



8 February 2017

To : Members of Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee

**Climate Change Plan (RPP3) - Concerns raised by the community sector**

In November 2016, twenty community sector leaders met to consider the Scottish Government's proposed Climate Change Plan and more specifically, to explore how community action on climate change could be incorporated into the Plan. As a result of this meeting, a paper (attached as appendix) was submitted to the Scottish Government describing the significant contribution that communities can make in this respect, and how this can be nurtured and built upon into the future.

While we can see much in the draft Plan that is ambitious - it describes the sort of low carbon future that we all want to see for Scotland - we are disappointed that the Plan shows little regard for, or knowledge of, the role that communities will be required to play if any of this ambition is to be realised.

The community Empowerment Agenda is currently front and centre of many areas of Scottish Government policy but none of this appears to be joined up with the specific challenge of tackling climate change. For instance, the Climate Challenge Fund (CCF) is just one relatively minor stream of community investment currently being committed by the Scottish Government. By only referencing CCF funding in relation to community action, the Plan gives the impression of sitting entirely within a policy silo and as such inevitably restricting any potential impact.

We find it difficult to comment directly on the Plan because there are so few points within it that are directly inviting of community engagement. Partly because of this we nonetheless have three key proposals:

1. We ask Scottish Government to commit to working closely with community sector organisations towards a better collective understanding of how climate action can be integrated across all aspects of the evolving Community Empowerment agenda.
2. Recognise the wider contribution that Local Place Plans (see Places, People and Planning - a consultation on the future of the Scottish planning system) have to play beyond the planning system so that they embrace all aspects of civic life and become a foundation stone of a renewed system of local democracy.
3. We call on the Scottish Parliament to approve the creation of a Cross Party Group on Climate Change.

Scotland's community sector operates primarily in the 'social' sphere of the ISM model of behaviour change. We have a unique reach in terms of connecting with individuals and whole communities in ways that are far beyond the public or private sector. We believe Government needs our sector every bit as much as we need Government to act in ways that enable communities to fulfil their potential.

We offer to attend any meeting of your Committee in the course of its consideration of the Plan.

Angus Hardie, Director, on behalf of many SCA member organisations

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