

## 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.]**

**03 JULY 2025**

**The Old School Thornhill, Station Road, Thornhill DG3 5DF**

<p><b>Board</b></p> <p>Professor Russel Griggs OBE (Chair) Rory Christie Helen Forsyth Emma Guy (MS Teams) Duncan McConchie (MS Teams) Jane Morrison-Ross, Chief Executive Mary Thomson Paul Winstanley</p> <p><b>SOSE Senior Leadership Team</b></p> <p>Anthony Daye, Director of Investment, Business and Entrepreneurship Allan Harrow, Director of Business Enablement Martin Valenti, Director of Investment and Sustainable Enterprise</p> <p><b>Guests</b></p> <p>Representative of Kight Ltd</p> <p><b>Apologies:</b></p> <p>Anna Austin Alistair Cameron Kirsten Hannay Karen Jackson, Director of Strategy and Insight</p>	<p><b>Scottish Government</b></p> <p>Scottish Government Officials – Regional Economic Development Division</p> <p><b>Scottish Government via MS Teams</b></p> <p>Scottish Government Officials – Regional Economic Development Division</p> <p><b>SOSE Staff via MS Teams</b></p> <p>Isabel Conway, Strategy Manager Elaine Jackson, Business Development Specialist Sarah Kenhard, Enterprise and Business Manager Donna Marshall, Head of Economic Infrastructure Alex Stewart, Head of Sustainability Paul Swarbrigg, Business Development Specialist Paul Wheelhouse, Head of Energy Transition</p> <p><b>SOSE Staff in Person</b></p> <p>Claire Barrett, Executive Assistant to Director of Investment, Business and Entrepreneurship Chris Hammell, Enterprise and Business Manager Maureen Malone, Head of Governance and Assurance, Data Protection Officer Nicola McArthur Head of Finance Services 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 and there had been no declarations of interest.

## THE OLD SCHOOL THORNHILL

2. The Project Manager, Old School Thornhill attended Board to provide an update on the Old School Thornhill (OST) project to bring an old building back to life by transforming it into an innovative, design-led community asset – providing a space to benefit the village and local communities. The building now housed local businesses trading locally and internationally, had a community kitchen and garden, meeting rooms, hall space – it was part community centre, part business centre and part arts centre. The collective had plans for potential community housing, establishment of a local energy company, employment of a youth co-ordinator and to implement a place plan commissioned by the community council.
3. SOSE were thanked for their help, encouragement, understanding and brilliant partnership with their business advisor.
4. Board members applauded the exceptional business concept, innovation and community aspirations and saw Old School Thornhill as a showcase community hub.

## BOARD INTERNAL MATTERS AND CHAIR'S REPORT

5. The private note of the previous internal matters item at the meeting on 09 May was approved.
6. A note was taken of the Board internal matters items and the Chair's Report.

## MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING AND ACTION LOG

7. The minute of the meeting held on 09 May was approved. The Action log was noted.

<b>Decision</b>	The minute of the meeting held on 09 May 2025 was approved.
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## CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

8. The Chief Executive informed the Board of recent visits, issues and challenges:
  - Thanks were given to Board members and SOSE colleagues for their time and organisation of the Team SOSE Day when colleagues discussed the drivers for change for the future, objectives and ambitions.
  - Public Sector reform meetings continued, and questions centred round headcount reduction, shared services etc, engagement and feedback would continue.
  - DFM Investment Roundtable - work to capture value of opportunities to South of Scotland.
  - SCAMP launch – Stranraer, the marine opportunities and Solway coast regeneration.
  - Langholm – collaboration with SLC, Crofting Commission, CES, Langholm on crofting, land use and the masterplan to tackle access to housing, small holding, young and new entrants to agriculture etc.
  - Flexible working pilot – confirmation from Scottish Government was awaited, but the pilot may end in August with a two-month transition time. SOSE would retain flexible working patterns and may transition from the pilot 32 hours back to a 35 hour week.
  - Borders Chamber Leadership dinner.
  - A positive RSA housing session.
  - The consideration of support to bid for Region of Culture 2029.

## DELIVERING ON OUR FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES – HYDROGEN AND CLEAN POWER

9. SOSE's Head of Energy Transition provided an update on Hydrogen and Clean Power and priority areas for SOSE.
10. SOSE had worked successfully to secure 2 of Scotland's 14 Regional hydrogen Hubs and had held several brokerage and innovation events.
11. The Board were informed of:
  - Hydrogen Production at Chapelcross
  - The HyLion E- Methanol project at Lockerbie
  - The Borderland Energy Investment Programme.

*Duncan McConchie left the meeting*

## **UPDATE KIGHT POWER HUB**

12. SOSE's Enterprise and Business Manager gave background to SOSE's involvement with Kight. The Head of Economic Infrastructure joined the meeting via MS Teams as did Scottish Government's Team Leader, South of Scotland Economy.
13. The Director of Kight Ltd gave a presentation on Kight's journey, its vision, mission and product.
14. The Board were interested in the unique Power Hub product and its ability to store energy when prices were low and for the energy to be used when prices peaked which would help households thrive in a dynamic decentralised grid. There was great potential and opportunity for a factory to be located in Dumfries and for Kight suppliers to be located there.
15. Board members comments included:
  - The use of the product – the product was autonomous so property owners with the battery installed will not have to input to the operating system. There would be an app to provide information on Co2 saved, electricity usage and costs but the transitions between solar and grid were seamless.
  - Overall cost and the cultural challenge – organisations buying the product would require guidelines about expectations and asset purchases could be spread.
  - There was discussion around recyclability – the batteries would last in excess of 25 years and were recycled in Finland. There were fundamental upsides in the chemistry of the battery and recycling.
16. Board members found the social element interesting, and it was confirmed that the battery could be integrated with complete housing solutions such as ground source heating.
17. The Director of Investment and Sustainable Enterprise highlighted the work that had been done with Kight and SOSE; in addressing the market, analysing the strategy and bringing together the supply chain and communicating with contacts in Japan.
18. The Director of Kight Ltd was thanked for his presentation. They expressed gratitude for SOSE's unique support.

## **FUNDING APPLICATIONS**

19. The Chair commented on the format of funding papers going forward. An email had been circulated to Board members seeking their comments.
20. The Board considered funding applications.
21. *"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's Enterprise and Business Manager left the meeting.*

## **MONEY MATTERS**

22. The Head of Finance Services and Director of Business Enablement were thanked for their work, and the Financial Report was noted.

<b>Decision</b>	The Board noted the Financial Report
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## HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT

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

<b>Decision</b>	The Board noted the Health and Safety Report
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## DRAFT BOARD ANNUAL REPORT

24. There were discrepancies in the draft Board attendance figures, and these would be corrected.

## BOARD STANDING ORDERS

25. The Director of Business Enablement informed that a commitment was made to review the Board Standing Orders. The Standing Orders were presented to the last meeting of the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC), and they had been agreed.  
26. SOSE's Head of Governance and Assurance attended the Board in person to highlight the key changes and inform that the Standing Orders would be routinely reviewed every two years.  
27. The Chair of ARC added assurance that ARC had reviewed and were content with the Standing Orders and the Director of Business Enablement assured that proper process in updating had been followed.

<b>Decision</b>	The Board approved the revised Board Standing Orders and agreed to the Standing Orders being reviewed every 2 years.
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## MAKING A DIFFERENCE

28. SOSE's Strategy Manager attended the meeting via MS Teams to provide an update on the Housing and the Action Plan that was launched almost a year ago. SOSE's role was instrumental in driving delivery and progress with partners.  
29. Further discussion was around the systemic housing issues, an affordable better rental system, better methods to heat homes and a community-led housing system. There was a need for innovative construction of affordable housing.  
30. The working relationship with the Councils had been very good, and Councils were committed through their housing emergency action plan to look at their housing and planning processes. Both Scottish Borders and Dumfries and Galloway Councils had increased resources in planning departments of late.  
31. Board members suggested tracking the resource put into this.  
32. Thanks were provided to SOSE's Strategy Manager, and she was congratulated on the good work of the SOSE Team for their work with both the Councils.  
33. The Chair informed of:

- The Lochside housing initiative
- A visit to Lord Haughey to look at his housing construction method.
- The Cabinet Secretary for Housing was intending to visit the area in the summer.
- Discussions with VASO were underway.

## **PAPERS FOR INFORMATION**

34. The undernoted papers were provided for information:

- Standing Orders Appendix A
- Minute of People and Organisational Development Committee 12.03.25
- Annual Reports 24-25
  - People and Organisational Development Committee
  - Just Transition Committee
  - Audit and Risk Committee
- Forward plan.

## **DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS**

35. 20 August 2025 at Hawick tbc.