

Forestry and Land Scotland

Draft Corporate Plan:   
Consultation Analysis Report

August 2019

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Introduction

**Forestry and Land Scotland**

The Forestry and Land Management (Scotland) Act 2018 was commenced in April 2019. This means that forestry is now fully devolved and accountable to Scottish Ministers and the Scottish Parliament.

As part of this change, new Scottish Government agencies were formed to take forward the work previously undertaken by Forestry Commission Scotland and Forest Enterprise Scotland (FES). Forestry and Land Scotland (FLS) was established on 1st April 2019 as the Scottish Government agency responsible for managing Scotland’s national forests and land, a function previously undertaken by FES. FLS will look after the national forests and land to enhance biodiversity, support tourism and increase access to the green spaces that will help improve Scotland’s physical and mental health and wellbeing. It will also continue to provide vital timber supplies to support the rural economy.

**The Draft Corporate Plan**

FLS is developing its first Corporate Plan, due for publication in October 2019. This sets out priorities and proposed direction of travel for the new agency over the next three years. The priorities on how the agency will manage the national forests and land are directly aligned to the Scottish Government’s purpose and outcomes. Activities are designed to contribute to the wider National Performance Framework.



The Forestry and Land Scotland Framework Document, published in April 2019, sets out how FLS will function as an executive agency of the Scottish Government and defines its relationship with Scottish Ministers. The Framework Document stipulates:

“The Corporate Plan will set out Forestry and Land Scotland’s outcomes and targets; high level performance indicators; and give an overview of how it will deliver these over the Plan period in line with the Scottish Government’s Purpose and National Outcomes set out in the National Performance Framework.”

The Draft Corporate Plan draws on the knowledge, expertise and experience of Forest Enterprise Scotland. Staff and stakeholders were involved in the development of the Draft Corporate Plan through a series of workshops; the Plan also builds on the work undertaken by Scottish Government on the Forestry Strategy 2019-2029.

At the core of the Plan are a set of Corporate Outcomes designed to guide FLS’s work over the next three years and setting out a position statement of where FLS wants to be by 2022. The Outcomes are reliant on each other and all support the delivery of the FLS mission and vision, and ultimately the Scottish Government’s outcomes and purpose.

The Consultation

FLS has formally consulted on the Draft Plan. The purpose of this consultation was to seek the views of stakeholders and individuals who have an interest in the national forests and land. The draft plan was published on the FLS website together with a link to the consultation questionnaire hosted on the Citizens Space portal. The consultation questionnaire typically asked respondents to indicate how strongly they agreed/disagreed with the provision in the plan (tick box) and then invited further feedback. The questions covered:

* The corporate structure
* The vision and mission
* Each of the five outcomes
* Diversity and inclusion
* Any final comments.

The consultation opened on 28th May and closed on 5th July 2019.

Consultation response

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Table 1: Consultation response | |  |
| Individuals | 49 | |
| Organisations | 39 | |
| FLS staff | 12 | |
| **Total** | **100** | |
|  | | |

In total, 101 responses were received. One was considered defamatory, resulting in 100 valid responses (see Table 1).

Almost all of the responses were received via the Citizens Space portal using the questionnaire. A small number of responses were sent directly to FLS.

The organisations responding comprised:

* Public bodies and agencies: national, local, partnerships
* Representative and special interest groups: professional/commercial, sports and recreation, environmental/conservation
* Charities: mainly conservation/environmental/heritage, but also sport/wellbeing
* Commercial: mainly timber but also consulting.

No-one responded to all of the questions, but most people answered/commented on the core questions: those relating to the FLS structure, vision and mission and the outcomes.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Table 2: Responses to each question |  |  |  |
| Corporate Structureꭞ | 83 | Outcome 5ꭞ | 79 |
| Vision and Missionꭞ | 84 | Overview of outcomesꭞ | 83 |
| Outcome 1ꭞ | 85 | Diversity and inclusion\* | 45 |
| Outcome 2ꭞ | 87 | Diversity and inclusion\* | 38 |
| Outcome 3ꭞ | 86 | Other comments\* | 62 |
| Outcome 4ꭞ | 81 |  |  |
| **Base** | **100** | **Base** | **100** |
| Note responses are based on all responses to any part of a question closed or open:  ꭞ Questions that comprise both closed and open elements  \*Questions that comprise just an open element | | | |

Summary of the response

The overall response to the direction of the Draft Plan was positive. In particular, respondents agreed with the provisions set out in the Plan’s structure, the Vision and Mission, and the Outcomes. However, respondents tended to feel that the Plan would benefit from further detail, and in particular, more clarity in how the outcomes will be delivered. Table 3 summarises the response to the core questions.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Table 3: Support for the Plan measures | | | | | |
|  |  | **Agree strongly/**  **slightly** | **Disagree strongly/**  **Slightly** | **Don’t know** | **Base** |
| **FLS** | Structure: good introduction to FLS | 60 | 14 | 6 | 80 |
| Agree with vision and mission | 54 | 22 | 3 | 79 |
| **Outcome 1** | Agree with the outcome | 55 | 22 | 4 | 81 |
| Agree with the delivery actions | 41 | 24 | 12 | 77 |
| **Outcome 2** | Agree with the outcome | 64 | 18 | 0 | 82 |
| Agree with the delivery actions | 48 | 24 | 8 | 80 |
| **Outcome 3** | Agree with the outcome | 66 | 14 | 2 | 82 |
| Agree with the delivery actions | 44 | 29 | 8 | 81 |
| **Outcome 4** | Agree with the outcome | 45 | 11 | 21 | 77 |
| Agree with the delivery actions | 29 | 14 | 28 | 71 |
| **Outcome 5** | Agree with the outcome | 49 | 14 | 12 | 75 |
| Agree with the delivery actions | 33 | 18 | 16 | 67 |
| **Overview** | Plan provides a strategic overview | 48 | 27 | 6 | 81 |

FLS corporate structure

Question: To what extent do you agree that the Corporate Plan provides a good introduction to the organisation and structure of Forestry and Land Scotland? Please use this space to comment further.

Most (80) of the respondents answered the tick-box question and most of these respondents (around three quarters) agreed that the information in the Plan provides a good introduction to FLS. Just 14 of the respondents disagreed; none of those disagreeing were staff.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Table 4: To what extent do you agree the Plan provides a good introduction to FLS? (#) | | | | |
|  | Total | Individuals | Organisations | FLS employees |
| Agree strongly | 22 | 10 | 9 | 3 |
| Agree slightly | 38 | 21 | 10 | 7 |
| Disagree slightly | 9 | 6 | 3 | - |
| Disagree strongly | 5 | 2 | 3 | - |
| Don't know | 6 | 3 | 3 | - |
| **Base** | **80** | **42** | **28** | **10** |

Respondents commented that the Plan provided a useful, if high level, introduction to the new organisation, its role and function, how it relates to Scottish Government, and its new structure. Comments were generally designed to improve the clarity and increase the level of detail included in the Plan, so that a wider audience would be able to understand FLS’s context and structure. A number of suggestions were made by respondents:

* The policy context is relatively new, and quite complicated; a diagram and/or a clear concise explanation would be useful.
* The use of an organisation chart/job titles to describe the structure of the organisation is not accessible to people from outside the organisation; some further explanation of what these mean would be helpful. Further information on the FLS Strategic Board, roles played by the Strategic Board and the Executive Team is also needed.
* More detail is needed on the five regions (for example, are they aligned to local authority boundaries) and the local offices that are mentioned.
* FLS relationship with communities is not articulated. This had been discussed during the wider consultations, and respondents commented that the Plan would benefit from the setting this out in more detail.

A number of respondents commented that Plan could have been broader in scope and more ambitious, for example:

* Some respondents commented that the commitments to sustainability and biodiversity were inadequate and that the climate emergency was not addressed sufficiently.
* Related to this, some commented that planning for just three years constrained addressing such challenges, and a more realistic time horizon was five or ten years.
* Some, typically commercial, respondents, commented that the structure of the organisation, and hence the Plan, was focused on ‘Forestry’, and there was little said on ‘Land’. Clarity on remit and outcomes with respect to this role was sought.
* Some, typically representative, respondents, commented that they expected to see FLS set clear commitments to contribute towards delivering the Scottish Government plans, policies and targets referred to within the Plan.

*“Are the 'national forests and land' really 'the Scottish Ministers’ land i.e. owned by them, or are they the custodians on behalf of the people of Scotland?”* Individual

*“It's a good introduction to the high level structure of the organisation. Some people might want more detail of how work gets done – perhaps drill down into the local level with regional structure and/or an example of delivery?*” Organisation

Vision and mission

Question: To what extent do you agree with the FLS Vision and FLS Mission contained in the Corporate Plan? Please use this space to comment further

**The Mission**

To look after Scotland’s forests and land, for the benefit of all, now and for the future.

**The Vision**

Forests and land that Scotland can be proud of.

Most (79) of the respondents answered the tick-box question and most of these respondents (around two thirds) with the FLS Vision and Mission. Around a third (22) of these respondents disagreed with the vision and mission statements in the draft plan. There was no difference in the profile of response between individuals, organisations and FLS staff.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Table 5: To what extent do you agree with the FLS Vision and FLS Mission contained in the Corporate Plan? (#) | | | | |
|  | Total | Individuals | Organisations | FLS employees |
| Agree strongly | 16 | 9 | 5 | 2 |
| Agree slightly | 38 | 18 | 14 | 6 |
| Disagree slightly | 11 | 5 | 4 | 2 |
| Disagree strongly | 11 | 8 | 2 | 1 |
| Don't know | 3 | 1 | 2 | - |
| **Base** | **79** | **41** | **27** | **11** |

A few respondents, especially staff, were very positive about the vision and mission, simply noting that they “love it”, or that it is “inspiring and positive”. Others, while less effusive, were still positive, commenting the vision and mission “reflect the breadth and ambition of the new agency”, are “simple and direct”, and “make sense”.

Several respondents made suggestions to improve the vision and mission:

* Some considered the statements too imprecise, suggesting the wording might give the impression that FLS’s role is to look after *all* of Scotland’s forests and land. One respondent suggested the mission might be better framed as *“To look after Scotland’s national forests and land, for the benefit of all, now and for the future.”*
* The related phrase “*Delivering* forests and land Scotland can be proud of” was considered less appealing, and alternatives such as “*creating* forests and…” and “*caring* for forests and …” were proposed.
* Some, especially staff, also suggested the grammar might benefit from being tidied up a little, although, there is always a trade-off between accuracy and accessibility, consistency of capitalisation within the document (especially for the phrase “forests and land”).
* Some suggested the term ‘look after’ was too weak, and not an adequate description of the professional management of the estate.

Several respondents suggested that the visions and mission could be more ambitious:

* Some suggested simply that the statements could be framed in active more terms – for example “Forests and land of which Scotland will be proud”.
* Others challenged FLS to be much bolder, in particular, their actions to address the climate and biodiversity emergencies should be more visible throughout this plan, accompanied by clear commitments of action from FLS as a major land-owning agency.

Some respondents were critical of the vision and mission:

* Some respondents commented it was overly-focused on commercial aspects of the organisation, and in particular on revenue-raising activities and the sale of public lands. For example, one respondent said: *“I believe our forests should be focused on providing carbon capture and storage, providing space for wildlife which may be accessed by people, and not an economic asset for short term monetary gain.”*
* Many of the comments related to very specific actions, such as land-use, conservation activities, sport and tourism, and re-forestation.

One respondent was critical of the process, noting that the vision and mission are already in use on the FLS website, and questioned whether there was now scope for the consultation to amend these.

*“Welcome the breadth and ambition of the vision which recognises the role of forest and woodland in delivering a range of ecosystem services, although that term is not specifically used. The reference to "sustainably managed and better integrated with other land uses" is particularly welcome.”* Organisation

“*Many stakeholders are involved in forest and woodland management. How will integration with different land uses and users be prioritised, balanced and managed? It is impossible to please everyone?”* Organisation

Outcome 1

Questions: To what extent do you agree with the following Outcome? To what extent do you agree the actions for delivery will be sufficient to deliver this Outcome? Please use this space to comment further.

**Outcome 1:**

FLS supports a sustainable rural economy by managing the national forests and land in a way that encourages business growth, development opportunities, jobs and investments.

Most of the respondents (55) who answered the tick box question said they agreed with Outcome 1, either strongly or slightly, while around a quarter (22 respondents) said they disagreed with Outcome 1. None of the FLS staff and just six organisations disagreed with this outcome.

However, fewer respondents (41) agreed that the delivery actions set out in Plan would be sufficient to deliver this outcome. Most organisations and FLS staff agreed that the actions would be sufficient to deliver the outcome, although just two organisations agreed strongly; the views of individuals were more mixed.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Table 6: To what extent do you agree with Outcome 1? (#) | | | | |
|  | Total | Individuals | Organisations | FLS employees |
| Agree strongly | 26 | 9 | 12 | 5 |
| Agree slightly | 29 | 14 | 10 | 5 |
| Disagree slightly | 13 | 10 | 3 | - |
| Disagree strongly | 9 | 6 | 3 | - |
| Don't know | 4 | 3 | 1 | - |
| **Base** | **81** | **42** | **29** | **10** |
| **To what extent do you agree the actions for delivery will be sufficient to deliver this Outcome? (#)** | | | | |
|  | Total | Individuals | Organisations | FLS employees |
| Agree strongly | 9 | 4 | 2 | 3 |
| Agree slightly | 32 | 13 | 14 | 5 |
| Disagree slightly | 15 | 10 | 5 | - |
| Disagree strongly | 9 | 5 | 3 | 1 |
| Don't know | 12 | 8 | 4 | - |
| **Base** | **77** | **40** | **28** | **9** |

General comments

Some respondents’ were very positive about Outcome 1, noting for example that they welcomed the outcome, that it is an important outcome, it is clear and concise. A small number of the comments were critical, for example concerned that commercial objectives (sporting and timber production) were being prioritised over environmental/conservation objectives. However, the majority of respondents’ comments supported the Outcome, in whole or in part, but wished to challenge FLS to further develop the outcome, or refine the proposed actions.

* **New Woodland Investment Programme (NWIP), Timber access Strategy (TAS) and Timber Management Strategy (TMS):** Respondents recognised that these were important documents in relation to this outcome, but several respondents were unfamiliar with their content. Several respondents noted that they required further information on the NWIP and TAS and TMS in order to comment, and suggested that links/further information on these should be included in the final version of the Plan.
* **Procurement processes**: Some respondents raised concerns about the deliverability of the outcome, and in particular about the procurement processes, which were considered a major barrier to service delivery. Some respondents commented that both the parcelling of work into large chunks and the bureaucratic procurement process is geared towards large national and international organisations with the capacity, time and resources to tender for work. The many rural businesses that could (and historically did) provide services to FLS are ‘micro businesses’ and do not have the interest or capacity to deal with the bureaucracy needed.
* **Level of detail:** Perhaps not unexpectedly, given the tick box responses, several respondents commented that they supported/agreed with the outcome, but had concerns in relation to the delivery actions. In particular, the respondents commented that the Plan lacked the level of detail required to develop an informed view on whether the outcome will be delivered, for example: *“The listed key actions appear to be just about talking about what FLS wants to do and nothing about delivering it.” – FLS staff.* Many comments suggested that they would have expected the Plan to have included an action plan (or similar) to accompany this section, and were frustrated by the limited detail that had been made available. It is worth noting that this sentiment applies across delivery action sections within the Plan, and is discussed in further detail at Outcome 5.
* **Clarity:** It was suggested that some of the terms used in outcome 1 would benefit from clearer definition. Respondents highlighted “sustainable”, and “investment” as terms that could be further refined within the Outcome. Respondents commented on environmental and economic sustainability/resilience, and were clear that economic/business growth should not be at a cost to the environment. Indeed, one organisation suggested the outcome “*be reworded to include “sustainable” in front of “business growth”, as growth in itself is not an appropriate indicator of success*.”

Timber

Respondents were supportive of the NWIP, TAS and TMS, although a number of individuals commented that they required further details on these strategies in order to comment. One respondent suggested that the review of the NWIP should involve consultation with external stakeholders, including local communities.

Specific issues on the timber strand were as follows:

* Softwood crop for the timber industry makes an important contribution to the rural economy, but sustainable economic development in rural areas requires a mix of business opportunities. FLS should support/encourage the development of commercial and sustainable hardwoods as well as softwoods. One respondent suggested that work should be undertaken to scope the potential for hardwood as a potential route to achieve timber productivity and support native productive forestry.
* FLS should emphasise the use of native species in planting and conservation strategies. One respondent suggested that *“mass planting of non-native evergreens should be severely limited to those parcels of land that are actively being worked for the wood harvest.”*
* Timber businesses highlighted the need to distinguish the needs of large and small timber businesses in the delivery documents, and to ensure they take into account the needs of small/rural businesses.
* FLS should revisit the role of woodland crofts, with a view to supporting the initiative.
* Work to decarbonise processing and logistics within the sector should be prioritised. This would include increased local processing of timber to reduce transportation and increased use of rail and sea as alternatives to road haulage – reducing 'timber miles'.

Tourism

Respondents appreciated FLS’s role in supporting tourism. The key points raised included the following:

* There was a view that people are drawn to areas by the landscape, including the forests and land; and that the facilities and “attractions” support and assist tourists and sports people, but may not be/were not be the reason they visit. Respondents suggested that FLS’s focus on supporting tourism should be wider – on caring for the Scottish landscape and the related tourism and recreation opportunities, rather than delivering ‘visitor attractions’ or ‘iconic views’.
* There was a view that FLS should not over-commercialise recreation to the disbenefit of the wider population. It was suggested that recreational access should be free for most users, with charges levied only for additional services, and parking charges should not be increased/introduced.
* Respondents suggested that FLS should work in partnership with other local/national tourism, heritage and conservation bodies to ensure delivery of this outcome.
* Respondents, especially those representing sporting organisations, suggested that there are opportunities for FLS to support rural economic development based on participation in outdoor sports, outdoor sports events, and outdoor sport and recreation related tourism.

Local economy

Several respondents questioned the extent to which economic/business objectives are compatible with environment objectives:

* Some, including timber organisations, commented that the timber industry makes an important contribution to the rural economy, and emphasised the importance of developing sustainable mixed economies in rural areas. This would include making land available for a range of economic activity such as softwood production, hardwood production, tourism, and recreation.
* Others noted that economic factors/income generation should not take precedence: Public land should be managed to benefit the environment and wider communities, not be focused on economic benefits at the cost of the environment. One respondent commented that “*this outcome must be carefully monitored to ensure that delivery is ecologically sustainable, as well as economically beneficial*”.
* Several respondents advocated supporting small-scale, rural/forest businesses, so as to increase local employment, and reduce transport costs/emissions.
* A few respondents made specific comments on **renewable energy.** The comments made were broadly supportive, but respondents noted that:
  + The scale, design and location of renewable energy provisions should be appropriate and not detract from the experience of wildness.
  + Renewable energy plant should not be located on ancient woodland or on other land where they are likely to have negative environmental impacts.
* Likewise, only a few respondents commented on the **venison** action. In particular, one respondent noted that venison sales are mentioned as a source of economic benefit, but queried how this would be sustained if numbers are reduced through culling.

*“An important outcome, clear and concise. It may be worth explaining what the planned Timber Access Strategy and Timber Marketing Strategy will involve.”* FLS staff

*“Supporting efforts to enable the sustainable transport of timber is welcomed as this has a disproportionate and negative impact on the rural road network. Modal shift to sea or rail is to be encouraged as is increased local processing which would help to add value within the local rural economy.”* Organisation

Outcome 2

Questions: To what extent do you agree with the following Outcome? To what extent do you agree the actions for delivery will be sufficient to deliver this Outcome? Please use this space to comment further.

**Outcome 2:**Scotland’s national forests and land are looked after; biodiversity is protected and enhanced and more environmental services are provided to people.

Most (64) of the respondents who answered the tick box question said they agreed with Outcome 2, with 35 saying they strongly agreed; while around a quarter (18) said they disagreed. Individuals’ views were polarised: around half said they strongly agreed, while around a fifth said they strongly disagreed.

Fewer respondents (48) agreed that the delivery actions would be sufficient to deliver Outcome 2. Most organisations and FLS staff agreed that the actions would be sufficient to deliver the outcome, although just two organisations agreed strongly; the views of individuals were more mixed.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Table 7: To what extent do you agree with Outcome 2? (#) | | | | |
|  | Total | Individuals | Organisations | FLS employees |
| Agree strongly | 35 | 20 | 9 | 6 |
| Agree slightly | 29 | 11 | 15 | 3 |
| Disagree slightly | 8 | 4 | 3 | 1 |
| Disagree strongly | 10 | 8 | 2 | - |
| Don't know | - | - | - | - |
| **Base** | **82** | **43** | **29** | **10** |
| **To what extent do you agree the actions for delivery will be sufficient to deliver this Outcome? (#)** | | | | |
|  | Total | Individuals | Organisations | FLS employees |
| Agree strongly | 12 | 7 | 2 | 3 |
| Agree slightly | 36 | 13 | 18 | 5 |
| Disagree slightly | 8 | 4 | 4 | - |
| Disagree strongly | 16 | 11 | 3 | 2 |
| Don't know | 8 | 7 | 1 | - |
| **Base** | **80** | **42** | **28** | **10** |

General

Respondents were broadly supportive of Outcome 2; they agreed with the underlying principles and ambition, considered they should be a key priority for the organisation, and felt that the outcome was framed clearly and concisely. Some suggested that this outcome could go much further, embrace more challenging goals and work within more realistic/longer time horizons. The general issues raised by respondents were as follows:

* Respondents were supportive of the consultative approach, and welcomed further education and consultation around the outcome. One individual in particular made the point that *“there is a need to actively work more closely with communities/businesses/schools etc. to develop more support in enhancing and protecting our environment.”*
* Some respondents commented that lack of resources was impacting on capacity to protect and enhance natural assets.
* Some respondents suggested that improving the existing condition of the native woodland should be explicitly stated as an action.
* Some respondents welcomed the inclusion of restoration of vacant and derelict land for woodland planting and wider beneficial use.
* Some respondents identified terms that would benefit from clarification within the context of the Outcome. In particular ‘resilience’ was highlighted – one respondent considered it related to environmental and economic resilience over the long term, another that it related to both climate change and tree health threats. Other terms respondents suggested need further clarification were ‘sustainable’, ‘woodland’ and ‘biodiversity’.
* Some respondents suggested further work to identify and develop clearer links to wider Scottish Government plans, policies and strategies such as the Peatland Action Plan.

Sustainable management

There was broad support from respondents for the commitment to protect and enhance biodiversity within the Plan. Many stressed the current position includes large areas of non-native monoculture, and welcomed the opportunity to diversify Scotland’s woodlands and forests.

* There was support for a holistic approach to managing the national forests and land at landscape scale. Respondents particularly welcomed references to habitat management and restoration, enhancement of biodiversity, and regional planning. One organisation suggested that “*a key action could include the development and implementation of a Biodiversity Strategy and/or Environmental Services Strategy”.*
* There was support for specific actions to conserve and restore peatlands.
* Some respondents supported collaborative working with other agencies or with adjacent ownerships to achieve better outcomes for biodiversity. One organisation suggested examples of collaboration on “*opportunity mapping, shared R&D, effective partnership working, catchment environmental projects, peat land, as well as restoration of vacant and derelict land for woodland planting*” and recognised that many other such examples could no doubt be identified.
* There was support for the commitment to effective management of invasive, non-native species, in particular, the Sitka Spruce. However, there were some concerns that insufficient priority or resources has been allocated to addressing the problem.
* Some respondents suggested that the Plan should have a stronger commitment to the long-term, sustainable development of the national estate.

Expanding forest and woodland area

There was support for the commitment to expand the forest and woodland area, although a number of respondents felt the target was not sufficiently challenging:

* There was support for a commitment to produce an updated programme of conservation action for priority species that are found on the national forest and land estate and a clear statement of how FLS will contribute to Scottish Government biodiversity and habitat restoration targets.
* There was also a strong commitment to the creation of broadleaf woodlands.
* Many respondents considered effective control of deer would have a positive impact on woodland growth. Key measures suggested included a review and implementation of a refreshed Deer Management Strategy; and locally-based, experienced staff within designated deer control areas to achieve effective forest protection. A number of respondents challenged FLS to maintain existing commitments on the use of non-lead ammunition and to move towards the creation of a ‘fenceless deer environment’
* There was support for the commitment to work in partnership in order to restore vacant and derelict land for woodland planting and wider beneficial use, although some suggested that more detail was needed on delivering biodiversity outcomes on open land.

Delivery landscape

Several respondents noted that the Plan states at section 7.0 Scotland has a diverse landscape and as such not all of the outcomes can be delivered across all of the FLS regions.

Respondents disagreed that outcomes should be applied differentially across the country and they queried whether this meant that a single direction of travel had been set for each region, rather than encouraging diverse approaches to land and forest management. One respondent commented that the map gave the misleading impression that each area would focus on a single dimension, whereas in practice, areas will be seeking to develop balanced land-uses, while some noted that the priorities applied to their local area were not acceptable.

One respondent said that the Plan should highlight local needs and the importance of FLS to the local economy. For example, some remote rural areas (e.g. Argyll and Bute) are especially dependent on FLS employment, and FLS performance will have a big impact on the local economy and wellbeing.

Increasing forest and woodland resilience

Respondents supported measures to increase the resilience of forests and woodlands. In particular they commented:

* There should be greater use of native tree species and a presumption against the use of non‑native species which present the risk of importing diseases and pests into the UK and are unlikely to support native species.
* There should be improved provisions within FLS plans to address specific challenges to tree health, such as larch disease, and emerging diseases such as ash and pine
* Planning should be undertaken to ensure forests and woodlands are sustainable and resilient to climate change. This would accommodate solutions such as peatland restoration and mainstreaming biodiversity within FLS policies and practices.
* There was strong support across the consultation to move away from reliance on a small number of commercial species, and a view that FLS should strive to support research and development of new ways to support a more sustainable and diverse forest industry.

Enhancing environmental benefits

Issues raised included:

* Building in consideration of environmental management, including biodiversity, improved water quality, flood management, at the design and planting stage, as well as when considering restructuring. One respondent suggested deforestation may be the solution in particularly environmentally sensitive areas where impacts on wider ecosystem services (e.g. carbon storage, water quality and regulation) would outweigh the benefit of producing timber crops.
* Respondents suggested taking actions to reduce the use of pesticides on the public forest and land estate.
* Respondents commented that management of soil carbon stocks is increasingly being seen as a critical component of mitigating climate change, and should be accommodated with the Plan.

*“The emphasis [in outcome 2] is on resilience and adaptation - we should be more committed to contributing to combatting climate change, i.e. more planting/peatland restoration.”* FLS staff

*“We strongly agree with the holistic view of the forest estate embraced in this outcome… The references to ‘collaborating with partners on integrated landscape-scale approaches to habitat management and restoration’ and ‘managing national forests and land to further the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity’ are particularly welcome.”* Organisation

Outcome 3

Questions: To what extent do you agree with the following Outcome? To what extent do you agree the actions for delivery will be sufficient to deliver this Outcome? Please use this space to comment further.

**Outcome 3:**

Everyone can visit and enjoy Scotland’s national forests and land to connect with nature, have fun, benefit their health and wellbeing and have the opportunity to engage in our community decision making.

Most (66) of the respondents who answered the tick box question said they agreed with Outcome 3, with 46 saying they strongly agreed. Just 14 said they disagreed.

Again, respondents were less likely to agree (44) that the actions would be sufficient to deliver the outcome, with just 9 agreeing strongly with this. Most organisation agreed that the actions would be sufficient, but the views of staff and individuals were mixed.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Table 8: To what extent do you agree with Outcome 3? (#) | | | | |
|  | Total | Individuals | Organisations | FLS employees |
| Agree strongly | 46 | 25 | 15 | 6 |
| Agree slightly | 20 | 8 | 9 | 3 |
| Disagree slightly | 8 | 5 | 2 | 1 |
| Disagree strongly | 6 | 4 | 2 | - |
| Don't know | 2 | 1 | 1 | - |
| **Base** | **82** | **43** | **29** | **10** |
| **To what extent do you agree the actions for delivery will be sufficient to deliver this Outcome? (#)** | | | | |
|  | Total | Individuals | Organisations | FLS employees |
| Agree strongly | 9 | 8 | 1 | - |
| Agree slightly | 35 | 11 | 19 | 5 |
| Disagree slightly | 17 | 10 | 4 | 3 |
| Disagree strongly | 12 | 8 | 3 | 1 |
| Don't know | 8 | 6 | 1 | 1 |
| **Base** | **81** | **43** | **28** | **10** |

General

Respondents were generally very supportive of Outcome 3. In particular, they appreciated the value FLS was placing on forests and land as a natural resource and a key contributor to health and wellbeing.

A number of other general comments were made:

* Some respondents were unsure about the word ‘fun’ in the Outcome text. One respondent commented “*Biodiversity is a statutory duty, health has major cost implications, fun is very nice but not a priority. What about access with responsibility and awareness?*”
* Some respondents suggested alternative uses for the FLS estates. For example, one respondent suggested that some land should be left undisturbed for wildlife, another that designated areas should be kept undisturbed as exemplar unique eco-systems.
* There were some concerns, typically from staff, that visitor services management was not core to FLS: that the service was ignored elsewhere in the organisation, and that resource requirements were a low priority.
* There was a widespread view that resources for education and visitor-facing services – in particular paths and trails – had been in decline. Respondents questioned whether FLS had the capacity to deliver the Outcome. One respondent commented, *“I agree with the vision but there are currently insufficient resources to maintain FLS facilities. To engage more people & communities will take additional time and effort – where are the resources to do this?”*
* Some respondents stressed that the provisions within this Outcome should focus on the core functions of FLS, in terms of community access, engagement and education; and not on developing visitor centres and servicing niche sports.

Management and access to visitor facilities and experiences

Respondents were broadly supportive of FLS managing forests and lands as a natural resource that supports a range of tourism and sports activities.

* A number of opportunities to encourage improved access were suggested, including: improved toilets, free parking, signage and mapping, vehicular access to open water, and trials to test new approaches to providing facilities (e.g. new ways of providing low-impact facilities for motor homes and campervans).
* Opportunities to further develop and promote access to outdoor sports on FLS land could be delivered through a dedicated strategy and (bilateral) partnerships.
* Respondents commented that improved transport access to FLS estates was needed: most estates are remote, with limited public transport options. One respondent commented that an alternative to people driving for miles to do a bit of mountain biking was required; another commented that “*Many rural communities are poorly served in terms of public transport and this limits opportunities for non-drivers to enjoy the many recreation facilities that are provided.”*
* Improved access within the estate was also highlighted, for example in terms of signage, and quality of paths.
* Several respondents specifically suggested increased provision for family huts and free campsites, following the Nordic model, as a way of linking people to the countryside and generating associated health benefits.

However, some respondents did feel the outcome was biased towards visitors, recreation and tourism, particularly in the introductory paragraphs, and should rebalance towards local communities, education and access.

Education

Many respondents identified education as a key feature of FLS’s work, with some noting with concern that education resources have been in decline. A range of education measures were suggested by respondents:

* Promoting and encouraging outdoor learning to schools, and particularly in disadvantaged areas, would enable more young people to enjoy and benefit from the FLS estate.
* Respondents noted the important role that Community and Education Rangers undertake in delivering outdoor learning and community engagement, especially with schools and local communities.
* It was suggested that an Outdoor Learning Strategy would be helpful.
* The role of volunteers in education could be explored and developed further.
* It was suggested that IT/social media could be used to enable and support wider public access to the forests.

Involvement/engagement

Respondents were supportive of the commitment to engage and consult with communities. Respondents emphasised the need to develop a strategic approach to consulting in a fair and transparent manner. There was an expectation that the Communities Plan would provide details on how communities would be properly consulted and engaged throughout the decision-making process.

Some staff raised concerns that engagement could result in special interest groups lobbying hard for their interests. It was suggested that supporting and encouraging wider community participation in consultation, and promoting outdoor learning and informed communities, might go some way to redressing this.

*“We believe that the opportunities for visiting and enjoying recreation within the national forests make a significant contribution to the health and wellbeing of people in Scotland.”* Organisation

*“The traditional view of tourism and recreational opportunities offered by FLS tends to focus on facilities e.g. paths, trails, centres. The natural environment should also be included e.g. flora and fauna, water quality, natural geology and integration with surrounding landscapes.”* Organisation

Outcome 4

Questions: To what extent do you agree with the following Outcome? To what extent do you agree the actions for delivery will be sufficient to deliver this Outcome? Please use this space to comment further.

**Outcome 4:**

FLS is a supportive, safe and inclusive organisation that provides exciting careers, professional development and strives to be an employer of choice.

Most respondents (45) who expressed an opinion said they agreed with the outcome, with the majority (32) agreeing strongly, while just eleven respondents said they disagreed with the outcome. None of the FLS staff and just two organisations disagreed with this outcome.

However a fairly large minority of respondents were unsure to what extent they agreed or disagreed with outcome 4 (21 of 77 said ‘don’t know’).

Overall, most respondents who expressed an opinion agreed that the actions for delivery would be sufficient. Again, however, a sizeable minority (28 of 71) were unable to give an opinion.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Table 9: To what extent do you agree with Outcome 4? (#) | | | | |
|  | Total | Individuals | Organisations | FLS employees |
| Agree strongly | 32 | 12 | 13 | 7 |
| Agree slightly | 13 | 10 | 1 | 2 |
| Disagree slightly | 7 | 6 | 1 | - |
| Disagree strongly | 4 | 3 | 1 | - |
| Don't know | 21 | 11 | 10 | - |
| **Base** | **77** | **42** | **26** | **9** |
| **To what extent do you agree the actions for delivery will be sufficient to deliver this Outcome? (#)** | | | | |
|  | Total | Individuals | Organisations | FLS employees |
| Agree strongly | 14 | 8 | 4 | 2 |
| Agree slightly | 15 | 7 | 6 | 2 |
| Disagree slightly | 8 | 6 | 1 | 1 |
| Disagree strongly | 6 | 4 | 1 | 1 |
| Don't know | 28 | 14 | 13 | 1 |
| **Base** | **71** | **39** | **25** | **7** |

General

Respondents generally welcomed Outcome 4. Health and Safety commitments were welcomed, although could potentially be stronger for visitors. There was also emphasis on the need for the FLS health and safety culture to be empowering rather than restrictive and an impediment to things like partnership working.

The key issues raised by respondents related to:

* The ongoing impact of the recent restructure. Linked to this, a small number commented that the new structure restricts career progression, partly due to staff being too stretched in new roles to have time to develop new skills.
* The need for an apprenticeship scheme to address the age profile of the staff body, which is currently very much skewed to older workers. More could be done to link apprentices with older staff close to retirement, so that expertise and knowledge can be passed on.
* Many respondents mentioned the need for a refresh of staff training, to better reflect the organisation’s outcomes and ethos. Areas such as biodiversity and access/recreation were mentioned in terms of staff training.

Issues

Some respondents considered the measures to be not bold enough, and made the following observations:

* Diversity objectives are not sufficiently ambitious for some, and should not be worded in terms of ‘trying’ to increase diversity, but worded as a stronger commitment instead.
* Whilst the commitment to diversity is welcomed, there is some sensitivity to any perceived suggestion of positive discrimination, and a desire for an equally clear commitment to recruiting the best people for the role.
* Provisions should be made to support workers both financially and practically e.g. bringing back forestry housing to relieve the costs and difficulty of moving and encourage people into areas that need staff.
* Reducing the organisation’s waste and resource use should be a higher priority.
* The plan is strong on what FLS wants to do, but needs more detail on strategies for how things will be delivered.

*“The listed key actions appear to be just about talking about what FLS wants to do and nothing about delivering it. Even over the short period of the plan it should be possible to prepare and start to implement a strategy.”* FLS staff

*“I look at the teams around me and majority of staff are close to retiring. The loss of knowledge and experience is huge if we don't have staff to learn from them before they retire… So much has been lost when the older generation leave forestry.”*  FLS staff

Outcome 5

Questions: To what extent do you agree with the following Outcome? To what extent do you agree the actions for delivery will be sufficient to deliver this Outcome? Please use this space to comment further.

**Outcome 5:**

FLS is recognised as a high performing, efficient and effective, financially sustainable organisation that continues to transform and adapt.

Most of the respondents (49) who answered the tick box question said they agreed with Outcome 5, either strongly or slightly, while around one fifth (14 respondents) said they disagreed with this outcome. None of the FLS staff and only five organisations disagreed with this outcome.

Although a majority agreed that the actions for delivery will be sufficient to deliver the outcome, over one quarter (18) disagreed. The strength of agreement was relatively weak too, with only 9 agreeing strongly.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Table 10: To what extent do you agree with Outcome 5? (#) | | | | |
|  | Total | Individuals | Organisations | FLS employees |
| Agree strongly | 25 | 11 | 9 | 5 |
| Agree slightly | 24 | 13 | 7 | 4 |
| Disagree slightly | 6 | 3 | 3 | - |
| Disagree strongly | 8 | 6 | 2 | - |
| Don't know | 12 | 7 | 5 | - |
| **Base** | **75** | **40** | **26** | **9** |
| **To what extent do you agree the actions for delivery will be sufficient to deliver this Outcome? (#)** | | | | |
|  | Total | Individuals | Organisations | FLS employees |
| Agree strongly | 9 | 4 | 2 | 3 |
| Agree slightly | 24 | 11 | 9 | 4 |
| Disagree slightly | 12 | 6 | 4 | 2 |
| Disagree strongly | 6 | 4 | 2 | - |
| Don't know | 16 | 8 | 8 | - |
| **Base** | **67** | **33** | **25** | **9** |

General

Many respondents noted they need sight of the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to comment effectively on governance, sustainability of outcomes and financial sustainability. Without seeing KPIs, it is hard for members of the public especially to judge whether the outcome is achievable. As it is, there was concern amongst some respondents that whilst the outcome was worthy, there was not enough detail on how it would be delivered.

The emphasis on financial sustainability concerned some, as they felt that it should not be considered in isolation from other aspects of sustainability. Care should be taken to ensure that success is measured against all outcomes, and that success against Outcome 5 (a financial outcome) does not take precedence over the others. There needs to be a balance of benefits for economy, environment and society rather than a ‘dash for cash’, as one respondent put it. Environmental sustainability should perhaps be mentioned in the outcome alongside financial sustainability. There needs to be clarity on whether the forests are being managed principally for profit or for wider environmental benefit, especially given the importance of trees in combating global warming.

The meaning of ‘financially sustainable’ needs to be set out more clearly so that it is transparent and shows how money is spent on a range of outcomes. The financial model needs to be clear e.g. where FLS is expected to make a profit or break even and where its activities are to be grant funded. Indeed, financial sustainability is perceived to be so tied in with other outcomes that there was some uncertainty about whether Outcome 5 was required as a separate outcome.

Governance

Key issues raised included:

* Collaboration and partnership working should be developed and promoted.
* Procurement processes are overly bureaucratic, and a barrier to contractors securing contracts with the organisation.
* The mention of ‘developing lots of strategies to meet Scottish Government policy requirements’ concerned some, suggesting excessive bureaucracy, a ‘top-heavy’ organisational structure and a focus on pleasing ministers rather than managing forests effectively.

Key actions

Key issues raised included:

* The importance of maintaining the FLS UKWAS accreditation, which is seen as underpinning everything FLS does. Some felt there could be more emphasis on this, possibly including a case study. Certainly, mention should be made of it earlier in the document.
* Customers need to be identified, and customer satisfaction needs to be measured. Customers should include the general public taking informal, unpaid-for access as well as those using paid-for services.

*“UKWAS certification is important to the organisation and the Scottish Government and influences virtually everything that FLS does. There should be more emphasis on the importance of UKWAS – it is not mentioned until page 24 of the draft Corporate Plan.”* FLS staff

*“It would be useful to set up a monitoring methodology in consultation with stakeholders, etc. as an action. The same stakeholders could be consulted at the end of this Corporate Plan period as part of a review of the relevance/validity of the KPIs in the light of 3 years’ experience.”* Organisation

Overview of outcomes

Question: To what extent do you agree the Corporate Plan provides a sufficient strategic overview of the types of work we will deliver over the next three years? Please use this space to comment further on the coverage of the outcomes.

Most (48) of the respondents who answered the tick box question agreed the Corporate Plan provides a sufficient strategic overview of the types of work FLS will deliver over the next three years, with 33 of these saying they agreed slightly. Around a third of respondents (27) disagreed. Just one staff member said they disagreed; views from individuals and organisations were more mixed.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Table 11: To what extent do you agree the Plan provides a sufficient strategic overview? (#) | | | | |
|  | Total | Individuals | Organisations | FLS employees |
| Agree strongly | 15 | 8 | 3 | 4 |
| Agree slightly | 33 | 15 | 13 | 5 |
| Disagree slightly | 14 | 8 | 5 | 1 |
| Disagree strongly | 13 | 8 | 5 | - |
| Don't know | 6 | 5 | 1 | - |
| **Base** | **81** | **44** | **27** | **10** |

Respondents were broadly supportive of the strategic direction, with some commenting that it was balanced or reasonable. Nonetheless, several respondents made suggestions for further developing the content, for example:

* Some felt that the Plan could have been more ambitious. For example, one organisation said *“we believe that this Corporate Plan will deliver ‘business as usual’ outcomes, which is fine, but in the context of what Scotland's environmental and forestry sector needs, something bolder and more ambitious would be much more welcome.”*
* Linked to this, some suggested the Plan timescale was way too short to accomplish the stated outcomes, and insufficient to address the range of ambitions that stakeholders might hold for the organisation.
* Some respondents noted that the Plan did not identify resources (staff and other) to deliver the outcomes, and there were concerns that may mean the organisation was under-resourced. One respondent was concerned that FLS may increase commercial activities in order to bridge this resource gap, with negative consequences for the environment and the general public.
* Some felt the Plan would benefit from increased clarity and detail, especially with respect to the delivery of the outcomes. Respondents were especially looking for information on/links to the underpinning strategies and policies (where relevant); action plans to support statements of intent; and detail on the KPIs that set out the baselines, targets, responsibilities, and how the monitoring will be undertaken and by whom.
* Respondents commented that some issues had been omitted (or not covered with sufficient detail/depth) within the Plan, for example:
  + Climate emergency: FLS’s role in delivering net-zero targets needs to be set out. Respondents expected detail in terms of an action plan, targets and monitoring.
  + Land: there was a view that the strongest emphasis within the Plan was on forestry and woodland; and considerations relating to land were not addressed in sufficient depth.
  + Historic environment: it was suggested the Plan would benefit from taking a broad view of landscape, heritage and environment that recognises the contribution the historic environment makes towards these outcomes.

*“The declaration of a climate emergency and the existence of an ecological emergency should inform the development of the final Plan, accepting the declaration came after this draft publication.”* Organisation

*“We welcome the innovative approaches described to develop ‘triple-bottom-line’ planning and accounting across economic, social and environmental aims. We suggest that FLS might consider providing more clarity on the balance and scale of work on each of these outcomes across the national forest.”* Organisation

Diversity and inclusion

Questions: Are there any key issues or opportunities we should consider to make sure that the Corporate Plan works for different equality groups or for people from different socio-economic backgrounds?

Do you think any of the outcomes or actions in the Corporate Plan will impact differently on people who share protected characteristics? (for example, in relation to their age, disability, gender, pregnancy/maternity, marital status, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, religion or belief).

**Diversity and inclusion**

We want to create an environment that is accessible, open and welcoming to people from all backgrounds and communities across Scotland – as a place to work, to visit and to participate.

We will continue to integrate Diversity & Inclusion into everything that we do by identifying and removing barriers, enabling us to build a more inclusive organisation services and facilities.

Most of those responding to the diversity and inclusion questions simply said they had no comments, or that they did not think there were additional opportunities or issues for people with protected characteristics/from equalities groups.

* Some suggested that clear targets for participation should be set and actively monitored within the KPIs as these are developed.
* It was considered important that communities are consulted and actively involved in the process – in designing the final Corporate Plan, to ensure the content, language and layout are accessible; in the development of KPIs to ensure the delivery plan and monitoring framework reflects equalities characteristics; and in the delivery actions.
* Some respondents suggested that FLS undertake research on the profile of users/on barriers to access relating to the protected characteristics and other potential barriers, such as income, access to transport, or perceptions of opportunity and risk. This analysis could be used to inform any actions required.
* Some respondents suggested that required interventions could be developed in partnership with other bodies (e.g. private land owners, private sector organisations, other public sector organisations).

Specific actions that need to be taken were identified as:

* Permitting access across the estate, and protecting it against being rolled back.
* Developing access for people in disadvantaged areas – for example drawing on the Cuningar Loop model, which successfully created a woodland area from derelict land in a disadvantaged urban area.
* Education and outdoor education targeted at young people and communities in disadvantaged areas.
* Developing/maintaining facilities and provision for older people and people with particular needs, such as toilets and paths.
* Supporting transport to the national forests and land: including parking provision and public transport.

*“For community engagement, it may be useful to explore how the agency can connect with both communities of place, and of interest, including those who for various reasons may not be currently well represented.”* Organisation

*“Host special consultation events, with consideration of access and barriers to participation across special protected characteristics such as gender, disability, race and ethnic background.”* FLS Staff

Final comments

Question: Please use this space to provide any other comments you think are relevant to the Corporate Plan.

The final comments reiterated those made previously. Respondents welcomed the opportunity to comment on the Draft Corporate Plan. They considered the document clear, concise and well written (some amendments to resolve minor grammatical errors notwithstanding). There was strong support for the direction set out in the plan: the commitments to manage reforestation, conservation and biodiversity; and the approach to manage the forest estates to encourage business growth and benefit the health & wellbeing of communities.

Ambition:

Respondents called on FLS to be bold and ambitious in the Plan. It was suggested that a five or ten year time horizon would accommodate a much more ambitious and challenging set of outcomes. In particular, respondents suggested this would include delivering re-foresting targets while securing biodiversity and conservation objectives, such as addressing/eradicating large-scale monoculture and expanding areas of native species including hardwoods, and restoration of peatlands.

Climate emergency:

Respondents suggested the Plan should focus more explicitly on FLS’s role in addressing climate change, including clear statements on the urgency of climate change in relation to forestry issues and the actions that FLS will undertake. For example: “*In the light of the current climate emergency, this strategic document ought to include a statement on the urgency of climate change in relation to forestry issues and what mitigation is proposed within FLS’s remit.”*

The timber industry in particular was looking for guidance on FLS’s long-term planting priorities for its estate, and how these might shift as a consequence of the Climate Emergency declaration.

Respondents also commented that they would have liked specific detail on FLS’s contribution to the Scottish Government net-zero carbon economy, both in terms of forest planning and operations/logistics.

Brexit:

Several respondents were concerned that the Plan did not reference the UK’s withdrawal from the EU. It was suggested that a more explicit and transparent approach to Brexit was needed, which identified the potential impacts, mitigations, and potential benefits.

Delivery:

Respondents were concerned that the Plan had included very little information on how the outcomes would be delivered: there were no delivery plans, action plans and/or performance indicators. One industry organisation (a representative group) said this made it difficult to comment on the outcomes. Some requested further consultation on these details, and especially on the KPIs (the measures and how they will be assessed), as they are being developed. For example, one organisation commented *“We note with concern the lack of KPIs and no commitment to produce more detailed implementation or delivery plans… We propose that FLS produces a delivery and monitoring plan within 12 months, with full stakeholder engagement on the setting of appropriate indicators, to enable future scrutiny of progress and action on the public estate.”*

*“Brexit, together with the climate emergency, will very likely be the source of the most radical rethink of land use subsidies policy and therefore require a more integrated approach to land use that brings together farming and forestry. It is reasonable to think that FLS will be expected to lead on this… the fact that there is no mention of this in the corporate plan is concerning.”* Organisation

*“A nice balance between developing an organisational identity and aiming to deliver real commitments.”* FLS staff

*“We are very pleased to see that you understand that the environment underpins our rural economy and that sound environmental management is fundamental to your operations.”* Organisation

*“The time period of the Corporate Plan is short. It is suggested it would be better if it [ran] for at least 5 if not 10 years with regular (biennial or triennial?) reviews and updates so it becomes a ‘living’, ‘evolving’, dynamic working document that continuously rolls over.”* FLS staff

*“The equation between afforestation and carbon sequestration needs to be considered at a much more local level, depending on the type of ground.”* Individual

*“We expect to see accompanying documents developed which set out how FLS will become a sectoral leader across all aspects of management of the national forest and land estate for the benefit of Scotland’s wildlife and people.”* Organisation

*“We are very disappointed that no details on monitoring and implementation are available at this stage for public discussion. This must be consulted on, so what process will be put in place to allow our input to these after this consultation?* Organisation

Technical appendix

Method and sampling

* The data was collected by public consultation.
* The target group for this research study was the general public and stakeholders.
* There was no target sample size, but an estimated final response of around 100 was anticipated.
* A total of 100 valid responses were received.
* The consultation ran from 28 May until 5 July 2019.
* The consultation was available to respondents on the FLS website, via the Citizen Space portal.

Data processing

* Our data processing department undertakes a number of quality checks on the data to ensure its validity and integrity of the responses received.
* Progressive was granted access to the FLS Citizen Space portal, and were able to download the all responses received through the portal. For questionnaire received through the Portal these checks include:
  + Responses are checked for duplicates where unidentified responses have been permitted.
  + All responses are checked for completeness and sense.
* A small number of responses were submitted directly to FLS. These were forwarded to Progressive as emails for processing. For these responses checks include:
  + All questionnaires are checked manually for completeness and sense. Any errors or omissions detected at this stage are referred back to the field department, who are required to re-contact respondents to check and if necessary, correct the data.
  + Rejected or problematic questionnaires are manually entered
  + A computer edit of the data carried out prior to analysis involves both range and inter-field checks. Any further inconsistencies identified at this stage are investigated by reference back to the raw data on the questionnaire.