

Rural Affairs, Islands and Natural Environment Committee

5th Meeting, 2022 (Session 6), Wednesday, 9 February

National Planning Framework 4

Background

1. The National Planning Framework (NPF) is a long-term spatial plan for Scotland up to 2045 that sets out where development and infrastructure is needed.
2. As members will be aware, the [draft NPF4 document](#) was laid on 10 November and Parliament has 120 days to consider, report and debate. The Local Government, Planning and Housing Committee (LGPHC) is co-ordinating parliamentary scrutiny on behalf of a number of committees whose remits are impacted by planning. The LGPHC issued a call for written views that closed on 10 January and committees have been asked to provide written comments to the LGPHC within 81 days, by Thursday 24 February.
3. The Committee received an informal briefing on NPF4 from Scottish Government officials at its meeting on 15 December. The Committee agreed at that meeting to consider and pursue the issues raised in responses to the LGPHC call for views with the Cabinet Secretary in an evidence session on 9 February. Subsequently, the Cabinet Secretary and the Minister for Public Finance, Planning and Community Wealth agreed to attend the evidence session.
4. Representatives from the Committee will also attend sessions hosted by Scottish Rural Action and Rural Housing Scotland at an engagement event LGHPC is undertaking on Monday 7 February. After this session, but ahead of the evidence session with the Cabinet Secretary and Minister on 9 February, clerks will circulate a brief note of key points discussed at this event and the Members attending will be able to add their own reflections at the evidence session.

Next Steps

5. A draft letter will be prepared highlighting the issues explored by the Committee at the evidence session with the Cabinet Secretary and Minister. The Committee will consider this at its meeting on 23 February.
6. Any areas of concern identified through the call for views can also be incorporated into the Committee's longer-term work programme. Whilst this scrutiny would not

be in time to influence the final NPF4 document, it would, however, give members more time to effectively explore and scrutinise a policy issue and provide fully evidenced conclusions and recommendations.

**Rural Affairs, Islands and Natural Environment Committee clerks
February 2022**