

Banff and Buchan Community Council Forum

Crudie School, Crudie

Tuesday 12th March 2013, 7pm

Local Development Plan Process and the Identification of Main Issues

This meeting was attended by a number of members from Community Councils throughout Banff and Buchan and local councillors for the area. A total of 5 Community Councils were represented at the meeting from a total of 12 in Banff and Buchan. Piers Blaxter (PB) the Policy Team Leader presented the meeting and was available to answer questions throughout the session. Nicola Malone, the Policy Planner for Banff and Buchan took a note of the meeting.

Overview

PB gave a presentation on the timeline and processes involved with the new LDP, and identified why there is already a need for a new LDP. The Policy Team have already identified potential 'main issues' and these were discussed throughout the session with input from the attendees. PB encouraged Community Councils to suggest further main issues and communicate them to the Policy Team in the next few months.

Issues Raised

Concern was expressed that the proposed time period for representations to the Main Issues Report was too stringent and 1st February 2014 does not take into account the festive period and infrequent meetings of some of the Community Councils. PB expressed an understanding of this and ensured that any reasonable requests for time extensions for Community Councils will be considered.

There was discussion surrounding the possibility of policy being put in place to safeguard the traditional layout and characteristics of fishing villages within Aberdeenshire. The lanes within these villages are of particular significance and development can sometimes cut these off as they are not identified as specific 'rights of way'. PB responded that policy SG LSD2: Layout, siting and design of new development is in place to prevent development damaging existing characteristics and this policy should be utilised in such cases to preserve the lanes. PB advised that it could be a possibility to clarify the safeguarding of these lanes as a planning objective within settlement statements if required.

A question was raised about whether the introduction of a 'bedroom tax' will lead to an increase in one bedroom houses being built to protect people in Aberdeenshire from the tax in the future. PB explained that whilst this is a sound suggestion, it is unlikely that this would happen. Building one bedroom houses would not always be viable and this is a wider issue that the Scottish Government should address.

Concern was expressed that whilst it is anticipated that wind energy will be a main issue, there has been no mention of off-shore wind issues for inclusion within the LDP. PB explained that the LDP only covers land-use planning and does not cover the sea. He explained that the LDP will encompass on-shore wind but off-shore wind developments are dealt with by marine planning and a different framework. It is understood that Fraserburgh Community Council have already been consulted on the Moray Firth off-shore wind farm so Community Councils still have the opportunity to comment on off-shore wind proposals, although not through the LDP.

PB thanked the attendees for their time.