



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

26 June 2024

### Attendees:

Kevin Quinlan, Chief Executive (Chair)  
Graeme Hutton, Director of Net Zero  
Jo Ellis, Head of Planning and Environment  
Michael Hymers, Director of Corporate Services  
John Mair, Director of Commercial Development  
Sophia Christopoulos, Secretariat Assistant, Minute Taker

### Others:

Donna Mortimer, Chief Financial Officer  
Mick Bottomley, Head of Marketing and Sales  
Gwen Hamilton, Head of Communications  
Julie Fitzpatrick, Head of People and Organisational Development

### Apologies:

Graeme Prest, Director of Land Management and Regions

### 1. Minutes of last meeting

Subject to amendments from Kevin Quinlan, the minutes from the ELT on 18 June 2024 were held to be a true and accurate reflection of the meeting.

### 2. Action Points and Matters Arising

Ref:	Action:	Who:	Target Date:
4/05	Director of Land Management and Regions to provide forecasting on coupe readiness.	Graeme Prest	October 2024
12/05	Finance Team to develop a new cluster for "Natural Capital" to show mandatory and discretionary programme information.	Donna Mortimer	18 July 2024
13/05	Finance Team to incorporate roadside stock into Management Accounts Profit & Loss.	Donna Mortimer	18 July 2024
14/05	Head of Marketing & Sales to present unit cost information from sales to the ELT.	Mick Bottomley	6 August 2024
16/05	Finance Team to launch new format for finance Management Information at the end of Q1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Director of Corporate Services to develop Power Business Intelligence suit to present agree Management Information Pack.</li> </ul>	Donna Mortimer / Michael Hymers	25 July 2024
2/06	Director of Commercial Development to reinvigorate the 360 Steering Group and establish ownership of actions from the Procurement Action Plan.	John Mair	26 July 2024

Ref:	Action:	Who:	Target Date:
3/06	Directors to reflect on the KPIs presented in the Procurement Strategy draft and provide feedback to Deputy Head of Procurement.	Directors	26 July 2024
4/06	Deputy Head of Procurement to incorporate the feedback received from the ELT into the Procurement Strategy and present a revised draft.	Jenna Morrison	29 July 2024
11/06	Head of Planning and Environment to create agenda for the next Strategic Advisory Board meeting in September 2024.	Jo Ellis	19 August 2024
12/06	Regional Manager (South), Chief Financial Officer and Director of Land Management and Regions to analyse vacancy data in South Region and provide feedback on baseline and proposed targets.	John Dougan Donna Mortimer Graeme Prest	31 July 2024
14/06	Director of Land Management and Regions, Head of Communications and National Visitor Services Manager to start work on external communications for the Transformation Programme.	Graeme Prest Gwen Hamilton Stuart Chalmers	30 July 2024
15/06	Chief Financial Officer and Director of Corporate Services to develop clear governance on the management of investments, disposals, and reserves.	Donna Mortimer / Michael Hymers	August 2024
15/06a	Finance Team to develop an approach to reporting in-year budget approvals and transfers between budget lines (including the management of reserves).	Donna Mortimer	August 2024
15/06b	Director of Commercial Development to revisit the proposed asset sales. This includes the appropriate segmentation into business streamlining and other categories such as ease of sale and the PESTLE criteria.	John Mair	August 2024
15/06c	Chief Financial Officer to explore other criteria which can be used to categorise investment proposals and business cases (for example, project readiness, business criticality, time sensitivity, return on investment).	Donna Mortimer	August 2024
15/06d	Chief Financial Officer to create a Financial Plan for investments, disposals, and reserves.	Donna Mortimer	August 2024
16/06	Head of Communications to provide further information on website re-platforming and the options available at future ELT meeting.	Gwen Hamilton	August 2024
17/06	Director of Land Management & Director of Net Zero to revisit and reduce the number of potential investments.	Graeme Prest / Graeme Hutton	August 2024
18/06	Director of Corporate Services to include Deer Management as an agenda item for future ELT meeting.	Michael Hymers	18 July 2024
19/06	Head of Marketing and Sales to explore options related to the Direct Production Review and provide an update at future ELT meeting.	Mick Bottomley	August 2024

Action Points 10/05, 11/05, 17/05, 18/05, 19/05, 20/05, 21/05, 22/05, 23/05, 24/05, 13/06 were discharged.

Action Points 4/05, 12/05 and 13/05 were reviewed and the deadlines revised to allow further time for the work to be completed.

Action Points 11/05, 19/05, 22/05, 23/05 and 24/05 were superseded to create a single, overarching action on investments, disposals, and reserves. Work has been completed on different aspects of this, with outstanding areas identified and noted for action.

**AP 16/05 and 17/05:** As there is significant overlap between these two actions, these have been combined into a single action 16/05.

**AP 15/06: Chief Financial Officer and Director of Corporate Services to develop clear governance on the management of investments, disposals, and reserves.**

**AP 15/06a: Finance Team to develop an approach to reporting in-year budget approvals and transfers between budget lines (including the management of reserves).**

### **3. FLS's Financial Position**

Donna Mortimer presented a paper on FLS's financial position, explaining that this was requested by Grant Thornton LLP, to evidence the organisation's going concern status.

The ELT provided feedback on the formatting of the document and presentation of the data. It was agreed that Donna will incorporate this feedback and issue the revised paper to Grant Thornton LLP.

### **4. Business Case – Utilisation of Harvesting Data**

Mick Bottomley provided an overview of the business case, noting the benefits this would have for the organisation. The use of telematics would provide a source of data for monitoring, tracking, benchmarking, and anomaly reporting.

The ELT discussed the advantages and disadvantages of utilising harvesting data, as well as exploring methods used by other organisations in the forestry industry. They concluded that this would significantly benefit harvesting as it will provide valuable data by which to benchmark and improve efficiency. The ELT accepted the business case.

### **5. Business Case – Website Re-Platforming**

Gwen Hamilton outlined the business case, highlighting the need for digital security and legislative compliance as adhered to by wider Scottish Government. The ELT agreed to consider the business case pending feedback from Gwen regarding; the outcome of a penetration test to assess digital security, the level of compliance required for accessibility, and key points related to mobile functionality. Kevin also sought further information on website use and traffic to better understand the rationale behind website re-platforming.

**AP 16/06: Head of Communications to provide further information on website re-platforming and the options available at future ELT meeting.**

### **6. FLS Investment Pipeline**

Kevin introduced the Investment Pipeline Summary, stressing the importance of maintaining visibility and cohesion between three elements, investments, disposals, and reserves, as these are inextricably linked.

He sought feedback on what information should be included and how this supports a coherent programme for the three aforementioned elements. The following actions were agreed:

- Director of Commercial Development to revisit the proposed asset sales. This includes the appropriate segmentation into business streamlining and other categories such as ease of sale and the PESTLE criteria.
- Chief Financial Officer to explore other criteria which can be used to categorise investment proposals and business cases (for example, project readiness, business criticality, time sensitivity, return on investment).
- Chief Financial Officer to create a Financial Plan for investments, disposals, and reserves.

Finally, Kevin also requested that Deer Management be added as an agenda item for a future ELT meeting.

**AP 15/06b: Director of Commercial Development to revisit the proposed asset sales. This includes the appropriate segmentation into business streamlining and other categories such as ease of sale and the PESTLE criteria.**

**AP 15/06c: Chief Financial Officer to explore other criteria which can be used to categorise investment proposals and business cases (for example, project readiness, business criticality, time sensitivity, return on investment).**

**AP 15/06d: Chief Financial Officer to create a Financial Plan for investments, disposals, and reserves.**

**AP 17/06: Director of Land Management & Director of Net Zero to re-visit and reduce the number of potential investments.**

**AP 18/06: Director of Corporate Services to include Deer Management as an agenda item for future ELT meeting.**

## **7. Direct Production Review**

Mick Bottomley provided a paper, highlighting key points from the review, namely the need to improve machine care and reduce the cost of fleet management. John Mair advised that more up to date information is required and that this could constitute grounds for a more transformational mindset towards fleet management.

The ELT agreed that more clarification is needed on the different options available along with further data and evidence.

**AP 19/06: Head of Marketing and Sales to explore options related to the Direct Production Review and provide an update at future ELT meeting.**

## **8. Workforce Planning Update**

Julie Fitzpatrick presented a paper, outlining previous discussions held with the Management Board in December 2023. She noted that the 'meso' approach was agreed and highlighted that this will align with the transformation process once the programme is agreed. The ELT reflected on this latter point, noting the importance of alignment between workforce planning and transformation. They discussed timing around this before agreeing to endorse the paper.

### **9. ELT Forward Look**

The agenda item was not minuted.

### **10. ELT Reflections**

The agenda item was not minuted.

### **11. AOB**

Julie proposed three topics for the Staff Survey; Collaboration and Team Performance, Change Management and Safe to Challenge. The ELT agreed to these as the first two align with the Transformation Programme while the Safe to Challenge topic remains pertinent as reflected in the previous Staff Survey results.

The date of the next ELT meeting is 18 July 2024.