



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

30th September 2025

Attendees:

Kevin Quinlan, CEO (Chair)
David Leven, Director of Commercial Development
Graeme Hutton, Director of Net Zero
Tom Greenan, Director of Corporate Services & Transformation
Jo Ellis, Head of Planning & Environment
Calum McNicol, Corporate Development Assistant (Minutes)

Others:

Paul Sutherland, Project Manager
Colin Buchanan, Senior Finance Manager
Rhondda Salmond, Change Manager
David Craig, Transformation Programme & Planning Manager

Apologies:

Graeme Prest, Director of Land Management & Regions

1. Review of Minutes

It was agreed that the minutes from the ELT meeting held on 16th September 2025 were a true and accurate reflection.

2. Summary of Action Points from Meeting

Ref.:	Action:	Owner:	Target Date:
13/09	Engage with ELT to round-out understanding of final Aspen product prior to launch.	Paul Sutherland	4 November 2025
14/09	Produce message regarding Aspen for directors to cascade to their respective directorates in advance of the next SLG.	Paul Sutherland	17 November 2025
15/09	Liaise with Head of Planning & Environment and Head of Harvesting, Marketing & Sales to update in-depth figures on restocking backlog and sales to inform future finance updates to ELT.	Colin Buchanan	14 October 2025
16/09	Include Plant & Seed Supply graphs and modified Reserves graph in future finance updates to ELT.	Colin Buchanan	14 October 2025
17/09	Assign ownership of respective data on Monthly Balance Scorecards.	Directors	14 October 2025
18/09	Finalise agenda for Strategic Advisory Board for review by chair.	Rhondda Salmond	16 October 2025

Action Point 5/08 has had its due date revised. Action Points 12/07, 29/07, 09/09 and 10/09 were closed.

3. Aspen Go-Live

Paul Sutherland provided an update on Aspen's readiness, an overview of the Digital Assurance Office outcomes, and sought approval for Aspen's Go-Live on 5 November 2025.

The report outlined areas of assessment, including technical, stakeholder, and business readiness and provided recommendations supported by its findings. Paul and the team involved with Aspen have established a detailed cutover plan which includes system data migration and on-site triage and support for users post-launch, building upon staff experiences during the Aspen roadshows.

The ELT were asked to cascade key messages about Aspen's launch through their teams to the wider agency regarding initial challenges and breathing space whilst staff adapt to each aspect of the platform.

The board discussed FLS' implementation strategy and methods used to ease the transition between Aspen and its predecessors.

Following this detailed review of readiness and risk mitigation plans, the ELT agreed to approving Go-Live on 5 November.

AP 13/09 – Aspen Project Manager to engage with ELT to round-out understanding of final Aspen product prior to launch.

AP 14/09 – Aspen Project Manager to produce message regarding Aspen for directors to cascade to directorates in advance of the next SLG.

4. Finance Update

Colin Buchanan provided an executive summary update on FLS' finances, highlighting income, gross profits and FLS' current position. The ELT considered operating surpluses, deficits and budget planning, with particular emphasis on FY24-25 timber forecasts. Consideration was also given to aspects of current FLS financial models, and how these interact with external funding.

AP 15/09 – Senior Finance Manager to liaise with Head of Planning & Environment and Head of Harvesting, Marketing & Sales to receive in-depth figures on restocking backlog and sales to inform future finance updates to ELT.

AP 16/09 – Senior Finance Manager to include Plant, Seed & Supply graphs and modified Reserves graph in future finance updates to ELT.

5. Monthly Balance Scorecard

The ELT took time to review and discuss FLS' performance on the Monthly Balance Scorecard.

The profiling of figures and colour coding on both the Corporate and Land Management scorecards was discussed. It was agreed that figures should each be assigned a 'data owner' so that these can be standardised between scorecards, ensuring a greater degree of reporting accuracy.

AP 17/09 – Directors to take ownership of respective data on Monthly Balance Scorecards.

6. Strategic Advisory Board Preparation

The agenda for the upcoming Strategic Advisory Board meeting was discussed.

The ELT noted that the introduction of new Non-Executive Advisors has been offering value to the board, bringing a level of challenge and informed experience, which has in turn allowed the SAB to explore new opportunities. The ELT welcomed the planned implementation of strategic themes to each SAB moving forward and discussed agenda items and structure. A revision was suggested so that that the ELT can be informed by the SAB on the topic of Workforce Planning.

AP 18/09 – Change Manager to finalise the agenda for the Strategic Advisory Board for review by chair.

7. ELT Forward Look

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

8. ELT Reflections

The ELT provided their reflections on the meeting.

9. AOB

There were no areas of outstanding business raised.

The date of the next ELT meeting is 14th October 2025.