



MINUTE OF MEETING

SOUTH OF SCOTLAND ENTERPRISE – BOARD MEETING 30 SEPTEMBER 2021 – HETLAND HALL, DUMFRIES

<p>Board Professor Russel Griggs OBE (Chair) Jane Morrison-Ross, Chief Executive Alistair Cameron Alan Daubney Helen Forsyth Duncan McConchie Lindsay McDowell Jeremy Sainsbury David Sulman Kate Rowell Hazel Smith Professor Sara Carter</p> <p>SOSE Senior Leadership Team Anthony Daye, Director of Finance & Corporate Resources John Evans, Director of Transformation & Development Karen Jackson, Director of Strategy, Partnerships & Engagement Bryan McGrath, Director of Place & Enterprise Martin Valenti, Director Net Zero</p> <p>Apologies: Scottish Government Official - Regional Economic Development Division</p>	<p>SOSE Attendees Claire Renton, Head of Area Operations Linsey McGillivray, Corporate Office (Minute taker) Fiona Sköller, Corporate Office</p> <p>SOSE Attendees by MS Teams Tracey Graham, Communications & Marketing Manager Susan Cannon, Corporate Governance Lead Kate Musgrave, Head of Area Operations Phil McCreadie, Head of Area Operations Stuart Thomson, Business Development Specialist Ros McArthur, Business Development Specialist</p> <p>Guests Galloway and Southern Ayrshire UNESCO Biosphere</p> <p>Guests by MS Teams Scottish Government Officials - Regional Economic Development Division</p>
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WELCOME, INTRODUCTION AND APOLOGIES

1. The Chair welcomed Board members and SOSE colleagues to the meeting. The Chair also welcomed Galloway and Southern Ayrshire UNESCO Biosphere, and those joining by MS Teams. Apologies were noted.

GUEST SPEAKER – GALLOWAY AND SOUTHERN AYRSHIRE UNESCO BIOSPHERE

2. A representative from Galloway and Southern Ayrshire UNESCO Biosphere gave a presentation on Scotland's first Biosphere in Dumfries and Galloway in which SOSE invested £1.9m over 5 years to support and assist the organisation to grow and strengthen its standing as a key influencer in the region.
3. Anthony Daye, Director of Finance & Corporate Resources noted that Biosphere and SOSE have worked well as partners across all aspects of business, and he was confident we would continue to see good progress going forward.
4. The following points were noted:
 - 1.

- Work with communities: Biosphere are concluding a number of significant community projects and are working with nine communities, engaging with their natural cultural heritage, supporting with building resilience, engaging with them and providing training and support with sustainability.
 - Working with young people: Biosphere are providing opportunities to work with young people and are building this in with local education providers.
 - Outcomes in the first year: the first twelve months have been very much a setting up period, recruitment has been on line during Covid and the core team was not fully in place until August. At the end of a five-year period Biosphere will be able to demonstrate the additionality.
 - National Galloway Park Association: Board membership straddles the Galloway Park Board and Biosphere Board, and they operate in harmony nationally and internationally.
 - UNESCO: It was commented that the framework put to UNESCO shows the infrastructure; forestry and tourism and it is interesting to show the integration with businesses, communities and sustainable activity rather than just tourism.
 - Additional funding: The Biosphere will never be self-funding and it is hoped that a more informed 10-year business plan which articulates clear objectives including the goal to bring in other funding can be brought back to the Board at a later date. SOSE can also start to look at other benefits added elsewhere such as the businesses that join Biosphere's accreditations scheme.
5. The Board thanked the Biosphere representative for attending the Board and for their presentation

DECLARATION OF INTEREST

6. A Board member declared an interest in ETGB Ltd and recused themselves for the second part of item 12. Another Board member declared interest, but the interest was confirmed as not being an issue.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

7. The minute of the meeting of 26 August Board was circulated and agreed with the below amendment which is to be inserted to the minute under A.O.B. and an insertion to the action log:

Discussion was held about progressing Board placements with operational staff. Consideration is to be given to Board members spending time working with operational staff in a geographical area or sector they are not necessarily familiar with (or an area of their expertise) which will help Board members foster their understanding of matters at an operational level.

Decision: *The minute of the previous meeting was agreed with the insertion above.*

ACTION LOG

8. The updated action tracker was noted.

CHAIR'S REPORT

9. The Chair informed of recent activity:

- A meeting with Kate Forbes MSP and Ivan McKee MSP took place. Thanks were given to the Board and congratulations were relayed.
- City of Culture – SOSE’s role has been one of strategic alignment in collaboration with all partners and leads, drives and co-ordinates the journey. It was not known if there was progression to the next round. SOSE’s resources include two staff members leading on this: Jayne Ashley, Head of Natural Capital and Mark Geddes, Strategy Manager, Cultural and Creative Capital who are doing an outstanding job.
- The Regional Economic Strategy was launched yesterday.
- Paracycling UCI world championships event launch –SOSE contributed £250k and the return will be substantial with huge television coverage and £5k in bed nights.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE’S REPORT

10. Jane Morrison-Ross, Chief Executive, informed of recent activity and gave an update to the Board on the organisation restructure. The Board were informed of the challenge to resource against the current workload and SOSE continued to recruit whilst under pressure to deliver. A full and robust discussion was held, and each Director gave an overview of their directorate. The SLT Report had been circulated.

***Decision:** The Board noted the restructure. The Board noted the regular SLT update.*

LUNCH BREAK

CIVTECH

11. Claire Renton, Head of Area Operations, informed the Board of the CivTech programme.

***Decision:** The Board noted the partnership SOSE has formalised with CivTech and the commitment to supporting up to five Challenges per year. The Board is supportive of a distinct fund to support SOSE’s commitment to the CivTech Programme.*

NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION

12. A Scottish Government representative gave background to the new 10 year National Strategy for Economic Transformation (NSET). Discussion included:

- The appetite for change and the green and circular economy – change was happening quickly.
- Implementation plan or guidance for best practice on policy strategies (e.g. Fair Work). Greater cross portfolio collaboration (ref Christie Commission work) – engagement has been positive, and changes are already being made. Key to successful delivery is that that the private sector also needs to take ownership.
- The setting up of the right regulatory framework for regional Councils.
- The delivery of objectives by 2030 and the infrastructure to deliver more objectives from 2030-40. The challenging strategy and financial position – Scottish Government will help find greater confidence and signalling for longer term investment and private sector involvement.
- Natural capital and the delivery of local solutions – Advisory Council and Ministers are mindful of different strategies in the landscape. The Economic Strategy will have detailed delivery plans included within it.
- The NSET is an economic strategy which will deliver to the 10-year Transition to Net Zero.

Decision: *The Board thanked the Scottish Government representative for their presentation and for their time and flexibility with a moving agenda. The NSET is critically important, and the Board appreciated the overview.*

Regional Economic Strategy Overview

13. Karen Jackson provided an overview of the Regional Economic Strategy (RES), reflecting on timelines and implications for SOSE. The timetable allows SOSE to move forward to deliver on regional ambitions and contribute to national ambitions. The RES has a delivery plan that captures collaboration. SOSE's own action plan will pick up on the respective actions for delivery under the RES.

Decision: *The Board noted the RES overview. Particular thanks were given to Karen Jackson, Garry Legg and the team for a remarkable job in achieving this in a short period of time.*

PROJECT FUNDING APPLICATIONS

14. The Board considered two project funding applications. Both of the proposals were agreed or agreed in principle.

“Details of projects funded, and their values are published by SOSE on a quarterly basis once all relevant contractual terms have been agreed. Please refer to the SOSE website for information on the Grant Funding that we have distributed. [SOSE - Accessing our information](#)”.

A JUST TRANSITION TO NET ZERO

15. Martin Valenti introduced SOSE's first Just Transition to Net Zero Action Plan which the Board were asked to endorse. Discussion was held around:

- The creation of a toolkit for all SMEs.
- The support for businesses with incentive-based conditionality which is in direct alignment with the RES.
- The close work of the dynamic cluster of teams within SOSE to build up knowledge base and to jointly review projects with conditionalities.

Decision: *The Board agreed the Just Transition to Net Zero Action Plan.*

FINANCE UPDATE

16. Anthony Daye, Director of Finance and Corporate Resources gave a Finance update for August and a revised autumn budget. Discussion included a plan to look at SOSE marketing and communications information on the website to ensure it is targeted in its messaging so that businesses understand what SOSE provides (including the provision of loans). A solution will be sought to enable the provision of loans which needs extra time and staff resource.

Decisions:

- *The Board noted the Finance update.*
- *The Board approved the alterations to original budget lines, the proposal to return £2.5m FT's at SBR and the challenge around the capital budget position with ongoing work to utilise the full budget.*
- *There was discussion around the promotion and uptake of the loans process and to be more targeted in our messaging of what SOSE provides. Work is already underway to address the*

points raised.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

17. Frequency of meetings – This was discussed and resolved out-with the meeting.
18. The Board were provided with an update on 3 projects which had received SOSE support.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

19. 30 September 2021 – 11.00 am to 3.00pm

PAPERS PROVIDED FOR INFORMATION:

- Biosphere
- Programme for Government
- Committee Updates:
 - RNHR Committee 02 September 2021
 - Shadow Workers Interest Committee 09 September 2021
 - Audit & Risk Committee 16 September 2021
- SOSE Board Forward Plan

Decision: *The Board noted the above papers provided for information.*