior to becoming mandate, and members offered their thoughts on various details or amendments made since the board's previous meeting. The achievability of business targets and figures were also considered.

It was agreed that, in terms of further developing templates, there would be ongoing engagement with senior leadership, and that active collaboration between teams should be promoted.

6. Reflections

The ELT provided their reflections on the meeting.

7. AOB

There were no areas of outstanding business raised.

The date of the next ELT meeting is 2nd September 2025.