

Consultation Title	<b>Draft 2020-2023 Corporate Plan consultation</b>
Date	<b>25/11/19</b>
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Scottish Land & Estates (SLE) is the voice of rural businesses throughout Scotland. We are a membership-based organisation representing a wide range of rural businesses, including farmers, foresters, tourism operators, housing providers, leisure companies, and renewable energy providers. We welcome the opportunity to contribute to this consultation.

We have restricted our answers to the areas most relevant to our wider membership, particularly those questions relating to the rural estates.

### **The Organisation**

**1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the draft Corporate Plan provides a good introduction to the purpose, organisation and structure of Crown Estate Scotland?**

SLE considers that the draft Corporate Plan provides a good and full introduction to the purpose, organisation and structure of Crown Estate Scotland. We consider it a sufficiently transparent model that allows any interested party a thorough understanding of the Crown Estate Scotland. Sections 4.2 – 4.6 are particularly useful in understanding the Crown Estate Scotland's objectives.

It may be worth considering how to make some of the wording in the plan more accessible. For example, there is frequent use of acronyms such as KPI and GW renewables etc., which might be acceptable for those already familiar with these terms but are not necessarily understood by the wider public. Perhaps a glossary of terms would be helpful in this respect.

### **Strategic direction**

**2. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the draft Corporate Plan clearly sets out the long-term direction of Crown Estate Scotland in line with the core purpose of 'investing in property, natural resource and people to generate lasting value for Scotland'?**

It is quite clear from the draft plan the Crown Estate Scotland is committed to investing in property, natural resource and people. This is clearly demonstrated by the actions relating to each strategic objective.

SLE considers there is greater scope to include reference to objectives that will help deliver an inclusive, net-zero economy as set out by the Just Transition Commission. Understandably, the move to net-zero carbon emissions for the Scottish Crown Estate would not be achievable within the lifetime of this Corporate Plan, but it can still be a recognised long-term ambition.

**3. The coastal assets are particularly diverse and many different stakeholders use them. We are keen for your views on how we can ensure they are managed to promote and deliver**

**To what extent do the coastal actions reflect the importance of coastline? To inform your answers, please refer to Section 4.2.3 and the full list of coastal actions in Annex 6.**

We consider these potential business plan targets to be sufficient to deliver the objectives. While we welcome the recognition of boat-based tourism in this section it is worth considering that coastal areas will also play host to tourism accommodation and facilities that are not boat-based.

- 4. Action 16 states that we are developing a flexible package of support for communities, particularly those in coastal areas. This will link to our responsibility to manage land and property in a way that delivers social, economic and environmental benefits. The intention is that this package will plug a gap in existing support rather than duplicate what is available already.**

**In relation to coastal communities and how they use land and property, please tell us if you are aware of any gaps in existing support that should be addressed as a priority? (The support may be, for example, advice, expertise or financial help.) To inform your answers, please refer to Section 4.2.3 and the full list of coastal actions in Annex 6.**

None.

- 5. Strategic objective 2: Develop built environment that strengthens communities and benefits businesses.**

**To what extent do you agree or disagree that the actions for delivery will be sufficient to deliver this objective? To inform your answer to this question, please refer to Section 4.3.**

SLE welcomes the broad actions outlined in relation to strategic objective 2 to develop built environment that strengthens communities and benefits businesses. We are particularly encouraged to see a focus on partnership working across private, public and third sectors and the embedding of this collaborative approach through the adoption of the Place Principle.

One point we feel worth raising relates to the potential business plan targets for actions 19 and 20 which are both to “increase land and property values”. While we consider this to be a legitimate business target, it could potentially raise a question over compatibility with Scottish Government’s wider agenda in relation to land value uplift and the deliverability of sustainable public interest lead development. It might be worth explaining that “value” in this circumstance has more than just a financial meaning, i.e. social and cultural etc.

SLE strongly welcomes Actions 22, 23 and 25 (Annex 7) and their related business plan targets. These closely match our own aspirations for rural businesses that we have outlined in our [#Route2050 – A direction of travel for Scottish land management to 2050](https://www.scottishlandandestates.co.uk/our-work/route2050) (<https://www.scottishlandandestates.co.uk/our-work/route2050>). In it, we highlight the need to; enhance productivity and efficiency; improve understanding of carbon footprint and ways to reduce it; and increase access to skills and knowledge training etc. Like Crown Estate Scotland, SLE is keen to see greater focus on soil health and management; increased knowledge exchange and more uptake

of skills training; integrated crop management; and investment in applied research as we are of the view that this approach will deliver business resilience and efficiency as well as environmental benefits. We would welcome the opportunity to work with Crown Estate Scotland, particularly on the development of pilot schemes around these themes.

We also welcome Action 27 of Annex 7 which effectively embeds best practice on community engagement in increasing local involvement in the decision-making process. SLE would also welcome the opportunity to work with Crown Estate Scotland in developing this work.

**6. Strategic objective 2: Develop built environment that strengthens communities and benefits businesses**

**To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed targets are appropriate? To inform your answer to this question, please refer to Section 4.3.**

The proposed targets are generally appropriate. As above, while the target to increase land and property value is perfectly legitimate from a private business perspective, we suggest a wider definition of value is applied here.

**7. Strategic objective 3: Invest in innovation and work with tenants to enable sustainable resource use**

**To what extent do you agree or disagree that the actions for delivery will be sufficient to deliver this objective? To inform your answer to this question, please refer to Section 4.4.**

Welcome the actions in this section. While Action 24 sets out the importance of research in the sustainability of wild fisheries, there is perhaps also a role for Crown Estates' rural estates to play in facilitating research on productivity and sustainability which is perhaps not already explicit in this section. It is our view that our research institutes perform an important role in underpinning policy and practical land management and this role will only become more important. We will need researchers and land managers to be working more closely together if we are to achieve our aspirations for land management for our rural industries.

**8. Strategic objective 3: Invest in innovation and work with tenants to enable sustainable resource use**

**To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed targets are appropriate? To inform your answer to this question, please refer to Section 4.4.**

These targets are appropriate.

**9. Strategic object 4: Build partnerships for people and the planet**

**To what extent do you agree or disagree that the action for delivery will be sufficient to deliver this objective? To inform your answer to this question, please refer to Section 4.5.**

These actions, particularly action 15, will help to deliver sustainable development, and we welcome the other action points in relation to community engagement and empowerment. SLE would welcome the opportunity to work with Crown Estate Scotland on this aspect.

**10. Strategic objective 4: Build partnerships for people and the planet**

**To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed targets are appropriate? To inform your answer to this question, please refer to Section 4.5.**

These are appropriate targets. We look forward to further details on the programme to be launched in relation to action point 15.

**11. Strategic objective 5: Develop and deploy our people's expertise to deliver value and success**

**To what extent do you agree or disagree that the actions for delivery will be sufficient to deliver this objective? To inform your answer to this question, please refer to Section 4.6.**

Generally, accept these actions. There could be more emphasis placed on embedding community engagement into staff culture so that when undertaking all actions, staff think about community engagement in the same way that they would health and safety. This is outwith the official 'community engagement strategy'.

**12. Strategic objective 5: Development and deploy our people's expertise to deliver value and success**

**To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed targets are appropriate? To inform your answer to this question, please refer to Section 4.6.**

Welcome the targets but would also like to see the inclusion of our answer to question 13.

**13. Investment Strategy**

**To what extent do you agree or disagree that the Investment Strategy successfully balances activity required to raise funds with ambitions for reinvesting? To inform your answer to this question, please refer to Section 5.**

This seems reasonable.

**14. Investment Strategy**

**To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed criteria in Section 5.2 meet our obligations in the Act to deliver sustainable development, regeneration, economic development, social well-being and environmental well-being?**

This is suitable.