



Agenda
Fortieth Meeting
Crown Estate Scotland Board
Quartermile Two, Edinburgh
28 February 2024
10am – 3pm

1. Standing Items

10.00	1.1	Welcome and Declarations of Interest	
	1.2	Approval of Minutes of Meetings held on 29 November 2023; 8 and 11 December 2023; and 6 February 2024	Attached
	1.3	Matters Arising and Action Tracker	Attached
	1.4	Decisions taken out of meeting [<i>BD(2023)OOM5 and BD(2024)OOM1</i>]	BD(2024)40.1

10.15 2. Board Committees

2.1	Investment Committee (6 February)	Verbal
2.2	Remuneration Committee (6 February)	Verbal
2.3	Audit & Risk Committee (13 February)	Verbal

10.30 3. Chief Executive's Report

3.1	Chief Executive's Report	BD(2024)40.2
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10.50 4. Decisions

4.1	Internal Scheme of Delegation and Authorised Signatories	BD(2024)40.3
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5 Discussion

11.00	5.1	Organisational Design (MainStreet to attend)	Briefing attached
11.40	5.2	Charitable Giving	BD(2024)40.4

12.00 Break in Board Meeting for meeting with Cabinet Secretary

LUNCH

13.00	5.3	Aquaculture Presentation	Slides to follow
13.40	5.4	Decarbonisation and Glenlivet Estate	BD(2024)40.5

13.50 6. Management Reports

*	6.1	Finance Report (including FY24-27 draft budget)	BD(2024)40.6
	6.2	Performance Report	BD(2024)40.7
*	6.3	People Report	BD(2024)40.8
	6.4	Corporate Planning	BD(2024)40.9
+	6.5	Stakeholder Engagement	BD(2024)40.10

7. Any Other Business

8. Date of Next Meeting

29 May 2024

*This item will be treated as closed business and the paper exempt from publication in terms of s33(1)(b) of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002

** This item will be treated as closed business and the paper exempt from publication in terms of s29(1)(a) of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.

+ This item is for noting

Minutes for	Fortieth Board Meeting	BD(2024)40
Meeting date	28 February 2024	
Security classification	Restricted	
This document contains commercially sensitive and confidential information and may relate to the formulation of policy.		
Minutes for the meeting of the Board of Crown Estate Scotland held at Quartermile 2, Edinburgh and by video conference call on Wednesday, 28 February 2024		

Present:

Euan McVicar	Chair
Katerina Brown	
Dr Michael Foxley	(left meeting during item 6.3)
Liz Leonard	
Robert Mackenzie	
Ailsa Raeburn	

In attendance:

Ronan O'Hara	Chief Executive (did not attend for item 5.1 and part of item 5.3)
Esther Black	Director of Corporate Operations (did not attend for item 5.1)
Oster Milambo	Director of Property (did not attend for item 5.1)
Alastair Milloy	Director of Finance & Business Services (did not attend for item 5.1 and part of item 5.3)
Sian Wilson	Interim Director of Marine (did not attend for item 5.1)
Penny Davis	Interim Head of Governance

By invitation:

Jess Thorne	Governance Assistant
Fiona Haywood	Head of People (for item 6.3)
Anneli Hill	Aquaculture Planning & Engagement Manager (for item 5.3)
Mark McLintock	Mainstreet (for item 5.1)
David Welsh	Mainstreet (for item 5.1)

1. Standing Items

1.1 Welcome, Apologies and Declarations of Interest

The Chair welcomed everyone to the fortieth meeting of the Board. It was noted that the order of items on the agenda would be changed to accommodate the Cabinet Secretary's visit at 12.00 noon.

Apologies had been received from Ann Allen and Jean Lindsay.

There were no new declarations of interest.

Members were reminded that Ailsa Raeburn is a member of the Board of Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) and that HIE were also involved in the potential development at Nigg. Ms Raeburn does not take part in the discussions on Nigg during HIE Board meetings.

1.2 Minutes of Previous Meetings

Minutes of the meetings held on 29 November 2023, 8 and 11 December 2023, and 6 February 2024 were approved as accurate records.

1.3 Matters Arising and Action Tracker [REDACTED]

The Board discussed progress against actions.

Action 39/1: It was confirmed that INTOG matters were progressing in line with the Board's decision at its meeting on 6 February. Scottish Government had confirmed its support; a public notice would be put up on 1 March 2024.

Action 37/6: The Board requested a report including indicative timescales for carbon credits across the agricultural estate at its next meeting. **Action:OM(40/1)**

Action 37/5: The Board noted a seeming inconsistency between management assurances that stress was not work-related and the People Report in which stress was identified as the primary reason for absence.

The Board **agreed** that development of an asset register and workforce development plan should be included in the action tracker. **Action:PD/Executive(40/2)**

The papers are exempt from publication in terms of s.30(b) and s.30(c) of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.

1.4 Decisions Out of Meeting

BD(2024)40.1 [REDACTED]

The papers are exempt from publication and the minutes redacted in terms of s.30(b) and s.30(c) of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.

2. Board Committees

2.1 Investment Committee, 6 February 2024

The Committee Chair provided a brief overview of matters considered at the recent meeting. The Committee had asked the Executive for improved project / acquisitions / disposals status reporting on a number of occasions. Members had provided feedback on the draft budget for financial year 2024/2025 and asked that it reflected a more ambitious approach to investment. The Committee had also received a report on portfolio management and a presentation on future investment, further to which the Committee had requested a pilot business case be worked up. Other reports had updated the Committee on [REDACTED], Nigg Land Purchase, Capital Challenge Funds and Montrose Zero-Four. A deep dive report on the agricultural portfolio would be presented to the May meeting of the Committee.

Sections of the minutes have been redacted and are exempt from publication in terms of s.33(1)(b) of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.

2.2 Remuneration Committee, 6 February 2024

In the absence of the Committee Chair, the Board Chair reported that the Committee had discussed the staff pay award for 2024, and agreed a submission on behalf of the Board to Scottish Government with regard to Board Members, Chair and Chief Executive's pay award and that going forward the Pay and Reward Strategic Action Plan would go to the Committee prior to coming to the Board.

2.3 Audit & Risk Committee, 13 February 2024

The Committee Chair provided an update following the recent meeting. Members had noted the scale of variation in the budget, indicating both growth potential and volatility. The Committee had discussed budgetary implications relating to retention of funds and the fact that ScotWind funds were excluded from the statutory 13% transfer for FY 2023/24 and FY 2024/25. The external audit plan had been put back to September, noting the challenges experienced last year. The Committee also considered internal audit progress reports, Health & Safety, and risk, including [REDACTED].

Sections of the minutes have been redacted and are exempt from publication in terms of s.33(1)(b) of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.

3. Chief Executive's Report BD(2024)40.2 [REDACTED]

3.1 The Board discussed the report and **noted:**

- a. without confirmation of an appropriate statutory transfer for 2025/26 to 2029/30 it would be difficult for CES to meet anticipated value and profits and would impact on the positive financial contribution it could make to the Scottish Consolidated Fund;
- b. progress with implementation of interim resourcing plans; the Chief Executive highlighted concerns about the impact of constraints imposed by public procurement processes on the organisation's ability to recruit timeously.

3.2 Natural Capital Collaboration CES and NatureScot

The Chief Executive reported on a useful discussion with NatureScot regarding long term value creation and a joint project with them which would explore both potential opportunities and barriers.

The Board **noted** that it did have an appetite for natural capital related activity to form part of the new corporate plan and that:

- a. opportunities would likely be for revenue rather than capital growth;
- b. a long-term perspective on CES's role and added value, taking account of advocacy and community impact, would be more useful than in-depth short-term analysis;

- c. opportunity mapping around credits and ecosystem services could in itself increase capital value;
- d. it was important that baseline data in relation to both carbon and wider natural capital be obtained and should be prioritised.

Agreed:

- a. Opportunity mapping around ecosystem services/credits and advocacy would be included in the Corporate Plan and that the Board should be updated on plans for obtaining relevant baseline data. **Action:EB(40/3)**

3.3 **Autumn Statement**

The Chief Executive had provided the Board with an extract of the 2023 Autumn Statement referring to the UK Government's intention to bring forward legislation to provide The Crown Estate with new borrowing and wider investment powers. The Board discussed implications and **noted**:

- a. the changes to TCE powers (if implemented) and resulting imbalance may create risks for CES within the internal UK market;
- b. further work would need to be undertaken to assess the risks and consider opportunities for CES going forward including the possibility of equivalent powers.

The Board **agreed** that the Chief Executive would investigate the matter further and bring an update to the next meeting of the Board. **Action:ROH(40/4)**

3.4 **Evolution Beyond Devolution**

The Chief Executive presented a paper concerning lessons learned from the first seven years of CES's operation and whether these provided a rationale for reviewing governance and *vires* arrangements. The Board discussed the paper, and **noted**:

- a. a clear rationale would be needed for what added benefit CES would deliver with any additional powers it might gain; for example, realising the potential of offshore wind opportunities;
- b. CES should be cognisant of the wider fiscal implications of any proposed changes to its *vires*;
- c. that the constraints imposed by the current framework document, aspects of SPMG and the accountable officer regime had caused difficulties in recent transactions and that lessons learned should be taken forward in discussions on reforming that governance with a view to making sure it did not impede CES' ability to deliver on its potential; **[ACTION]**
- d. the Chief Executive would progress his thinking on additional *vires* and report to the next meeting of the Board. **Action:ROH(40/5)**
- e. the need to work with partners and undertake advocacy to enhance understanding of these issues among external stakeholders;

The paper is exempt from publication in terms of s.30(b) and s.30(c) of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.

4. Decisions

4.1 Delegated Authority

BD(2024)40.3 [REDACTED]

The Director of Finance & Business Services presented the report.

The Board **noted** that the scheme of delegation changed regularly to reflect the changing regulatory environment as well as changes to staffing.

The Board **approved** the following recommendations set out in the paper:

- a. an increase in Directors' delegated limits from £150k to £200k for capital transfers and revenue expenditure;
- b. the inclusion of Sian Wilson, Interim Director of Marine, as an authorised signatory in place of Colin Palmer.
- c. The removal of job title specific delegations in favour of job grade specific delegations.
- d. The Chief Executive in his capacity as Accountable Officer highlighted the intention to review the document to ensure lessons learned from the first seven years are incorporated.

The paper is exempt from publication in terms of s.18 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.

5. Discussion

5.1 Organisational Design

The Chief Executive provided a brief introduction and handed over to David Welsh and Mark McIntock of Mainstreet to present their report. The Chief Executive did not attend the Mainstreet presentation or the Board's discussion with Mainstreet after their presentation.

David Welsh outlined the two-stage project undertaken to identify current gaps in resourcing and inform future corporate planning, commissioned at the request of the Chief Executive. They had recommended appointments in several areas and a timescale for key appointments to be made. The Board held a full and frank discussion with the Mainstreet representatives, and **noted**:

- a. findings and recommendations in the report aligned with assessments and actions agreed by the Board in the past, however, limited progress had been made;
- b. barriers to progress identified by Mainstreet included the degree of change already ongoing within the organisation and pressures on senior management due to a capacity gap at leadership team level;
- c. immediate risks to the business included staff retention and single points of failure;
- d. notwithstanding the immediate challenges, a strategic rather than responsive approach to workforce planning was essential;
- e. the Board could support development by helping the Executive to stay focused on priorities and by ensuring clarity around governance versus management roles and responsibilities.

The paper is exempt from publication in terms of s.30(b) and s.30(c) of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.

5.2 Charitable Giving

BD(2024)40.4 [REDACTED]

The paper is exempt from publication and the minutes redacted in terms of s.36 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.

5.3 Aquaculture Presentation

The Aquaculture Planning & Engagement Manager gave a presentation on the aquaculture portfolio, including seaweed cultivation, seaweed harvesting, shellfish, and finfish sectors, of which finfish was by far the largest with around 8,500 people employed across the estate.

The Board discussed the challenges and opportunities, and **noted**:

- a. many challenges, including climate change, regulatory change and mortalities in the finfish sector, were global rather than Scotland-specific;
- b. positive steps by CES could include leasing to optimise development prospects, post-research projects, and supporting posts with the Scottish Seaweed Industry Association, Scottish Shellfish Marketing Group and Fisheries Management Scotland;
- c. the particular challenges relating to processing waste from closed containment farming and the distinction between compliance with regulatory standards and best practice;
- d. the possibility of seeking licenses to conduct short-term offshore trials in, for example, water habitation development;
- e. the potential to explore the legal viability of developments relating to natural oysters and natural seagrass and the role of marine natural capital more generally.

The Board **agreed** that the presentation had been very helpful, and that it would welcome the opportunity to visit a fish farm.

5.4 Decarbonisation and the Glenlivet Estate

BD(2024)40.5

This item was deferred due to time constraints. The Board **agreed** that this should be rearranged as a speaker session to allow adequate time for discussion. **Action:PD/JT(40/6)**

6. Management Reports

6.1 Finance Report

BD(2024)40.6 [REDACTED]

The Financial Controller introduced the report. The Board **noted** the issue of retention of ScotWind funds which had been discussed at recent Committee meetings and the Chief Executive provided assurance that discussions were ongoing with Scottish Government.

Draft Revenue and Capital Budgets 2024/25-2026/27

The Financial Controller advised the Board that draft budgets had been considered by both Investment Committee and ARC with differing perspectives put forward, and the feedback received had informed the version presented to the Board. The Board **noted**:

- a. that the budget should reflect CES's strategic priorities;
- b. that the desirability of an ambitious budget must be balanced against what CES can realistically deliver but more ambition would be welcomed by the Board;
- c. constraints on delivery included public sector processes but also the status of workforce development and resourcing;
- d. the benefit of longer term financial planning alongside the 3-year budget;
- e. the challenges and opportunities of residential management projects, in the context of opportunities considered by Investment Committee;
- f. variances in the revenue budget were being actively monitored by the Finance team.

The Board **approved** the budget in principle but **agreed** that the Executive should reflect on a more ambitious 1-year target and share conclusions with the Chair, who will determine whether to circulate to the Board for approval by email or to convene another meeting.

Action:ROH/EM(40/7)

The paper is exempt from publication in terms of s.33(1)(b) of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.

6.2 Performance Report BD(2024)40.7 [REDACTED]

The Board **noted** that the business plan was a few weeks behind schedule but would be circulated to the Board in due course. **Action:EB(40/8)**

The papers are exempt from publication in terms of s.30(b) and s.30(c) of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.

6.3 People Report BD(2024)40.8

The Head of People presented the report. The Board **noted**:

- a. its frustration that HR reporting did not reflect the workforce development priorities identified by the Board previously and independently recommended in the Mainstreet report; a strategic workforce plan was considered a fundamental building block for the organisation;
- b. that the report was aligned to objectives set out in the People Strategy action plan;
- c. stress workshops were a welcome development, and these had received good feedback from staff;
- d. exit interviews showed positive reasons for staff moving on;
- e. development was in place for all managers, and the organisation was investing heavily in leadership development as a retention tool at senior management level and above.

6.4 Corporate Planning BD(2024)40.9

The Director of Corporate Operations provided an update on corporate planning. The Board **noted** that a draft would be shared in March or shortly thereafter after which dialogue

would begin with the external agency supporting consultation on the plan and Scottish Government. **Action:EB(40/9)**

6.5 Stakeholder Engagement
BD(2024)40.10

The Board **noted** the update on stakeholder engagement.

7. Any Other Business

The Board discussed future visits and the benefit of ensuring at least one full Board visit annually. Members **agreed** that the Scottish Association for Marine Science should be added to the list of possible sites. **Action:PD/JT(40/10)**

8. Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as 29 May 2024.

Title: Natural Capital Workshops

Context: Crown Estate Scotland Chair and CEO met with NatureScot Chair and CEO on 1 February 2024. The meeting covered a diverse range of topics including the opportunity for both organisations to work together collaboratively. One area of immediate interest that is important to both Crown Estate Scotland and NatureScot is natural capital. Both organisations are interested in exploring the nexus between (1) natural capital, (2) private sector investment in natural capital, and (3) tenant farmers and the agricultural economy.

General Opportunity: Crown Estate Scotland holds a unique and privileged role as the largest tenant farmer landlord in Scotland. This fact when combined with the unique vires enshrined in the Act 2019¹ and the challenges faced by the rural economy beyond 2025, means Crown Estate Scotland is actively interested in initiatives that can support a new and sustainable rural economy as well as attracting private sector investment into rural Scotland. NatureScot has in recent years advanced significant work in relation to natural capital and the advancement of habitats and ecosystems that provide social, environmental, and economic benefits to humans. In combining the pooled skill and expertise of both organisations, an opportunity potentially exists to help advance natural capital investment in the context of Scottish rural tenant farmers.

Specific Opportunity: As part of the wider work being progressed by Crown Estate Scotland under the 'Glenlivet Estate 2050' project it is hoped that Crown Estate Scotland and NatureScot will facilitate a series of workshops relating to natural capital.

The 'Glenlivet Estate 2050' project began in 2022 and aims to identify how the Estate might evolve over the next 30 years, in a way that:

- Supports local jobs and investment
- Attracts the next generation
- Improves the environment
- Helps to address the challenges of the climate emergency and nature crisis

The project, which is being delivered in two stages, will produce a long-term vision for the Estate to 2050 and identify opportunities and recommendations for the next five years.

Proposal: Crown Estate Scotland and NatureScot will collaborate on several round table sessions (or workshops) which consider natural capital, investment in natural capital and what natural capital might offer tenant farmers in Scotland. The outworkings of the round table sessions will feed into the Glenlivet Estate 2050 project.

Stakeholder participation: It is envisaged that organisations such as the Scottish Land Commission, the University of Edinburgh Business School², private sector actors/institutions, plus other stakeholders yet to be identified by NatureScot and Crown Estate Scotland will be asked to contribute. The discussions will also potentially involve farming tenants and residents subject to their availability and willingness.

Costs: Crown Estate Scotland will cover the costs associated with organising the events, which will be offered on a hybrid basis (with face-to-face options in Edinburgh and Glenlivet).

¹ [Scottish Crown Estate Act 2019 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk)

² [Craig Mackenzie – University of Edinburgh Business School](#)

Annex B: CEO Report 28 February 2024

Extracts from Autumn Statement

To further accelerate the UK's world-leading offshore wind deployment, the government will bring forward legislation to provide The Crown Estate with borrowing and wider investment powers as soon as parliamentary time allows, which will help to unlock a further 20-30GW of new offshore wind seabed rights by 2030. Government is working with The Crown Estate to bring forward additional floating wind in the Celtic Sea through the 2030s, which could see an additional 12GW of generation deployed, alongside the 4.5GW round due to open soon, with the potential to deliver £20 billion of direct investment from deployment in the area.

Crown Estate modernisation – The government will bring forward legislation to provide The Crown Estate with borrowing and wider investment powers as soon as parliamentary time allows.

Title: Evolution beyond devolution?

Context: Crown Estate Scotland is seven years old, and as a newly formed Scottish Public Corporation, it is maturing and evolving in response to its everchanging economic, commercial and policy environment. Over the last seven years the organisation has explored various ways of creating and delivering value through the management of the Scottish Crown Estate, investment of capital and deployment of revenue. In doing so it has tested the governance arrangements and vires established under devolution in 2017 and the 2019 Act.

Reflections: Crown Estate Scotland has successfully established itself as a fully-fledged Scottish Public Body (self-financing public corporation) and sustained a net positive contribution to the Scottish Consolidated Fund over the first seven years of trading. During this period, it has tested the vires as set out in the 2019 Act and some of the administrative constructs associated with being a Public Body, including for example the Framework Document, compliance with the Scottish Public Finance Manual (SPFM) and the requirement for an Accountable Officer (AO).

Learnings: The experience of acquiring ZeroFour, the Challenge Funds, ScottWind, INTOG, Nigg and Scapa transactions, plus the farm sales pilot, have all provided important learnings. For example:

Project	Learning
ZeroFour	The importance of technical and commercial due diligence, having an exit for each investment. The value that can be derived from adhering to the Green Book business case process particularly when assessing risks, issues, options, and non-financial value.
Challenge Funds	The importance of robust governance, the difficulties associated with raising partner expectations unintentionally, the principle of assessing opportunities quickly and failing fast, ensuing opportunities should be timebound. Recognising and being clear that Crown Estate Scotland does not deploy grant (a point that is frequently misunderstood), and that investments should achieve a return.
NIGG	The Framework and SPFM place constraints on Crown Estate Scotland that are in tension with the commercial vires and legal obligations under the 2019 Act. Complex transactions require an assessment against SPFM in the event that they are potentially novel, contentious or repercussive. Delegated limits imposed through the Framework Document reduce the ability of CES to work at pace and the requirements for Scottish Government signoff can slow proceedings. All matters that stymie Crown Estate Scotland as a commercial operator.
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

Conclusions: There have been numerous significant achievements over the last seven years, which come with many learnings. It seems that the development of the new Corporate Plan provides a timely and logical opportunity to reflect on how these learnings may be applied moving forward, and specifically if there is a rationale for reviewing and updating governance arrangements.

Points for consideration:

- As a commercial public corporation is a Shareholder Agreement more appropriate than a traditional Framework Document?
- Should full or partial derogation be sought from the SPFM?
- Are the current delegated limits appropriate?
- Has Crown Estate Scotland fully leveraged its existing vires?
- Could Crown Estate Scotland achieve more for Scotland and future generations if it secured borrowing powers.
- Does delivering the full benefit associated with the devolved arrangement require the current governance framework to be refreshed?

Sections of this paper are exempt from publication in terms of s.33(1)(b) of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.

Board Paper

Date of Meeting:	28 February 2024
Classification:	Unrestricted
Subject:	Decarbonisation and the Glenlivet Estate
Paper Number:	BD(2024)40.5
Annexes:	None
Recommendation:	The Board is invited to note this paper and provide comment
Presenter:	Jess Thorne
Author:	Jess Thorne

**Our purpose: Investing in property, natural resources and people
to generate lasting value for Scotland**

1. Purpose and context

This briefing paper refers to my research project which identifies opportunities to deliver carbon sequestration, generate economic return, and enhance biodiversity through the holistic, long-term management of the forestry and peatland assets on Glenlivet Estate.

The project details the complex history between deforestation, commercial forestry, and peatlands, explaining why peatland restoration is necessary and important. The environmental and socio-economic value of both assets are explained, as are the land use conflicts between them, particularly the issue of Sitka spruce regeneration and its effect on the Scottish Crown Estate peatland ecosystems, farming tenants, and sporting tenants. The project identifies that these issues are echoed on a national scale and aims to raise awareness and generate thinking to develop solutions.

Climate change and emission reduction legislations and policies are placing decarbonisation at the centre of many organisations' strategic plans. My research project promotes peatland restoration on the Estate as a method of delivering carbon sequestration to meet our net zero ambitions, and an opportunity habitat restoration to meet our statutory requirements for biodiversity reporting, while also generating revenue through the carbon credit markets.

2. Background

My research project suggests that a more strategic approach to managing the forestry and peatland assets on Glenlivet Estate is needed to meet Crown Estate Scotland's diversified organisational objectives.

Forestry generates revenue for the Estate, but also presents some challenges to peatland restoration and the potential value which could be obtained from it, economically and environmentally.

The UK is still heavily reliant on timber imports, therefore maintaining and enhancing our forestry asset is completely necessary. It also contributes to local employment, sequesters carbon, provides habitat and amenity spaces. However, peatlands are being recognised as increasingly important in the fight against the nature and climate crises: self-regulating peatlands have the potential to store more carbon than forests over a longer period and provide a variety of habitat, all with minimal human intervention.

Our peatland asset holds opportunities for offsetting our own and potentially wider emissions, generating revenue in the process through the carbon credit markets. Markets for carbon credits are being developed, known as the Woodland Carbon Code and the Peatland Code. The Estate already sequesters carbon in its forestry asset but is yet to achieve (or quantify) sequestration through its peatland asset. Both assets could be valuable to carbon markets and should be explored further.

The holistic management of both assets is of vital importance to the economic and environmental health of Glenlivet Estate and would therefore benefit Crown Estate Scotland overall. My research paper highlights that one asset cannot be prioritized over the other, as has been the case in the past, and an integrated management approach is needed.

The main issue to be addressed to achieve integrated management is the regeneration of non-native commercial tree species (Sitka spruce) on peatland restoration sites such as Glenmullie (a project on Glenlivet Estate). Healthy peatlands are too wet to grow trees, however most peatlands are now degraded in some way, meaning the water table is low enough to allow the growth of non-natives. The non-natives are more suited to wetter environments, and are more tolerant to herbivore browsing, meaning they outcompete native species in this setting. As a result, the non-natives can establish themselves very well on a degraded peatland, altering the vegetation and hydrology of the site further, inhibiting restoration.

It is unclear what form a mature non-native forest on a degraded peatland will take, and whether it will have any biodiversity or commercial value. What *is* known is that Sitka regeneration has a significant impact on the farming or sporting tenant whose land it's growing on, inhibiting their normal activities and in some cases costing them money, either through loss of subsidies or incurred costs of tree removal.

Advice from Scottish Forestry, Forestry and Land Scotland, Forest Research, RSPB, and PeatlandAction (Cairngorms National Park division), was sought in the formulation of the research project.

I presented the research project proposal and findings to the Executive Team in March and August 2023.

3. Recommendation

Following the business case process, options should be considered for the creation of the next Long Term Forest Plan for Glenlivet Estate. It's currently due for renewal and the recommendation of my report is that the new plan should take peatland into account and include forest modifications where necessary to facilitate peatland restoration: for example, planting native woodland buffer zones on the edges of non-native forestry where the neighbouring land use is, or could be, peatland restoration; prioritising the felling of problematic seed sources contributing to the regeneration of non-natives; and restocking with more appropriate species which do not have the potential to compromise restoration efforts.

Further recommendations are:

- Determination of our rationale for peatland restoration. For example, is the primary objective carbon sequestration and the carbon market, or habitat restoration? Both are achieved through peatland restoration, but which will be the driver, and which will be the desirable byproduct? This is important to clarify as it will influence the management objectives of the land which will influence the outcomes.
- Assessment of peatland restorations impact on achieving our decarbonisation targets. This would include the quantification and valuation of Glenlivet Estate's Peatland Asset in terms of non-financial value.
- Assessment of the extent and impact of Sitka spruce regeneration on Glenlivet Estate's environment and tenants, including its potential financial and reputational risk to the business.
- Assessment of next steps for Glenmullie, and future peatland project management.
- Establishment of an ecological and carbon baseline for Glenlivet so that all future management can be measured and evaluated against the baseline.

Much of the work completed as part of these recommendations would have the added benefit of feeding into long-term corporate planning and Glenlivet 2050 master planning.

Please note the listed recommendations would require additional resourcing, outsourcing, and project management to be achieved.

4. Corporate / Business Plan alignment

The research project aligns with Corporate Plan Strategic Objective: "Promote new sustainable ways of using natural resources to produce energy, food and other products."

Action 23 of the Corporate Plan is to "promote sustainable use of natural resources and position Crown Estate Scotland as a leader in natural capital management with a focus on

biodiversity, soil and water health, biosecurity, carbon and environmental / ecosystem resilience”.

The Corporate Plan lists the following ways Crown Estate Scotland seek to embed the natural capital approach:

- Completing natural capital assessment of key rural assets’ natural capital to identify opportunities for improvements.
- Continuing work with agricultural tenants and other partners to embed natural capital approach in business management; and
- Exploring opportunities for carbon sequestration.

The Crown Estate Scotland Business Plan 2022/23 actions relating to the above Corporate Plan objective are:

Action 27 - Progress peatland restoration at Glenlivet Estate working with Cairngorms National Park Authority Peatland Action officers.

Action 31 – Develop a future plan for Glenlivet Estate.

Action 33 - Develop long-term vision for Crown Estate Scotland to inform future 5-yearly corporate plans.

5. Risk Analysis

There are significant social, environmental, and financial risks associated with not taking the recommendations of my research paper forward.

Social:

- There is a risk that our reputation as a ‘landlord of choice’ is damaged. If farm and sporting tenants continue to lose land to Sitka spruce regeneration, tenants will become frustrated and may become more outspoken about the issue, increasing the chance of negative press. Assessing the extent of the Sitka spruce regeneration across the Estate would be the first step in Crown Estate Scotland developing an approach towards the spread of this invasive species and mitigating this risk.
- Our reputation as an exemplary Estate is at risk. Other Estates are developing strategic land management plans which address modern issues such as climate change, ecological degradation, and the spread of invasive species. Establishing an ecological and carbon baseline on the Estate would be the first step in developing a progressive land management strategy.
- Crown Estate Scotland is at risk of being viewed as an organization which fails to honour partnership commitments. As a public body we are expected to align with the Cairngorms National Park Authority Landscape Partnership Plan (LPP). Peatland restoration is one of the top priorities of the plan. Assessing the extent of the peatland asset on the Estate would be

the first step in establishing a peatland restoration strategy and aligning with the LPP in this context.

- There is a risk Crown Estate Scotland will come into disrepute over Glenmullie peatland restoration project. Thousands of pounds of public money have been spent over the last 10 years and the peatland is still degrading. Establishing the most suitable next steps for Glenmullie and actioning them would mitigate this risk.

Environmental:

- Unchecked Sitka spruce regeneration at Glenmullie presents a risk to the environment. There is little understanding of the long-term ecological impact of Sitka regeneration on open moorland. The resulting forest could provide very little biodiversity value compared to the peatland on which it has regenerated on, resulting in a biodiversity net loss. Clearing the Sitka spruce regeneration regularly would mitigate this risk. However, there is also an opportunity to study what would happen if the spruce forest was allowed to regenerate, which would improve understanding and mitigate the risk that way. This is also true for all other areas of Sitka regeneration on the Estate.
- If our peatlands are not restored, Crown Estate Scotland is at risk of not achieving its decarbonisation and net zero ambitions. Degraded peatlands emit vast quantities of carbon dioxide, whereas healthy peatlands sequester carbon from the atmosphere and store it underground for long periods. Quantifying the extent and health of the peatland asset on the Estate would enable us to assess the emissions currently being released or stored by the asset. Understanding the potential carbon storage capability of the asset would help mitigate the risk.
- Crown Estate Scotland is at risk of not meeting the obligations of our statutory biodiversity duty. Peatland is a UK Biodiversity Action Plan priority habitat, not restoring our peatlands would impact negatively on the Estate biodiversity and our reporting. Restoring our peatlands and monitoring the subsequent biodiversity increases against a baseline would feed into our reports and mitigate the risk.

Financial

- There is a risk that more tenants begin to claim money through Crown Estate Scotland funding opportunities to clear Sitka regeneration on the land that they manage. Sitka regeneration takes tenanted land out of production; therefore, tenants want to remove it to regain full access to all the land included in their tenancy agreements. Removal of Sitka regeneration is very costly and often requires multiple interventions over time, resulting in long term investment. Some tenants may not be able to afford to clear the land themselves and may apply to Crown Estate Scotland for funding to do so. Crown Estate Scotland would need to establish how many tenants are affected and quantify the potential financial risk, then decide how to mitigate.

6. Financial Implications

There are no financial implications associated with the research project itself. The recommendations would need to be fully scoped and costed if taken forward.

Assessing the financial impact of the work required as part of the recommendations would be an activity for the future should any of the recommendations be taken forward.

Some of the recommendations could assist with long-term budget planning.

Much of the costs associated with the recommendations would be the cost of resourcing and outsourcing.

7. Sustainable Development and Wider Value

An asset profile specifically for peatland could be developed to quantify the value of the asset. Peatland restoration is briefly mentioned in the sporting asset profile, but the full asset is neither qualified nor quantified.

The recommendations of the project seek to enhance the value of Scottish Crown Estate assets and the income arising from them while also delivering environmental and social wellbeing.

8. Stakeholder relations / reputation

The most interested stakeholder is likely to be the Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA) as they are working with Crown Estate Scotland to deliver Glenmullie peatland restoration project on Glenlivet Estate. The Park is very keen to reach an agreement regarding the management of the Sitka spruce regeneration at Glenmullie, as it is a large factor in the success of the project. Failing to reach a timely agreement could result in strained relations with an important partner organization. If Glenmullie peatland restoration was successful it would generate positive publicity for Crown Estate Scotland, as would further commitments to deliver peatland restoration on the Estate. Members of the CNPA Peatland Action team have been engaged with as part of this research project.

Not establishing a clear policy regarding Sitka spruce regeneration on tenanted land could result in strained landlord-tenant relations. A tenant on Auchindoun Estate has received funding from Crown Estate Scotland through the Sustainable Communities Fund Environment Grant to clear Sitka regen on their land. More tenants may begin to seek this method of resolution. Having a clear policy on who is eligible under what circumstances would make the decision-making process for individual applications easier. No action on Sitka spruce regeneration on tenanted land could result in negative publicity for Crown Estate Scotland.

Achieving net zero using our own assets as opposed to offsetting using non-Crown Estate Scotland assets would most likely be better received with the public and stakeholders, including the Scottish Government. Not achieving net zero at all would result in negative publicity.

9. Impact Assessments

None completed as part of this work, but recommendations may result in future ones.

10. Legal and compliance

Out of the 2 active peatland restorations on Glenlivet Estate, one of them (Feith Mussach) is a legal obligation under planning conditions agreed as part of the old commercial peat cutting works on the site.

The other project (Glenmullie) is a voluntary agreement with the Cairngorms National Park Authority and PeatlandAction.

As mentioned previously, we are required to align with the Cairngorms National Park Landscape Partnership Plan, which identifies peatland restoration as a priority.

We are also required to comply with Scottish Government legislation and policy, including:

- The **Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019** and the supporting **Climate Change Plan 2018-2032**, which identifies peatlands as a decarbonisation tool.
- **The Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004**, which requires all public bodies to report on actions taken to improve biodiversity.
- And the **Scottish Biodiversity Strategy to 2045**, which identifies peatlands as a carbon credit investment opportunity and a nature -based solution to delivering NetZero.

11. Project Governance and Performance Indicators

If recommendations were taken forward, project governance and performance indicators would be developed.

Board Paper

Date of Meeting: February 2024

Classification: Confidential / Unrestricted

Subject: People Report

Paper Number: BD(2024)40.8

Annexes: **Annex A: 2023-25 People Strategy Action Plan**
Annex B: Board Reporting

Recommendation: The Board is invited to note and provide comment on the report provided on People matters in CES.

Presenter: [REDACTED]

Author: [REDACTED]

**Our purpose: Investing in property, natural resources and people
to generate lasting value for Scotland**

1. Purpose and context

This report contains updates which provide Board with insight into:

- 2023-25 People Strategy Action Plan
- Staffing update
- Learning and Development Update
- Employee engagement and Trade Union
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- Staff Survey Update
- Employee statistics and trends – through the metrics in Annex B and enclosed narrative

2. Background

This report provides regular quarterly reporting to Board on areas of People risk and activity including delivery of our People Strategy Action Plan.

*<https://www.gov.scot/news/scottish-government-workforce-statistics-march-2023/>

The board tracker noted that the Board would welcome information and analysis on pay, recruitment, and retention at a future meeting. We have provided information on this in this board paper.

3. People Strategy

Updates on delivery of the agreed People Strategy action plan are included in Annex A of this paper. High level detail of actions which are in plan for 2024/25 have also been included to provide a long term view of delivery.

4. Staffing Update

There has been a high level of recruitment to support turnover, internal moves and new roles to build resilience and capacity.

Posts currently under recruitment as at 08 February are listed in the below table.

Business Area	Job Title
Finance and Business Services	Finance Assistant
	Culture and Engagement Lead (FTC)
Corporate Operations	Corporate Strategy Coordinator (FTC)
	Head of Corporate Affairs
	Marine Sustainability Officer
Property	Head of Built Development
	Estate Maintenance Ranger
	Director of Development, Capital Delivery & Decarbonisation
Marine	Development Manager (Gas, Storage & Pipelines)
	Director of Aquaculture and Marine Ecosystem Services
	Assistant Development Manager
	Assistant Development Manager
Governance	Assistant Asset Manager
	Head of Governance (role profile under development)
	Information and Records Manager

We have had five new starters since the last Board update in November.

- [REDACTED] – Project Manager-Development, Property

*<https://www.gov.scot/news/scottish-government-workforce-statistics-march-2023/>

- [REDACTED] – Information & Records Manager (Fixed-Term), Governance - returned to role
- [REDACTED] – Procurement Manger, Finance and Business Services
- [REDACTED] – HR Business Partner (Fixed-Term), Finance and Business Services
- [REDACTED] – Senior Commercial Manager, Finance and Business Services

In addition we have one internal move into new role:

- [REDACTED] – Interim Director of Marine (Fixed-Term), Marine

We are also recruiting to new roles to build capacity across the organisation in line with the agreed additional c20 roles which have been communicated to staff. An update on recruitment to new roles is included in the MI in Annex B.

We have finalised the role profiles for the two new director level posts. We have appointed FWB Park Brown to partner with us on the Executive Search and Selection exercise to recruit the role of Director of Aquaculture and Ecosystem Services and Director of Development, Capital Delivery and Decarbonisation. These roles are out to recruit with FWB Park Brown, adverts close for application on 29 February.

4.1 Interim Roles

In addition to permanent recruitment we have agreed interim agency support across the business to ensure we have the capacity and capability in place to deliver. An update on interim agency roles is noted below:

- Head of Governance- Interim in place (permanent recruitment to commence shortly)
- Health and Safety- CV's received from agency and under review
- Director of Capital- CV's received from agency and under review
- Business Improvement Director- CVs received from agency and under review

4.2 Organisational Design and Organisational Change

4.2.1 Organisational Design Update

Mainstreet will be presenting initial findings to Board on 28th February, with the substantive report due 6 March 2024.

We have started the process of developing the scope of the second Organisational Design commission. We anticipate specifying this in the next 3 months and this commission will include the development of a strategic resourcing plan to help bring forward the new Corporate Plan.

*<https://www.gov.scot/news/scottish-government-workforce-statistics-march-2023/>

4.2.2 Organisational Change

We are currently running a consultation with the Aquaculture team to review the structure of the team. This is in advance of our Aquaculture Operations Manager retiring from their role at the end of March 2024.

The consultation is currently live and the new structure will be confirmed on 23 March 2024.

5. Learning and Development

Our strategic approach to Learning and Development is outlined in our refreshed People Strategy and our People Strategy Action Plan outlines the key deliverables against this in this time period. Key outcomes progressed are noted below.

5.1 Project Management

Our Project Management programme is well underway with 22 people completing the APM Fundamentals qualification. Following this 10 will progress to the APM Project management qualification in March. We have had positive feedback on the course which has provided a thorough foundation and rigorous assessment for all delegates.

5.2 Leadership and Senior Manager Development

Following the tender process 8 bidders were taken through to the presentation stage where two candidates were assessed as appointable. The panel has consensus, and this has been relayed to procurement. We are now progressing the final part of the process which is being managed by procurement. An appointment will be made by the 18th of March, which is later than expected due to procurement delays in relation to workload.

5.3 Learning and Development policy

A refreshed policy has been drafted and initial comments received from the Head of People. This feedback will be considered and or incorporated before this is issued for wider comment before going to the executive team.

5.4 Training to support Anti- Bullying & Harassment actions from the staff survey

A suite of resources has been developed to support all staff on the issues raised including:

- Speaking up – face to face workshop for all staff scheduled for Monday 19th February
- Microaggressions – Face to face workshops scheduled for May

*<https://www.gov.scot/news/scottish-government-workforce-statistics-march-2023/>

- B&H iHasco module which includes links to Crown Estate Scotland's specific policies. This module is an overview and will fall under our ongoing mandatory training schedule
- Resource for managers on avoiding Micromanagement (which was highlighted as the top cited cause of bullying in the staff survey).
- Resource for staff on dealing with Micromanagement

All resources have been issued to members of the culture forum for feedback to ensure continues to be staff led in delivery. This training will launch before the end of February.

6. Employee Engagement and Trade Union

Regular engagement continues to take place with our recognised Trade Union PCS on a monthly basis in addition to engagement on specific projects such as Organisational Design and Policy reviews.

PCS have also fed into the staff survey action plan which has been developed in collaboration with staff, management and Executive Team. A current focus with PCS is the development of a staff code of conduct (in line with the staff survey action plan).

7. Pay

A two year pay deal for all staff in grades A-I was accepted by PCS and implemented in January payroll. This pay award was implemented in January 2024 and included elements of backdated pay to 1 April 2024.

As this is a two year pay deal we will be able to progress our annual pay award and pay progression for 2024/25 shortly after concluding our annual performance management cycle at the end of Q4.

Remuneration Committee met in February to agree Chief Executive Pay and to ensure appropriate governance of Board rate increases for 2023-24. This has gone to Scottish Government for approval, if this progresses to plan we will have implementation in March payroll.

8. Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion

Our approach to EDI for 2025-30 continued to be developed through the corporate planning process, including consideration of how we may align with the specific duties in the Equality Act (including Mainstreaming Equalities Reporting).

We are trialing a one-year membership of Inclusive Employers. This external body will help support us on our agenda through membership support, resources, advice, and guidance.

*<https://www.gov.scot/news/scottish-government-workforce-statistics-march-2023/>

We are working with Newsquest & GenAnalytics' on the 2024 Diversity Awards. This year's sponsorship package will include a workshop, to take place in Spring, to explore how different groups and communities may be impacted by CES's new corporate plan. Outputs will then inform the plan's Equality Impact Assessment.

9. Staff Survey

The Staff Survey Action plan was shared with Board in November as a separate agenda item. Since this time we have progressed key actions under the action plan. Key outputs include:

- Regular updates and discussions with staff through our new All Staff Meeting agenda.
- Publishing an update staff survey action plan monthly so staff can see progress.
- Including a regular discussion on staff survey actions with PCS in monthly calls with them, building a partnership approach to delivery where appropriate.
- Completing key actions such as a review of our Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination policy and launch of learning and development in this area.

We have a pulse survey which is currently out to staff to check in on the staff survey action plan and the wellbeing hour pilot. This will close on 23 February and outputs will be available in March.

10. Employee Statistics and Trends

We have been developing a new suite of reporting for both Board and Executive Team, while some areas are still under development by our system provider, others are now available and included in Annex B of this report. Where MI is not provided this is because the dashboard is still under development. The diversity and inclusion screen currently under review, with a review of categories as well as a revised dashboard to support reporting.

FTE for the organisation is increasing, this reflects progress to recruit to new roles in teams. We have a number of fixed term roles in place across the organisation to cover long term leave and short term business requirements.

Turnover in the MI tracker shows the turnover in the rolling 12 months prior. This currently sits at 11% total turnover for the rolling past 12 months, an increase from last quarter's total turnover. Where turnover is noted as 'involuntary' in Annex B this includes leavers such as end of fixed term contracts, death in service, retirement and dismissals. There is no discernable trend in reasons for leaving in exit interviews, we continue to monitor this closely and have included additional analysis with turnover by tenure in relation to turnover in Annex B as requested by board.

*<https://www.gov.scot/news/scottish-government-workforce-statistics-march-2023/>

Exit interviews have highlighted that the top reasons for leaving in the last 12 months are career progression and moving to a role with a higher salary.

Workplace absence figures have been updated with year to date absence. We continue to support staff through occupational health referrals where appropriate. We have seen a particular drop in long term absence in the rolling year to date figures since the last quarter from 172 to 67 days.

The 3 main reasons for absence in 2023/24 to date remain:

1. Stress/ Anxiety/ Depression
2. Hospital Treatment
3. Cold/ Influenza

The Board requested confirmation if stress absence is work related. A review of stress/ anxiety/ depression absence since 1 January 2023 has confirmed that this absence is not work related. These absences were due to a variety of personal circumstances. In instances of stress related absence CES will instigate an occupational health referral to support the employee. We have an organisation-wise stress risk assessment which is carried out annually and in instances where work is cited as a factor in stress we utilise individual stress risk assessments to explore options with the employee and line manager.

Board have also been presented with data which shows the impact of unplanned absence which is not related to sickness. This has reduced since the last quarter from 2 days to 1.4 days per employee in the last 12 months. This is mostly attributable to a compassionate and bereavement leave which has taken place in this time.

The cost of sickness absence statistic has been calculated using the employee's daily rate, multiplied by the number of days absence. Our average days absence per employee has dropped from 4.32 days per employee reported to Board in November to 2.5 days. This remains below the benchmarked average of 8.1 days in Scottish government.

11. Corporate / Business Plan alignment

The new People Strategy takes us to 2025 and ensures that the People priorities in CES remain aligned to delivery of our Corporate and Business Plans. The strategy will be reviewed in the lead up to the introduction of the new Corporate Plan.

12. Risk Analysis

Our corporate risk register (risk workshops under way) cites an action related to competencies under risk number 2 and an action related to staff development policies under risk number 5. These risks have been mitigated by the recruitment of an L&D Manager in the People team to progress work in this area. We will however continue to monitor the situation to understand if further action is required.

*<https://www.gov.scot/news/scottish-government-workforce-statistics-march-2023/>

We are now moving ahead to procure a provider to undertake an equal pay audit for CES in line with our agreed People Strategy Action Plan.

13. Financial Implications

Costs for implementing the updated People Strategy are anticipated to be met by the current People Team budget which is approved in our annual budgeting cycle. Any additional costs are included the budget planning process.

We have recently recruited a fixed term HR Business Partner to support delivery of the People Strategy and are progressing recruitment to a fixed term Culture and Engagement Lead role to support delivery of wider organisational change programmes.

14. Stakeholder relations / reputation

As our workforce, remit, and impact grow, we want to continue to invest in our People processes, systems and core provision for staff. We want to be known as a great employer and ensure all staff are adequately supported to operate to the right standards.

*<https://www.gov.scot/news/scottish-government-workforce-statistics-march-2023/>

Annex A 2023-25 People Strategy Action Plan

[REDACTED]

Annex B- People MI

[REDACTED]

Sections of this paper are exempt from publication in terms of s.38(1)(b) of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.

*<https://www.gov.scot/news/scottish-government-workforce-statistics-march-2023/>

Update on plan development

	Complete	Ongoing / coming up
Engagement	Speakers Series, research, workshops etc (MSPs, local auths, tenants, specialists, staff & Board, SG).	SG sponsor (aid approval), workshops (equalities, NGOs). Develop consultation materials Formal consultation (10-12 weeks, July-Sep) Chair and BM engagement with stakeholders
Plan development	Outline materials to support engagement Phase 2 (ET-led, focus on prioritisation) Feedback from BMs on strategic framework	Further work on strategic framework Draft in Feb (to Board in March, to SG in April) Test against scenarios and PESTLE Progress statutory assessments
Input from team	Phase 1 inc. Future Focus sessions	Progress work on Budget & People and Delivery models Progress performance framework
Organisational development	Mainstreet work	Mainstreet work 2024-25 business plan

2024-25 preparation for next corporate plan

1. Testing of language / terminology / messaging
2. 10-year investment model populated & Total Cost progressed
3. 2025-30 Investment Strategy developed
4. Indicators and metrics tested (in line with emerging plan and Value Reporting Framework) to inform performance framework
5. Value Project - business case template and reporting tested
6. Workforce plan developed

Risks

- **Capacity** – Phase 2 timings and format changed to avoid clashing with business planning. Coordinator role not yet recruited to. Other gaps across teams.
- **Capability** – guidance, training and supporting materials provided
- **SG engagement** – bimonthly meetings, policy leads session. SMP to be finalised Autumn 2025 (SG have indicated no material change). Ministerial engagement.
- **Relevance of plan** over five years – language testing, ensure plan has appropriate level of detail, base final Vision etc in 2019 Act, workshop to explore external environment, test draft against scenarios, consider use of Sustainable Development Goals.

Board Paper

Date of Meeting: 28 February 2024

Classification: Unrestricted

Subject: 2025-30 Corporate Plan development update

Paper Number: BD(2024)40.9

Annexes: Annex A: Corporate Plan development update

Recommendation: The Board is invited to note the update

Presenter: Esther Black

Author: Esther Black

**Our purpose: Investing in property, natural resources and people
to generate lasting value for Scotland**

1. Purpose and context

Annex A provides an update on the development of the 2025-30 Corporate Plan for noting and discussion.

Board Paper

Date of Meeting: 28 February 2024

Classification: Unrestricted

Subject: Stakeholder Engagements

Paper Number: BD(2024)40.10

Recommendation: The Board is invited to note this paper.

Presenter: Ronan O’Hara

Author: [REDACTED] / [REDACTED]

**Our purpose: Investing in property, natural resources and people
to generate lasting value for Scotland**

1. Purpose and context

This paper provides the Board with a sample of the meetings and events which the Chair and the Chief Executive have held with stakeholders during the period from 24 November 2023 to 14 February 2024.

This paper also includes a summary of other stakeholder engagements and events.

2. Meetings and Events attended.

The Chair and Chief Executive both attended or met:

The Crown Estate Scotland Scottish Parliament Reception	6 December 2023
Tavish Scott, CEO of Salmon Scotland	7 December 2023
Ms Martin, Minister for Energy and the Environment	16 January 2024
Murray McCall and Fraser Geddes from Anderson Strathern	18 January 2024
Al Denholm CEO and Willie Watt Chair from Scottish National Investment Bank	30 January 2024
Francesca Osowska, CEO and Professor Colin Galbraith, Chair of Nature Scot	1 February 2024

The Chair attended or met:

Convention of the Highlands and Islands Autumn 2023	27 November 2023
Dave Signorini, temporary Director of Marine at Scottish Government	4 December 2023, 15 January 2024
HIE Chair Alistair Dodds and CEO Stuart Black	7 December 2023
Nigel Slater, MD Development at Northland Power.	21 December 2023
Ian Douglas CEO and Trevor Nash CCO from XLCC. [REDACTED] also in attendance.	12 January 2024
Scottish Renewables Offshore Wind Conference Dinner	24 January 2024

The Chief Executive attended or met:

Fergus Murray, of Argyll and Bute Council	24 November 2023
Robert MacKenzie call	24 November 2023
[REDACTED] and [REDACTED] from the SG Sponsor Team	27 November 2023 and 22 January 2024
Global Energy Group and Anderson Strathern meeting	30 November 2023
Stuart Black, Chief Executive of HIE	1 December 2023
PCS meeting	4 December 2023
Representatives from UHI North, West and Hebrides. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] also in attendance.	7 December 2023
Neil Kermode from EMEC	18 December 2023
David Hope Jones, Chief Executive of the SSDA	19 December 2023
Representatives of the CCSA	20 December 2023
Oliver Reid CEO and Gareth Waterson Corporate Director for Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration from Orkney Islands Council. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] also in attendance.	20 December 2023
Morag Angus, Chief Surveyor at Scottish Government	10 January 2024
Professor Norman McLennan and Morag Angus, Chief Surveyor at Scottish Government	10 January 2024
Peter Reekie, CEO, Scottish Futures Trust	15 January 2024
EELG for a meeting on water policy	19 January 2024

[REDACTED] and [REDACTED] from the SG Sponsor Team. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] also in attendance.	22 January 2024
SG Wellbeing and Sustainable Development Bill Team Workshop	23 January 2024
[REDACTED] and [REDACTED] from the SG Sponsor Team. [REDACTED] also in attendance.	25 January 2024
Richard Rollison, Director of International Trade and Development, Scottish Government	25 January 2024
An INTOG catch up with representatives of SG and CES.	30 January 2024
A meeting with Director of Marine, Director of Offshore Wind and other SG representatives. [REDACTED] also in attendance.	31 January 2024
[REDACTED] and [REDACTED] from the SG Sponsor Team.	1 February 2024
SG ScotWind Finance catch up. [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] also in attendance, along with several Scottish Government representatives, including members of the Sponsor Team.	1 February 2024
Hamish Trench, CEO of the Scottish Land Commission.	2 February 2024
Michell Quinn, Director of Offshore Wind and Davie Signorini, temporary Director of Marine, Scottish Government.	7 February 2024
Ronnie MacRae from CH Trust, [REDACTED] also in attendance.	8 February 2024

3. Other engagements and events

Past events include:

Scottish Renewables Offshore Wind Conference & Dinner	24 & 25 January 2024	Euan and members of the Marine team attended across the two days. CES speakers attended the Conference and Dinner.
DeCarb Scotland Conference	1 February 2024	CES sponsored the conference

Future events include:

Board recruitment event with Changing the Chemistry	Date TBC (Early March 2024)	Promoting vacancies within diverse groups
Speaker series with Just Transition Commission	7 March 2024	
Speaker series with Buccleuch: session for Board and ET.	Date TBC (April 2024)	
Exhibition Stall at Scottish Parliament	Date TBC (Autumn 2024)	Sponsor MSP: Arianne Burgess

Sections of this paper have been redacted and are exempt from publication in terms of s.38(1)(b) of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.