LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

AGENDA

16th Meeting, 2017 (Session 5)

Wednesday 24 May 2017

The Committee will meet at 10.00 am in the James Clerk Maxwell Room (CR4).

1. **Post-legislative scrutiny of the High Hedges (Scotland) Act 2013**: The Committee will take evidence from—

   Kevin Stewart, Minister for Local Government and Housing, Paul Cackette, Chief Reporter, and Julie Robertson, Policy Officer, Scottish Government.

2. **Post-legislative scrutiny of the Disabled Persons’ Parking Places (Scotland) Act 2009**: The Committee will take evidence from—

   David Brown, Service Manager, Network Management, Fife Council;

   Campbell Dempster, Roads Service, and Mark Henry, Roads Service, North Ayrshire Council;

   Assistant Chief Constable Wayne Mawson, and Chief Inspector Mandy Paterson, Police Scotland.

3. **Subordinate legislation**: The Committee will consider the following negative instruments—

   The Town and Country Planning (Fees for Applications and Deemed Applications) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2017 (SSI 2017/120);

   The Town and Country Planning (Fees for Applications and Deemed Applications) (Scotland) Amendment (No.2) Regulations 2017 (SSI 2017/149).

4. **Annual report**: The Committee will consider a draft annual report for the parliamentary year from 12 May 2016 to 11 May 2017.
5. **Consideration of evidence (in private):** The Committee will consider the evidence heard at agenda items 1 and 2.

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The papers for this meeting are as follows—

**Agenda item 1**

Note by the Clerk | LGC/S5/17/16/1
PRIVATE PAPER | LGC/S5/17/16/2 (P)

**Agenda item 2**

Note by the Clerk | LGC/S5/17/16/3
PRIVATE PAPER | LGC/S5/17/16/4 (P)

**Agenda item 3**

Note by the Clerk | LGC/S5/17/16/5

**Agenda item 4**

Local Government and Communities Committee Annual Report 2017 | LGC/S5/17/16/6
Local Government and Communities Committee

16th Meeting 2017 (Session 5), Wednesday 24 May 2017

Post-Legislative Scrutiny of the High Hedges (Scotland) Act – Note by the Clerk

Purpose

1. This paper provides background information on the Committee’s evidence session with local authorities as part of its post-legislative scrutiny of the High Hedges (Scotland) Act 2013.

Background

2. At its meeting on 1 February 2017, the Committee agreed its approach to the work it wished to undertake as part of post-legislative scrutiny of the High Hedges (Scotland) Act 2017.

3. On 6 February 2017, the Committee launched a call for written views from all interested individuals and organisations on how they feel the Act is working. The call for views ran until 20 March 2017 and the Committee received 62 submissions in total. The written submissions can be viewed at the following link:


4. A summary of the written submissions received was also produced and can be found at the following link:


Local Government and Communities Committee Consideration

5. At its meeting on 19 April 2017, the Committee held a roundtable evidence session with a number of individuals who had responded to the Committee’s call for views.

6. The Official Report (substantially verbatim transcript) of that meeting can be found at the following link:

7. At its meeting on 10 May 2017, the Committee took evidence from representatives from Aberdeen City Council, Fife Council and Perth and Kinross Council.

8. The Official Report (substantially verbatim transcript) of that meeting is available at the following link:


9. At its meeting on 17 May 2017, the Committee took evidence from Mark McDonald MSP, the Member who introduced the High Hedges (Scotland) Bill in 2012.

10. The Official Report (substantially verbatim transcript) of that meeting will be available by 6.00 pm on 19 May 2017 at the following link:


11. At its meeting on 24 May 2017, the Committee will take evidence from the Minister for Local Government and Housing.

Next Steps

12. Following the evidence session with the Minister on 24 May 2017, the Committee will consider the evidence received before deciding on its next steps as part of its post-legislative scrutiny of the High Hedges (Scotland) Act 2013.
Purpose

1. This paper provides background information on the Committee’s post-legislative scrutiny of the Disabled Persons’ Parking Places (Scotland) Act 2009.

Background

2. At its meetings on 1 and 8 February 2017, the Committee agreed its approach to its post-legislative scrutiny of the Disabled Persons’ Parking Places (Scotland) Act 2009.

3. On 6 February 2017, the Committee launched a call for written views from all interested individuals and organisations on how they feel the Act is working. The call for views ran until 20 March 2017 and the Committee received 17 submissions in total. The written submissions can be viewed at the following link:


Local Government and Communities Committee Consideration

4. At its meeting on 8 February 2017, the Committee agreed to hold an initial scene-setting evidence session with a number of organisations. At its meeting on 29 March 2017, the Committee took evidence from representatives from Aberdeen City Council, the Scottish Disability Equality Forum and the Mobility and Access Committee for Scotland.

5. The Official Report (substantially verbatim transcript) of the meeting on 29 March 2017 can be found at the following link:


6. Following the evidence session on 29 March 2017, the Committee agreed to hold further evidence sessions with supermarkets and private car park operators. At its meeting on 17 May 2017, the Committee took evidence from Tesco and
NCP. The Official Report (substantially verbatim transcript) of the meeting on 17 May will be available by 6.00 pm on 19 May 2017 at the following link:


7. At its meeting on 24 May 2017, the Committee will take evidence from representatives from Fife Council, North Ayrshire Council and Police Scotland. Written submissions from Fife Council and North Ayrshire Council are attached at Annexe A.

Next Steps

8. Following the evidence session on 24 May 2017, the Committee will consider the evidence received. The Committee will then take evidence from Jackie Baillie MSP, the Member who introduced the Disabled Persons’ Parking Places (Scotland) Bill in 2008 and then from the Minister for Transport and the Islands.
Written Submission from Fife Council

Q1. Do you think the Act has achieved its aim of preventing disabled person’s parking spaces being used by those who are not entitled to?

Perhaps individual stakeholders or Disability Groups would be better placed to give an opinion on the level of success the new Act has brought in terms of abuse of former advisory disabled bays by non-badge holders.

By their very nature, former advisory disabled bays in residential areas were not enforceable and hence there is no data available to make a comparison with the level of enforcement currently undertaken on residential disabled bays now included in a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO). Fife Council has been operating Decriminalised Parking Enforcement (DPE) since 2013, after the introduction of the Disabled Persons Parking Places (Scotland) Act, and hence there is good information available on the number of enforcements undertaken on disabled bays since then.

When the Council receives an enforcement request for a disabled bay it usually acts the same day. The following table provides data on the number of Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) issued at both on-street and off-street disabled bays between 29th April 2013 and 23rd February 2017. For on-street bays this equates to an average of 45 PCNs per month. There is, however, an increase in the number of on-street enforcements during 2016 whilst there have been no corresponding changes in enforcement effort. This could be due to particular problems at some town centre locations but may also be due to an increasing inventory of disabled bays. For off-street bays this equates to an average of 38 PCNs per month. There is, however, a clear reduction in the number of off-street enforcements whilst, again, there have been no corresponding changes in enforcement effort.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>NUMBER OF PCNs ISSUED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ON-STREET</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29/04/13 - 31/12/13</td>
<td>221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01/01/14 - 31/12/14</td>
<td>527</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01/01/15 - 31/12/15</td>
<td>520</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01/01/16 - 31/12/16</td>
<td>722</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01/01/17 - 23/02/17</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>2074</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTAL PCNs ON & OFF STREET 3810
Q2. How well is the local authority in your area carrying out its duties required by the Act to convert all advisory on-street disabled persons’ parking places into enforceable parking places, unless they are no longer required?

Fife Council considers that it is carrying out the duties of the Act in a very comprehensive and effective manner to the benefit of blue badge holders who live in, visit and travel through Fife.

When the Act came into force, Fife undertook a one-off audit of existing advisory on-street disabled bays (parking places) and accounted for 1,437 such bays throughout Fife. It was decided that one Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) would be promoted to allow these bays to be made legally enforceable. This came into force on 16 January 2012. A composite schedule to this TRO is amended every 6 months to account for new residential bays added or existing bays removed. This process continues.

Up until October 2016 (approximately 5 years since the Act came into force), a total of 1,381 residential bays have been added and 441 bays removed following 9 amendments to the TRO. This is an equivalent annual average addition rate of 276 bays and a removal rate of 88. The current inventory of enforceable residential disabled bays in Fife is 2377 which will be reviewed at the next regular TRO amendment, which is imminent. New applications for bays are on-going and they are provided as advisory pending amendment of the TRO.

To allow residential on-street disabled bays to be enforced under the terms of the Act and the associated TRO, it is necessary to erect a sign to complement the bay markings, all as per the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions. The cost to provide the sign is approximately £77 (based on a sign and pole) which equates to a rough estimated cost of £217,000 to provide 2,818 enforceable on-street bays since the Act came into force. During this time, 441 bays have been removed and the associated signs and poles were available for re-use, however no allowance is made in this estimate to cover any small cost reductions since the substantive part of the cost will relate to the engineering work to erect or remove poles and signs rather than the cost of materials.

All public off-street car parks provided for transportation purposes and managed by the Council as a Roads Authority have a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) in place which has been amended to make all associated disabled bays enforceable. 222 disabled bays have been added to this TRO since the Act came into force.

Fife Council considered that the most resource efficient way to liaise with private commercial off-street car park owners regarding disabled bays (where the general public have access to such car parks) was to provide advice on the Council’s web
site to allow private owners/managers to make a request to the Council to consider making these bays enforceable. No requests have ever been made to the Council in this regard. Conversely, the Council is continuing to liaise directly with its various Services and Partners who manage off-street facilities car parks at local offices, schools, hospitals, large housing complexes etc. A number of disabled bays have been made enforceable in these car parks and this work is continuing.

Access to an interactive map on Fife Council’s web site provides the public with extensive information on the location and status of all disabled parking bays in Fife. The mapping identifies which bays are currently enforceable and which are currently advisory, with information on when advisory bays are scheduled to become legally enforceable.

**Q3. Any other issues relating to the Act which you wish to bring to the attention of the Committee?**

Often when discussing issues relating to disabled bays in residential areas, applicants fail to appreciate that any valid blue badge holder can park in the enforceable parking bay provided following a successful application. Whilst this was also the case for advisory bays, some applicants were under the misunderstanding that the Act, a successful application and the provision of legal enforcement was to provide them with a personal dedicated disabled parking place. However, unlike town centres, there is likely very little use of these bays by other blue badge holders such as visitors. Other residents with blue badges would usually have off-street parking or may have a bay near their own home following a successful application.

The information requested from Local Authorities by the Scottish Government on an annual basis to allow the preparation of an annual report to Scottish Ministers is complex and generally follows the format of the various sections in the Act. There is a strong suspicion, due to a broad range of differing approaches taken by Local Authorities on the provision of enforceable disabled bays, that there is a lack of consistency in the information provided. A simpler data set with a stronger focus on important key outcomes would perhaps be more appropriate.

Whilst individual Local Authorities are provided with a composite summary of all the information provided by other Local Authorities in relation to the annual report, there is no advice/feedback from the Scottish Government on the deliberation of Scottish Ministers in relation to these annual reports. This tends to devalue the efforts in providing the Scottish Government with this information every year, even although some Local Authorities may be gathering some of this information for their own use and local reporting.
Written Submission from North Ayrshire Council

QUESTION 1

Do you think the Act has achieved its aim of preventing disabled person’s parking spaces being used by those who are not entitled to?

RESPONSE

North Ayrshire Council have not sought Decriminalised Parking Enforcement powers and as such rely on Police Scotland to enforce disabled person’s parking places that have been included with a Traffic Regulation Order. Overall, it is considered that the Act has been successful in ensuring that all on-street disabled persons’ parking places and Council operated off-street disabled persons’ parking places that have been included within an Order, are seldom abused. The Council has not received many complaints regarding the abuse of disabled persons’ parking places. It should be noted that no private car park owners (supermarket operators/offices etc.) have requested the Council to include their private disabled persons’ parking places in any Order.

QUESTION 2

How well is the local authority in your area carrying out its duties required by the Act to convert all advisory on-street disabled persons’ parking places into enforceable parking places, unless they are no longer required?

RESPONSE

North Ayrshire Council has promoted four separate Traffic Regulation Orders since the introduction of this Act, which has ensured that all on-street and Council operated off-street disabled persons’ parking places, are enforceable in law by Police Scotland. Initially, whilst awaiting formal inclusion in an Order, the Council will also provide the disabled parking place road marking prior to that bay being included within the next Traffic Regulation Order to accelerate availability. There are difficulties in knowing when a disabled parking place is no longer required, as often this information is not passed on to the Council.

QUESTION 3

Any other issues relating to the Act which you wish to bring to the attention of the Committee?

RESPONSE
It would be preferable if a disabled persons` parking place could be indicated by a road marking only (in keeping with the ethos of the new TSRGD 2016), as this would reduce time and costs involved in the erection of a new pole and sign for each new disabled persons` parking place location. In addition, this would also reduce time and costs in removing any pole and sign at each time a disabled persons` parking place is no longer required. It is clear that the majority of private car park owners do not wish to have their disabled persons` parking places included in an Order and as such it may be appropriate to review this element of the Act.
Overview of instruments

1. The following instruments, subject to negative procedure, is being considered at agenda item 3 today’s meeting:

   - The Town and Country Planning (Fees for Applications and Deemed Applications) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2017 (SSI 2017/120);
   - The Town and Country Planning (Fees for Applications and Deemed Applications) (Scotland) Amendment (No.2) Regulations 2017 (SSI 2017/149).

Procedure

2. Negative instruments are instruments that are “subject to annulment” by resolution of the Parliament for a period of 40 days after they are laid. All negative instruments are considered by the Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee (on various technical grounds) and by the relevant lead committee (on policy grounds). Under Rule 10.4, any member (whether or not a member of the lead committee) may, within the 40-day period, lodge a motion for consideration by the lead committee recommending annulment of the instrument. If the motion is agreed to, the Parliamentary Bureau must then lodge a motion to annul the instrument for consideration by the Parliament.

3. If that is also agreed to, Scottish Ministers must revoke the instrument. Each negative instrument appears on a committee agenda at the first opportunity after the Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee has reported on it. This means that, if questions are asked or concerns raised, consideration of the instrument can usually be continued to a later meeting to allow correspondence to be entered into or a Minister or officials invited to give evidence. In other cases, the Committee may be content simply to note the instrument and agree to make no recommendation on it.

Background

The Town and Country Planning (Fees for Applications and Deemed Applications) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2017

4. These Regulations amend the Town and Country Planning (Fees for Applications and Deemed Applications) (Scotland) Regulations 2004 to increase certain planning fees. The policy note for this instrument is attached at Annexe A.

5. An electronic copy of the instrument is available at:

6. A Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment can be found at:


7. There has been no motion to annul this instrument.

Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee Consideration

8. The Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee considered this instrument at its meeting on 9 May 2017 and draws the attention of the Parliament to the instrument on the following grounds within its remit in its report published on 9 May 2017:

The Committee draws the Regulations to the attention of the Parliament on reporting ground (i), as they appear to be defectively drafted in two respects:

1. Paragraph 8 of the schedule specifies the fee to be payable in relation to planning applications for the carrying out of any operations connected with exploratory drilling for oil or natural gas.

Where the site area exceeds 7.6 hectares, paragraph 8(b) specifies a fee of £30,240, plus £200 for each 0.1 hectare in excess of 7.6 hectares (subject to a maximum of £125,000). The figure of £30,240 should be £30,476. As a result the fee level is incorrectly stated in respect of sites with an area exceeding 7.6 hectares.

2. The Regulations omit to amend paragraph 14 of schedule 1 of the Town and Country Planning (Fees for Applications and Deemed Applications) (Scotland) Regulations 2004 (S.S.I. 2004/219), to reflect the increased fees stated in the new table of fees in these Regulations.

Paragraph 14, as amended to date, provides that where an application is for planning permission in principle and relates to development within more than one of the categories stated in the table of fees, the fee payable in respect of the application is £401 for each 0.1 hectares of the site area (subject to a maximum of £10,028).

The Committee welcomes the Scottish Government's commitment to bring forward an amending instrument before the Regulations come into force on 1 June 2017.

9. The Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee report can be found at the following link:

The Town and Country Planning (Fees for Applications and Deemed Applications) (Scotland) Amendment (No.2) Regulations 2017

10. These Regulations amend the Town and Country Planning (Fees for Applications and Deemed Applications) (Scotland) Regulations 2004 (“the principal Regulations”) and the Town and Country Planning (Fees for Applications and Deemed Applications) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2017 (“the amending Regulations”).

11. Regulation 2 amends paragraph 14 of the schedule of the principal Regulations to increase the fee for an application for planning permission in principle which relates to development which is within more than one of the categories of fee payable in the table scale of fees.

12. Regulation 3 corrects defects in the schedule of the amending Regulations in the fees for development within category 2 and category 8 in the new table scale of fees inserted into the principal Regulations by the amending Regulations. The policy note for this instrument is attached at Annexe B.

13. An electronic copy of the instrument is available at:


14. There has been no motion to annul this instrument.

Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee Consideration

15. The Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee considered this instrument at its meeting on 16 May 2017 and draws the attention of the Parliament to the instrument on the following grounds within its remit in its report published on 16 May 2017:

Accordingly, the Committee draws the Regulations to the attention of the Parliament under reporting ground (j). The instrument fails to comply with the requirements of section 28(2) of the Interpretation and Legislative Reform (Scotland) Act 2010.

The Committee finds the failure to comply with section 28 to be acceptable in the circumstances as the Regulations correct timeously defects which the Committee previously identified in the Town and Country Planning (Fees for Applications and Deemed Applications) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2017.

In accordance with the Committee’s objective of reducing the number of outstanding instruments that need to be amended wherever possible, the Committee welcomes the fact that the Scottish Government has brought forward an amending instrument so promptly.

16. The Scottish Government wrote to the Presiding Officer on 10 May 2017 on the breach of laying requirements:
The above instrument was made under section 252 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997. It is being laid before Parliament today. The Regulations, other than regulation 2, come into force on 31 May 2017. Regulation 2 comes into force on 1 June 2017.

Section 28(2) of the Interpretation and Legislative Reform (Scotland) Act 2010 has not been complied with. In accordance with section 31(3) of that Act, this letter explains why.

The general effect of the Town and Country Planning (Fees for Applications and Deemed Applications) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2017 (SSI 2017/120) is to increase some maximum fees currently payable under the Town and Country Planning (Fees for Applications and Deemed Applications) (Scotland) Regulations 2004.

SSI 2017/149 is required to correct errors in the SSI 2017/120, including errors which were identified by the Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee. The Committee drew the instrument to the attention of the Scottish Government on two accounts.

(1) There is an error in the specification of the fee in paragraph 8 of the table of fees. The figure of £30,240 in sub-paragraph (b) should be £30,476.

(2) SSI 2017/120 did not amend paragraph 14 of schedule 1 of the 2004 Regulations to reflect the increased fees in the new table of fees.

It is necessary to make corrections in order to ensure that the amended fees regime operates as intended from the date on which SSI 2017/120 comes into force on 1 June 2017. It is therefore necessary to breach the 28 day laying requirement.

17. The Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee report can be found at the following link:


Committee Consideration

18. The Committee is not required to report on negative instruments, but should it wish to do so, the deadline for reporting on SSI 2017/120 is 30 May 2017 and for SSI 2017/149 is 18 June 2017.

19. The Committee is invited to consider the above instruments and whether it wishes to report on any issues to the Parliament in relation to them.
Introduction

The above instrument was made in exercise of the powers conferred by section 252 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997. The instrument is subject to the negative resolution procedure.

Background

The Town and Country Planning (Fees for Applications and Deemed Applications) (Scotland) Regulations 2004 (the “principal Regulations”) make provision for the payment of fees to planning authorities.

The effect of these Regulations is that some maximum fees currently payable under the principal Regulations are increased. The increase applies from 1st June 2017. These Regulations replace the table scale of fees in Part III of the Schedule to the principal Regulations. The changes which have been made are shown in the Table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of development</th>
<th>Type of application</th>
<th>Old fee</th>
<th>New fee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Construction of buildings, structures or erections for use as residential accommodation (other than development within category 6).</td>
<td>Applications for planning permission in principle.</td>
<td>£401 for each 0.1 hectare, subject to a maximum of £10,028; or £401 if only one dwellinghouse.</td>
<td>Where the site area does not exceed 2.5 hectares, £401 for each 0.1 hectare or £401 if only one dwellinghouse.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Applications other than for planning permission in principle.</td>
<td>£401 for each dwellinghouse, subject to a maximum of £20,055.</td>
<td>Where the site area exceeds 2.5 hectares, £10,028 plus £100 for each 0.1 hectare in excess of 2.5 hectares, subject to an overall maximum of £62,500. Where there are no more than 50 dwellinghouses, £401 for each.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section</td>
<td>Activity Description</td>
<td>Application Type</td>
<td>Fee Details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>The erection of buildings (other than buildings within category 1, 3, 4 or 6).</td>
<td>Applications for planning permission in principle.</td>
<td>£401 for each 0.1 hectare, subject to a maximum of £10,028.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Applications other than for planning permission in principle.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Where the area of floor space does not exceed 40 square metres, £202. Where the area of floor space exceeds 40 square metres but not 75 square metres, £401. Where the area of floor space exceeds 75 square metres, £401 for each 75 square metres, subject to a maximum of £20,055. Where the floor space exceeds 75 square metres but not 3,750 square metres, £401 for each 75 square metres, subject to an overall maximum of £125,000.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>The erection, alteration or replacement of plant or machinery.</td>
<td>Applications for planning permission.</td>
<td>£401 for each 0.1 hectare, subject to a maximum of £20,055.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section</td>
<td>Activity Description</td>
<td>Planning Applications</td>
<td>Fees</td>
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<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>The carrying out of any operations connected with exploratory drilling for oil or natural gas.</td>
<td>Applications for planning permission.</td>
<td>£401 for each 0.1 hectare, subject to a maximum of £30,240.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Where the site area does not exceed 7.6 hectares, £401 for each 0.1 hectare. Where the site area exceeds 7.6 hectares, £30,240 plus £200 for each 0.1 hectare in excess of 7.6 hectares, subject to an overall maximum of £125,000.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>The carrying out of any operations not coming within any other category: the winning and working of minerals.</td>
<td>Applications for planning permission.</td>
<td>£202 for each 0.1 hectare, subject to a maximum of £30,240.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
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<td>Where the site area does not exceed 15 hectares, £202 for each 0.1 hectare. Where the site area exceeds 15 hectares, £30,240 plus £100 for each 0.1 hectare in excess of 15 hectares, subject to an overall maximum of £125,000.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>The change of use of a building to use as one or more dwellinghouses.</td>
<td>Applications for planning permission.</td>
<td>£401 for each additional dwellinghouse to be created, subject to a maximum of £20,055.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Where no more than 50 additional dwellinghouses are created, £401 for each. Where more than 50 additional dwellinghouses are created, £20,050 plus £200 for each dwellinghouse in excess of 50, subject to an overall maximum of £124,850.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12(a).</td>
<td>The use of land for the disposal of refuse or waste materials, including mineral waste.</td>
<td>Applications for planning permission.</td>
<td>£202 for each 0.1 hectare, subject to a maximum of £30,240.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Where the site area does not exceed 15 hectares, £202 for each 0.1 hectare. Where the site area exceeds 15 hectares, £30,240 plus £100 for each 0.1 hectare in excess of 15 hectares, subject to an overall maximum of £125,000.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12(b).</td>
<td>The use of land for the storage of minerals in the open.</td>
<td>Applications for planning permission.</td>
<td>£202 for each 0.1 hectare, subject to a maximum of £30,240.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Where the site area does not exceed 15 hectares, £202 for each 0.1 hectare. Where the site area exceeds 15 hectares, £30,240 plus £100 for each 0.1 hectare in excess of 15 hectares, subject to an overall maximum of £125,000.</td>
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Policy Objective
The overall resourcing of the planning system is the responsibility of local authorities. The planning service is financed through the local authority’s budget and fees from planning applications. The purpose of this instrument is to ensure that for certain larger applications, the planning fee recovers more of the local authority costs associated with the processing of planning applications from initial registration to decision stage.

Consultation
The Scottish Government consulted on proposals to raise the fee maxima across most categories. 124 stakeholders responded, including businesses and developers, business/developer membership organisations, planning authorities/other public sector bodies, professional firms & consultants, professional bodies & academics, and third sector organisations.

Respondents were somewhat divided on proposals; 54 respondents (44% of all respondents) supported the proposed maximum fee level, and 65 (52%) were opposed. Support for the proposals was most widespread amongst planning authorities and other public bodies, third sector organisations, and professional bodies/academics. The respondent groups most likely to be opposed to proposals were businesses and developers, and professional firms and consultants.

Many of the respondents who said no to the proposed increases indicated that they wanted to see evidence of performance improvement. We believe that the increased maximums should provide further resources for planning authorities to increase performance, and we will continue to work with authorities on performance improvement measures.

Impact Assessments

Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) is a tool to assist in considering how policy (by policy we mean activities, functions, strategies, programmes and services or processes) may impact, either positively or negatively, on different sectors of the population in different ways.

The Scottish Government is committed to ensuring the planning system is designed and delivered in a way that is sensitive and relevant to the diverse needs and experiences of all people living in Scotland. We consider the impact of policy on particular groups of people (whatever their age, race, gender, sexual orientation, religion or belief or whether disabled or not). We are not aware of any evidence that
any of the equality strands will be affected. The proposed increase will affect all those seeking approval of a relevant planning application proportionately.

Financial Effects

A Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment (BRIA) has been completed and is attached. The Scottish Government considers that the proposed increases will strengthen resources and the capability of the planning authorities to deliver a high performing planning service.

Scottish Government
Planning and Architecture Division
April 2017
ANNEX

BUSINESS AND REGULATORY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Title of Proposal

1. The Town and Country Planning (Fees for Applications and Deemed Applications) (Scotland) Regulations 2017.

Purpose and intended effect

Objective

2. The Scottish Government recognises the importance of planning in supporting economic growth, in the delivery of quality homes and in community empowerment.

3. The objective of these Regulations is to ensure that planning fees for major applications are increased substantially so that the service moves towards full cost recovery.

Background

4. The resourcing of the planning system has long been an issue. There has been widespread agreement that fee levels are too low and in many instances not proportionate to the work involved in processing applications. This was identified by the independent review of planning carried out in 2016, which contained 2 recommendations on fees:

   o That fees on major applications should be increased substantially
   
   o That consideration should be given to further discretionary charging, for example in the area of pre-application processes.

5. The Scottish Government Response to the report, published 11 July 2016, stated that the Scottish Government would consult on enhanced fees. We began this engagement process with key stakeholders at the first meeting of the Leadership, Resources and Skills Working Group on 12 and 13 September 2016. A formal consultation was carried out between November 2016 and February 2017.

6. The consultation indicated that we intend to take forward the independent review recommendations regarding fees in 2 stages, with this rise in the fee maxima being stage 1 and we propose to review the planning fee structure once the current planning reform programme has identified changes to the planning system.
Consultation

Within Government

7. In light of the independent review of planning last year and also *Places, People and Planning* the recent consultation on the future of the Scottish planning system carried out between January and April 2017, the Scottish Government has worked with key stakeholders through a series of working groups to consider a wide range of planning issues including fees.

8. Scottish Government colleagues in other policy areas such as energy and marine fish farming were also fully consulted about the proposal.

Public Consultation

9. A 3 month public consultation on the proposed increase was carried out between November 2016 and February 2017.

Business

10. A number of working groups, workshops and one to one discussions covering planning issues including the specific issue of fees with a wider range of business stakeholders have all been carried out during the independent review of planning in 2016 and during the Places People and Planning consultation in 2017.

Options

11. The consultation on raising planning fees invited responses to a single question: Do you agree with the proposed maximum fee level? Planning authorities were broadly in favour of the proposed new maximum (with a few suggesting it should be higher) and business stakeholders were largely against raising the maximum.

Option 1: Do nothing

12. Do not raise the current fees maximum. This would result in a continuing gap in resources between income received from planning applications and the costs of processing and making decisions.

Option 2: Introduce a new set of planning fees regulations

13. This would significantly increase the current fees maxima. The proposed regulations would help ensure that planning fees cover a greater proportion of the work involved in processing and deciding an application than is currently the case.

Sectors and groups affected
14. The sectors most likely to be affected by the proposals are:

- Planning authorities that are required to resource their development management service.
- Those who submit a major planning application.

Benefits

15. The fee increase proposed is intended to provide increased resources to planning authorities to help support ongoing performance improvement.

Costs

16. The costs for developers submitting major planning applications will rise for those applications which currently meet the maximum fee cap as this is being increased from between current caps of £18,270, £20,055 and £30,240 depending on the category of development to a revised cap for most categories of development of £125,000.

17. There is no change proposed to the current planning fee per unit of £401 for residential developments up to 50 units. Housing developments containing 50 residential units would pay £20,050 and any additional unit will be charged at £200 per unit until the fee maximum of £125,000 for 575 houses is reached.

18. There is no change proposed per hectare up to the current fees maxima (£18,270, £20,055 and £30,240 depending on the category of development) and additional hectares are proposed to be charged at a lesser rate until the fee maximum of £125,000 (4.3 hectares) is reached. The introduction of a lower rate which will apply over a specified amount should help moderate the impact on major projects of the higher fee maximum.

19. For applications for planning permission in principle (PPP) we propose similar changes per house or by per 0.1 hectare. The maximum for PPP will be raised to £62,500.

20. We have modelled the impact of the proposed changes on planning application data for major projects in 2015 provided by planning authorities. We applied the new fee maxima to a sample of 20% of all major applications. On the 20% sample of major projects the current fee income is £835,488. Applying the proposed new fee maxima the fee income would be £2,331,434 which is an increase of £1,495,946. Therefore we estimate that based on this 20% sample the total increase for major applications in 2015 would be £7,479,730.

Scottish Firms Impact Test
21. As part of the consultation process on fees, the independent review of planning which reported in 2016 and *Places, People and Planning* a consultation on the future of the Scottish planning system carried out between January and April 2017, we have consulted with a range of businesses to understand the direct impacts of this change to legislation on their business.

**Competition Assessment**

22. The proposals are not expected to impact significantly more on some firms than others nor restrict new entrants to the market. The need to produce detailed plans is not impacted by these changes.

23. We consider that the freedom of firms to choose the price, quality range or location of their products will be unaffected.

**Test run of business forms**

24. No new forms will be introduced as a result of this legislation therefore there is no requirement for a test run.

**Legal Aid Impact Test**

25. As far as we are aware these proposals have no impact in relation to Legal Aid, as the policy does not introduce any new procedures or right of appeal to a court or tribunal.

**Enforcement, sanctions and monitoring**

26. An application for planning permission is not valid unless the appropriate fee has been paid. Where the fee is incorrect or missing the planning authority can turn the application away.

27. Where a developer considers they have paid the correct fee but this is disputed by the planning authority then they can seek either a local review or appeal against non-determination.

28. As the consultation notes fee income and planning authority performance are inextricably linked. With an increase in resources through fee income Ministers expect to see an increase in performance and service delivery. As part of this planning authorities will be monitored and assessed against the Planning Performance Framework.

**Implementation and delivery plan**

29. It is anticipated that the amendments will be laid before the Scottish Parliament in April 2017 and will come into force on 1 June 2017.

**Post-implementation review**
30. The Government will monitor how the changes have impacted on planning authority resources, the number and type of developments that come forward and whether the increased income has impacted on service and performance. We will continue to have close dialogue with all stakeholders to assess how the new fee regime is working and whether there are any particular areas of ambiguity. The Government will liaise specifically with Heads of Planning Scotland to understand the effects of the changes.

Summary and recommendation

31. It is recommended that these regulations are implemented to help ensure that the planning fees regime becomes more proportionate, fit for purpose and accurately reflects the developments coming forward in modern Scotland. Planning authorities will see an increase in resources for larger more resource intensive developments. There will be an impact on developers’ costs with such an increase but there is an expectation that any increase in resources will see an increase in performance level from authorities and the service they provide to business. We indicated in the consultation that we propose to review the planning fee structure once the current planning reform programme has identified changes to the planning system.

Declaration and publication

32. I have read the Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment and I am satisfied that, given the available evidence, it represents a reasonable view of the likely costs, benefits and impact of the leading options. I am satisfied that business impact has been assessed with the support of businesses in Scotland.

Signed:

Kevin Stewart, Minister for Local Government and Housing

Scottish Government Contact point:

Bill Ellis
Directorate for Local Government & Communities
Planning & Architecture Division
POLICY NOTE

THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (FEES FOR APPLICATIONS AND DEEMED APPLICATIONS) (SCOTLAND) AMENDMENT (NO. 2) REGULATIONS 2017

SSI 2017/149

Introduction

The above instrument was made in exercise of the powers conferred by section 252 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997. The instrument is subject to the negative resolution procedure.

Background

The Town and Country Planning (Fees for Applications and Deemed Applications) (Scotland) Regulations 2004 (the "principal Regulations") make provision for the payment of fees to planning authorities. The Town and Country Planning (Fees for Applications and Deemed Applications) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2017 (SSI 2017/120) which come into force on 1 June 2017 increase some maximum fees currently payable under the principal Regulations.

The effect of these Regulations is to correct defects in SSI 2017/120, including defects which were identified by the Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee.

Given that SSI 2017/120 is due to come into force on 1 June 2017, the Scottish Government’s view is that it is necessary to breach the 28 day laying requirement to ensure that the errors in that instrument are rectified in time by this instrument.

Policy Objective

SSI 2017/120 sought to ensure that for certain larger applications, the planning fee recovers more of the local authority costs associated with the processing of planning applications from initial registration to decision stage.

These Regulations, other than regulation 2, come into force on 31 May 2017. Regulation 2 comes into force on 1 June 2017. The corrections are:

- paragraph 14 of schedule 1 of the principal Regulations is amended to reflect the increased fees in the new table of fees.
- paragraph (b) (iv) of category 2 of the table of fees is amended so that the fee for development that exceeds 3,750 square metres is £20,050 plus £200 for
each 75 square metres (or part thereof) in excess of 3,750 square metres, subject to a maximum total of £125,000.

- in paragraph (b) of category 8 of the table of fees the figure of £30,240 is replaced with the figure of £30,476.

Consultation

The Scottish Government consulted on proposals to raise the fee maxima across most categories.

Impact Assessments

Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) is a tool to assist in considering how policy (by policy we mean activities, functions, strategies, programmes and services or processes) may impact, either positively or negatively, on different sectors of the population in different ways.

The Scottish Government is committed to ensuring the planning system is designed and delivered in a way that is sensitive and relevant to the diverse needs and experiences of all people living in Scotland. We consider the impact of policy on particular groups of people (whatever their age, race, gender, sexual orientation, religion or belief or whether disabled or not). We are not aware of any evidence that any of the equality strands will be affected. The proposed increase will affect all those seeking approval of a relevant planning application proportionately.

Financial Effects

A Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment (BRIA) was completed for SSI 2017/120.

Scottish Government
Planning and Architecture Division
May 2017
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Local Government and Communities Committee

To consider and report on communities, housing, local government, planning and regeneration matters falling within the responsibility of the Cabinet Secretary for Communities, Social Security and Equalities.


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Committee Membership

Convener
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Deputy Convener
Elaine Smith
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Kenneth Gibson
Scottish National Party

Jenny Gilruth
Scottish National Party

Graham Simpson
Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party

Alexander Stewart
Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party

Andy Wightman
Scottish Green Party
Introduction

1. This report covers the work of the Local Government and Communities Committee during the Parliamentary year from 12 May 2016 to 11 May 2017.

Local Government and Communities Committee

Membership changes

2. Previous members of the Committee during the reporting year:
   
   • Mairi Evans (SNP) (8 June 2016 – 6 September 2016)
   • Ruth Maguire (SNP) (6 September 2016 – 30 March 2017)

Meetings

3. During the parliamentary year, the Committee met 30 times. Of these meetings 3 were wholly in private and 27 were partly in private. Most items taken in private were the consideration of draft reports and consideration of evidence heard. All meetings were held in Edinburgh.
Equalities

4. The Committee mainstreams equalities issues throughout its work. When inviting witnesses, the Clerks ask organisations to consider equalities issues when putting forward selected panel members.
172
Number of people who gave evidence

31
SSIs considered

30
Committee meetings

9
Reports published

2
Petitions considered

6
Fact finding visits

Source:
Inquiries and Reports

Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland's 5th Review

5. The Committee scrutinised the Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland's 5th Electoral Reviews and the Scottish Government's subsequent response.

6. Changes to local authority arrangements came into force on 30 September 2016, and are made subject to no procedure statutory instruments and therefore the Committee is not duty-bound to scrutinise them. The Committee, however, felt that there were a number of issues raised during its consideration of the reviews which should be highlighted to Parliament and should help to inform and improve future reviews.

7. The Committee recommended that given new roles for the Boundary Commission in relation to Scottish Parliament constituencies and the role of the Parliament in agreeing these, it was now time to review the process for changing Local Authority Boundaries.

Scottish Local Government Elections and Voting

8. In advance of the Scottish local government elections in 2017, the Committee undertook some work on how voter turnout could be increased for the Scottish local government elections.

9. It heard from Academia, the Electoral Reform Society Scotland, the Modern Studies Association, UNISON Scotland, Shelter Scotland, MECOPP and ENABLE Scotland on how all factions of Scottish Society could be encouraged to vote. It followed up this session by hearing from the Electoral Commission Scotland, Education Scotland, the Electoral Management Board for Scotland and from an Electoral Registration Officer, followed by the Minister for Parliamentary Business.

10. The Committee notes that voting in local authority elections was up around 10 per cent in 2017, compared to 2012 figures.
The Convener, Bob Doris, speaking to young people about voting in Local Government Elections.

Payment to Returning Officers in Scotland

11. The Committee undertook a short inquiry on payments to Returning Officers in Scotland for the conduct of elections and referendums, due to public concerns raised regarding the perceived transparency of the process, the amount of payments and the frequency of elections. In the current system, each Returning Officer (usually a Local Authority Chief Executive) can claim sums over and above their salary for undertaking the role.

12. Reporting in January 2017, the Committee called for the current system of payments to be stopped and to review the role and remuneration of Returning Officers in Scotland. The Scottish Government has agreed to review their role and remuneration as part of its consultation on electoral reform. However, given the announcement of the most recent General Election to take place in June 2017, the Committee wrote to the Scottish Government again in May 2017 to suggest that this work be brought forward urgently. The Committee also wrote to the UK Government highlighting its work in reference to elections it is responsible for in Scotland.
Building Regulations in Scotland

13. The Committee began a focussed piece of work on the building standards verification scheme, proposed rises in fees and whether the current system afforded suitable protections for home buyers. This work coincided with a review by the Scottish Government which announced that Local Authorities would be sole verifiers for building standards and not opened up to other organisations. The Committee issued a call for views and an online survey to ensure that it heard as wide a range of views as possible.

14. The Committee then heard privately by those who had some issues with the current process, followed by a public session with those in the building industry. The Committee will continue this inquiry into the next Parliamentary year.

Common Good Property and Funds

15. The Committee began a short focussed inquiry on the law in relation to common good property and funds, issuing a call for views on 8 February 2017. This inquiry will carry on into the next Parliamentary Year with oral evidence sessions.

Homelessness

16. The Committee agreed to hold an inquiry into homelessness, but in order to ensure that its inquiry reflected current issues causing homelessness and affecting homeless people, it undertook some initial information gathering sessions and fact-finding visits to inform the scope of the inquiry. These sessions informed the call for views which was launched on 3 May 2017. The Committee will consider its next steps following the close of the call for views on 14 June 2017.
Committee Members Andy Wightman and Alexander Stewart meeting homelessness charity CATH in Perth

Source: Scottish Parliament
Committee Members meeting service users and staff at Streetwork homelessness charity.

Source: Scottish Parliament

Source: Scottish Parliament
City Region Deals

17. The Committee launched its call for views on City Region Deals. The remit of the inquiry is "To explore rationale, prioritisation and value for money in relation to city region deals, including the progress to date of city region deals in delivering job creation and economic growth, and the structure and governance of city region deals in Scotland."

18. The call for views was launched on 4 April 2017. In the next Parliamentary year, the Committee will consider its next steps upon reviewing the submissions received.

Scrutiny of Budget 2017-18

19. The Committee's budget scrutiny focussed on the Local Government and Housing aspects of the Scottish Government's draft budget. Given the short amount of time between the publication of the draft budget, the Local Government finance circular and when the Committee has to report, it carried out some pre-budget scrutiny, hearing from firstly, stakeholders with an interest in Local Government and Communities and then from housing stakeholders.

20. Some issues raised were; difficulties around the consistency and transparency of figures presented in the budget document and the Local Government finance circular; difficulties in properly scrutinising the budget in the timings available; and the importance of multi-year budgeting and outcomes based budget scrutiny. The Committee also highlighted these issues in its response to the Finance and Constitution Committee's call for views on the review of the budget scrutiny process.
Non-Domestic Rates

21. The Committee undertook some evidence sessions on how the current Non-Domestic Rates (NDR) system is operating and identify the range of issues which may arise as part of the Barclay Review, which is currently reviewing the NDR system in Scotland. Following concerns raised at the level of engagement with the non-commercial sectors in connection with NDR and the wider public, the Committee wrote to the Cabinet Secretary highlighting these concerns. The Cabinet Secretary confirmed that he would not recommend an extension on the deadline of the review, however he has committed to fully engaging with the Committee on scrutiny of the review's outcome.

Scrutiny of Public Bodies

22. The Committee is responsible for scrutinising the performance of the following public bodies:

Accounts Commission - the Committee heard from the Accounts Commission on the publication of its Local Government performance overview report.
Scottish Housing Regulator; Scottish Public Services Ombudsman and the Commissioner for Ethical Standards in Public Life in Scotland - the Committee heard from each of these bodies following the publication of their Annual Report and Accounts.

The Draft Climate Change Plan (RPP3)

23. The Committee was one of four Committees scrutinising the Scottish Government's draft plan setting out how it will meet its ambitious climate change targets. The Local Government and Communities Committee’s focus was on Local Government, Housing, Communities and Planning. The Committees all had 60 days from the laying of the document to reporting and debating their reports in Parliament. A joint Committee debate on the plan took place in the Chamber on 15 March 2017.

24. Amongst other issues raised, the Committee highlighted that more emphasis could be placed on how the planning process could contribute to climate change abatement, the difficulty in scrutinising how realistic climate change housing targets were, given that most of the related policies were still being developed and a lack of focus on how the Scottish Government will drive behaviour change in communities where climate change is a lower priority. The Scottish Government will update the Parliament on the status of the final plan prior to Summer Recess 2017.
Committee members seeing external wall insulation being fitted to housing.

Source: Scottish Parliament
The Convener meeting with Cube housing to see and hear about its district heating scheme.
Implications for Scottish Local Government of the UK leaving the European Union

25. The Committee held a round-table evidence session in order to appraise itself of the key implications for Scottish local government of the United Kingdom leaving the European Union. Following the session, the Committee wrote to the Scottish Government to enquire further about the negotiation process and also to COSLA on Local Government's preparations for the implications of leaving the EU.
Legislation

Post-Legislative Scrutiny: Disabled Persons' Parking Places (Scotland) Act 2009

26. The Committee began its post-legislative scrutiny of the Disabled Persons' Parking Places (Scotland) Act 2009. The Committee heard from disabled people and private car park operators on their views on how the act was working in practice. This work will continue into the next parliamentary year.

Post-Legislative Scrutiny: High Hedges (Scotland) Act 2013

27. The Committee began its post-legislative scrutiny of the High Hedges (Scotland) Act 2013. The Committee heard from those who had applied for high hedge notices and local authorities on how the act was working in practice. This work will continue into the next parliamentary year.

The Committee hearing from members of the public about their experience of the High Hedges (Scotland) Act.

Source: Scottish Parliament
Subordinate Legislation

28. During this parliamentary year the Committee considered 31 statutory instruments of which 26 were negative and 5 were affirmative.

Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015

29. A package of affirmative and negative instruments were laid enacting various aspects of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015. To inform its scrutiny, the Committee heard from Community Bodies who might wish to use the new powers and public bodies who may be affected by the legislation, prior to hearing from the Minister for Local Government and Housing.

The Council Tax (Substitution of Proportion) (Scotland) Order 2016

30. This order, laid on 7 September 2016, reformed Council Tax by increasing the ratios of the upper bands (E-H) relative to Band D. This means that bills for Band E will increase by 7.5%, Band F by 12.5%, Band G by 17.5% and Band H by 22.5%. No additional bands have been added and the ratios for Bands A-D remain unchanged.

31. The Committee held an open call for views before hearing some oral evidence sessions with academics, industry representatives, local authorities and unions, before hearing from the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and the Constitution. It published its report on 28 October 2016.

32. Amongst other issues raised, the Committee highlighted the need for clear and coordinated communication between the Scottish Government and Local
Government regarding changes to household council tax and highlighted issues regarding the use of income earned from the increased bandings at local level to fund a national policy of educational attainment. Following the Committee's report, the Scottish Government committed to funding the educational attainment policy from central resources.
Public Petitions

33. Over the course of the parliamentary year the Committee considered:

34. **PE1539** on Housing Associations to come under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002

35. The Scottish Government has consulted on whether Registered Social Landlords should be brought under Freedom of Information and will publish its response in due course. The Committee has agreed to consider the petition again following that response. Should the Scottish Government option to extend coverage of FOI to Registered Social Landlords an order will be laid in the Scottish Parliament. It is that the Local Government and Communities would be lead Committee in scrutinising the order.

36. **PE1534** on Equal rights of appeal in the planning system

37. The Committee agreed to close this petition at its meeting on **14 September 2016** given that it had explored the terms of the petition with the Minister for Local Government and Housing on **7 September 2016**. The Minister confirmed that the issue would be taken into account during the Scottish Government's consultation on the planning system and that the petitioner would be given the opportunity to engage in workshops relating to the consultation. A planning bill is expected in the coming parliamentary year an the Committee expects to be the lead Committee in its scrutiny.
Engagement and Innovation

38. The Committee has endeavoured to engage directly with communities affected by its scrutiny, some examples are set out as follows:

Homelessness

39. The Committee visited three homelessness projects across Scotland to meet with those facing homelessness and those providing frontline service, to inform its ongoing inquiry.

Draft Climate Change Plan (RPP3)

40. The Committee met with people who had benefited from measures to improve the fuel efficiency of their home.

Scottish Local Government Elections and Voting

41. The Convener led a workshop of young voters on issues emerging from its work on Scottish Local Government Elections and Voting.

Post-legislative scrutiny of the Disabled Persons' Parking Places (Scotland) Act 2009 and High Hedges (Scotland) Act 2013

42. During its post-legislative scrutiny of the afore-mentioned Acts, the Committee met directly with people who had been affected by the legislation.

Building Regulations in Scotland

43. The Committee used a social media based survey to ensure that it could hear from as many people as possible on their experiences with building regulations. This approach proved worthwhile, returning over a thousand responses.
Committee members meeting with Cube Housing.

Source:
Committee members hearing about how the credit union had helped people in the community.

Scottish Parliament