Local Government and Communities Committee

Planning (Scotland) Bill

Submission from Granton and District Community Council

General feedback on Planning (Scotland) Bill

I would like to mention few point below based my experience about planning within my role in Granton and District Community Council.

- None of our community councillors have any technical qualification/knowledge about planning system. In comparison with the licensing regime, where certain qualification/training (SCPLH) course is required to be part licensing forum/input
- So many highly technical documents are associated with planning applications. These documents are difficult to understand for non technical audience. We need a simpler summary version (max 4 pages) as a synopsis of whole application/proposal.
- Granton and District Community Council attracts by huge number of application from waterfront development. No application mention about EIA (environmental impact assessment). Huge scale development has impact on local natural environment, both aquatic and coastal ecosystem of waterfront. Most often transport plan was not included with the application.
- It is a shame that whole planning regime is opposed to sustainable development ethos. Planning policy doesn’t work with any other policy like clean air, environment, Climate Bill etc.
- Lack of community capacity and resources often plays a key role to getting community involved in planning system. Granton fall within SIMD (Multiple deprivation) therefore empowerment of community is crucial.
- Our community had an experience of long struggle to restore/protect a historical and heritage site within planning regime. (i.e. Granton Castle Walled Garden)
- There is no such requirement of planning system to ensure gathering the voice/views from all section of communities. No mechanism to monitor any engagement of communities overall.
- Finally, we have witnessed many occasions when local voices are stifled within the planning system and seen the negative impact this has on local engagement. As a result, we propose an Equal Right of Appeal for communities in planning system.
I am looking forward to see the points/issues highlighted will be addressed in the Planning Scotland Bill. I will happy to give more evidence or clarification if required to ensure sustainable community engagement within the Scottish planning system.

Kind regards

Mizan Rahman
Granton and District Community Council