



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

20th January 2026

Attendees:

Kevin Quinlan, CEO (Chair)
Graeme Prest, Director of Land Management and Regions
Graeme Hutton, Director of Net Zero
Nicola McBain, Director of Corporate Services and Transformation
David Leven, Director of Commercial Development
Calum McNicol, Corporate Development Assistant (Minutes)

Others:

Michael Hymers, Head of Corporate Office (items 5 through 8)
Adam Dearnley, Head of Finance (items 5 through 8)
Julie Fitzpatrick, Head of People and Organisational Development (items 5 through 8)

1. Review of Minutes

It was agreed that the minutes from the ELT meeting held on 13th January 2026 were a true and accurate reflection.

2. Summary of Action Points from Meeting

Ref.:	Action:	Owner:	Target Date:
07/01	To finalise revisions of respective Business Plans in advance of the next ELT.	Directors	30 th January
08/01	To refine targets for Renewables and TCC.	David Leven & Graeme Prest	1 st September
09/01	To provide ELT with breakdown of “externally funded” roles by SG-funded and private sector-funded.	Julie Fitzpatrick	2 nd February
10/01	To ensure consistency in figures between overall reductions in FTEs.	Adam Dearnley, Julie Fitzpatrick & Directors	2 nd February
11/01	To create ‘Dynamic Workforce Management’ / ‘Change Management’ programme.	Nicola McBain & Julie Fitzpatrick	10 th February
12/01	To prepare a consolidated presentation on WfP to present at SAB.	Adam Dearnley, Julie Fitzpatrick & Nicola McBain	22 nd January

3. ELT Forward Look

The ELT reviewed and discussed the agenda for their upcoming meetings.

4. FLS Rolling Three-Year Business Plan

The ELT held a discussion on Regional and Directorate Business Plans, and FLS' overall financial position, including routes to progress in upcoming months. It was agreed that additional actions are required in order to finalise each respective Business Plan, and that Directors are to approve a final version in advance of the next meeting.

Adam Dearnley presented a Business Plan Finance update which aimed to confirm completeness and credibility of numbers, review actual outcomes against FLS' budget mandate, and identify risks and opportunities.

This included summaries of profit & loss, the agency's operating deficit, possible improvements in net positions, and recommendations on potential areas of focus. Adam provided more detailed information on value streams, operating incomes, identified risks and opportunities, and offered their observations.

Business Plan Finance targets per business area were discussed, and the ELT sought more detailed understanding of, and agreement on, how targets are established. It was noted that the outlook inherent in forecasts can have impact on current and future Finance targets.

AP 07/01: Directors to finalise the revisions of their respective Business Plans in advance of the next ELT.

AP 08/01: Director of Commercial Development and Director of Land Management & Regions to refine Business Plan targets for renewables & TCC. (timber crop compensation)

5. Workforce Planning Update – Three-Year Business Plan

Julie Fitzpatrick presented a Workforce Plan update outlining headcount across business areas and a value streams. Workforce management will be critical with the main considerations for FLS being vacancy management, remaining agile, and managing leavers.

The ELT noted the need for agility during the business planning period with an ongoing review of developing data. Workforce controls on vacancy management will be needed and that the organisation as a whole must be actively engaged in dynamic workforce management.

The ELT also acknowledged that, while an action plan is implicit in FLS' Business Plans, further detail and within certain elements is required and continuous dialogue with unions on these matters is necessary.

A Change Management Framework will be developed to support wider change in light of the new business plan.

AP 09/01: Head of People & Organisational Development to provide ELT with a breakdown of "externally funded" roles by Scottish Government-funded and private sector-funded.

AP 10/01: Head of Finance, Head of People & Organisational Development and Directors to work together to ensure consistency between overall reductions in FTEs.

AP 11/01: Director of Corporate Services and Head of People & Organisational Development to create a 'Dynamic Workforce Management'/'Change Management' programme.

6. Meeting Preparation – Strategic Advisory Board (SAB)

The ELT prepared for the upcoming Strategic Advisory Board on Thursday 22nd January which will focus on the Corporate and Business Plans.

AP 12/01: Head of Finance, Head of People & Organisational Development and Director of Corporate Services to prepare a consolidated presentation on Workforce Planning to present at the next Strategic Advisory Board.

7. ELT Reflections

The ELT provided their reflections on the meeting.

8. AOB

The next ELT meeting will be held on 4th February 2026.