

APPROVED PUBLIC MINUTE OF MEETING

SOUTH OF SCOTLAND ENTERPRISE – BOARD MEETING

[Note: This public minute excludes wording removed in the interests of effective conduct of public affairs.]

23 OCTOBER 2025

Whithorn New Town Hall, 53 St John St, Whithorn, Newton Stewart DG8 8PD

<p>Board members in person Professor Russel Griggs OBE (Chair) Anna Austin Alistair Cameron via MS Teams Rory Christie Helen Forsyth Emma Guy via MS Teams Duncan McConchie Mary Thomson</p> <p>SOSE Senior Leadership Team in person Allan Harrow, Director of Business Enablement Karen Jackson, Director of Strategy and Insight Donna Marshall, Interim Director of Investment, Business and Entrepreneurship Martin Valenti, Director of Investment and Sustainable Enterprise</p> <p>Apologies Jane Morrison-Ross, Chief Executive Paul Winstanley Scottish Government Official – Regional Economic Development Division</p>	<p>Scottish Government in person Scottish Government Officials – Regional Economic Development Division</p> <p>Scottish Government via MS Teams Scottish Government Officials – Regional Economic Development Division</p> <p>External guests joining in person Representative from Building Futures Galloway Representatives from Wigwam Holidays</p> <p>SOSE Staff via MS Teams from offices Maureen Malone, Head of Governance and Assurance, Data Protection Officer Donna Mounce, Economic Infrastructure Development Specialist Paul Swarbrigg, Business Specialist</p> <p>SOSE Staff in person Kevin Dickson, Economic Infrastructure Development Specialist Nicola McArthur, Head of Finance Services Phil McCreadie, Head of Enterprise and Business Sharon Ogilvie, Enterprising Communities Manager</p> <p>SOSE Admin Staff in person Claire Barrett, Executive Assistant to Interim Director of Investment, Business and Entrepreneurship Linsey McGillivray, Executive Assistant to Chair – Minute Heather Unsworth, Executive Assistant to Director of Strategy and Insight</p>
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WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

1. The Chair welcomed Board members, guests and colleagues to the meeting. Apologies were noted as above. The meeting was declared quorate.

BOARD INTERNAL MATTERS

Approved at Board on 18.12.25

2. The private note of the previous internal matters item at the meeting on 20 August was approved.
3. A separate note was taken of this Board internal matters item.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

4. The Chair informed that a Board member had declared business connections with two funding applications. It was considered that these were indirect and would have no impact on discussions.

MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING AND ACTION LOG

5. The Minute of the meeting held on 20 August was approved with an amendment.
6. The Minute of the Ad Hoc Board meeting held on 25 September was approved.

Decision	The minute of the Board meeting held on 20 August was approved with one amendment: the replacement of a full stop with a comma in para 21 The Minute of the Ad Hoc Board meeting held on 25 September was approved. The Action log was noted.
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CHAIRS REPORT

7. The Chair informed Board of recent meetings and visits which included:
 - Center Parcs
 - Kight Ltd and the visit of Mairi McAllan, Cabinet Secretary for Housing
8. Discussion took place around housing challenges.
9. The Chair recapped on Committees:
 - Economics Committee had been formally ended.
 - Just Transition Committee formally ended earlier this year.
 - Lessons Learned Group intended to meet in the new year.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

10. The Director of Strategy and Insight informed Board of the Chief Executive's recent visits, issues and challenges which included:
 - Center Parcs
 - Scottish Government Growth Board
 - Arla's 50th Birthday Celebration
 - Natural Capital Innovation Zone Roundtable
 - Military Trading Policy
11. Legislative Competence and Delivery Scottish Government's National Small Producers Pilot Fund (SPPF)
12. A paper had been shared, and the Board was asked to support SOSE's participation in delivering the SPPF nationally and recommend to Scottish Government adoption of SOSE Small Funds Process utilising subsidy route of Minimum Financial Assistance across Scotland. This would mean that SOSE would receive £500k of Capital and £95K of Resource funding via Spring Budget Review.
13. The Director of Strategy and Insight informed that legislation allowed SOSE to work out-with the area as long as it benefitted communities within our area. SOSE wished to ensure Board was aware and comfortable with SOSE delivering this national fund. Scottish Government's Sponsorship Team had confirmed SOSE legitimately could deliver the fund,

and it aligned with strategy. The £0.5m fund would support small producers with grants of between approximately £1k to £10k.

14. It was noted it would be an opportunity to work with Scottish Enterprise and Highlands and Islands Enterprise and SOSE would be conscious to be transparent and fair.
15. Board members comments:
 - It was recalled that SOSE had great experience of previously administering the Wedding Fund but there were concerns around resource and to ensure further money was obtained for resource.
 - It was thought to be a great opportunity to work with key partners.
 - Suggestions were to ensure working with Scottish Agricultural Organisation Society Ltd (SAOS) and also with the Scottish Rural College (SRUC).
 - Board members were supportive of SOSE acting to deliver the fund nationally.
16. Questions were answered with information available at the time from Scottish Government.

Decision	Board members supported SOSE's participation in delivering the SPPF and recommend to Scottish Government adoption of SOSE Small Funds Process utilising subsidy route of Minimum Financial Assistance nationally across Scotland.
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17. Board members comments on the SLT Board Report
 - Performance Management – it was suggested not to collect data for numbers sake e.g. figures on entrepreneurship, innovation and digital capabilities. Consideration could be given to presenting some figures less regularly. The detailed staffing breakdown could be provided less regularly.
 - Board members would prefer to receive more detailed information where targets were falling behind – commentary could be provided along with risk notification.
 - A Board member appreciated the enquiries data being included in the Board report but would be keen to know what sectors people seeking support were from.
 - It was suggested Equality and Diversity reporting to come by exception only or to come annually.
 - Cyber reporting – it was thought this area got a lot of focus but it was not necessary to come every pack. It would be good to get context on how the numbers changed between the previous Board report and whether the risk was changing.
 - The new layout of Board papers was complimented upon.
18. The Director of Strategy and Insight informed that SOSE were developing targets and continued to improve.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

19. Making a Difference in the Machars
20. SOSE'S Enterprising Communities Manager provided a short highlight of the work that the Enterprising Communities Team had been supporting in the Machars which included:
 - The Whithorn Trust museum and visitor centre
 - Wigtown Community Hall
 - Community businesses e.g. Wigtown Festival Company
 - A Boathouse at the Isle of Whithorn
 - Wigtown Ploughman: a pub and restaurant.
21. The representative from Building Futures Galloway (BFG) attended to provide a presentation to Board members. Board members learned of the youth employability scheme to offer young people training in traditional construction skills and work on projects. BFG worked in partnership with local high schools and pupils were also given the opportunity to gain SQA qualifications.

22. The Chair commended Building Futures Galloway and the importance of their work for the community. The representative informed of the challenge of continuing with volunteers and SOSE's next recommendation was for Building Futures Galloway to recruit temporary trustees to assist as sustainability was a real concern.

PUBLIC BODIES CLIMATE CHANGE DUTIES

23. A copy of a letter from Cabinet Secretary for Climate Action and Energy, Gillian Martin MSP had been provided to Board members.

FUNDING APPLICATIONS

24. The Board considered funding applications.
25. *"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.*

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

26. Wigwam Holidays - external guests from Wigwam Holidays were in attendance and gave presentations.
27. Discussion took place around renewables, power, planning challenges and further development.
28. The guests gave thanks to SOSE as sustainability was central to everything they did.
29. The Chair thanked Wigwam Holidays for their presentation, their success story and informed them they were a prime example of rural resilience.

MONEY MATTERS

30. The Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) gave an overview of recent ARC meetings including:
- MTBIC project - the Director of Business Enablement would take over as Senior Reporting Officer (taking the reins from departing Director of Investment, Business and Entrepreneurship.)
 - The continuing benefit of advice from previous ARC Chair and Board member Viv Cockburn.
 - The suggestion that the Head of Finance Services attend Board to provide finance expertise across all items on the agenda.
 - It was noted that the number of politically related FOI requests had increased.
 - There had been in depth PESTELS/horizon scan.
31. The Head of Finance Services gave a detailed report on the finance position in September.
32. The Head of Finance Services and Director of Business Enablement were thanked for their work, and the Financial Report was noted.

Decision	The Board noted the Financial Report
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RISK MANAGEMENT UPDATE AND RISK APPETITE HALF YEAR REVIEW

33. Thanks were given to the Head of Governance and Assurance who attended via MS Teams and provided highlights and summary of the Risk Report including horizon scanning which had been shared.
34. The Board were asked to approve the proposed unchanged risk appetite for the next 6 months, were informed of the latest four Corporate Risks which were currently above risk

appetite and tolerance and were given an overview of the top Directorate Risks and major Project Risk Registers

Decision	Board: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reviewed and noted the refreshed Corporate Risk Register (CRR) for 2025-26.• Reviewed and noted the Directorate Red Risks and the Project Risk Registers.• Reviewed and noted the updated PESTELS (Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Environmental, Legal and Security) – for external environment scanning in 2025-26.• Reviewed and approved that no increases or decreases in risk appetite were required at this point.
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HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT

35. The Health and Safety Report had been circulated to Board members for information, and it was formally noted.

Decision	The Board noted the Health and Safety Report.
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A.O.B.

36. Borders College Building
37. Board members were assured that meetings had been held with partners and all feedback received had been positive.
38. Council budget savings and cuts
39. There was discussion around the impact of extensive cuts to community assets and services. There was concern of the risk to funding pots and that communities should not use community benefit from wind farms to fund the things that Councils stop paying for. There was great pressure on SOSE's Communities team and expectations should be managed whilst recognising capacity.

PAPERS FOR INFORMATION

40. The undernoted papers were provided for information:
- Forward plan
 - Approved Minutes of ARC 13.08.25

DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS

41. 18 December 2025 at Scottish Borders – venue to be confirmed.