

# Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee 4th Meeting, 2022 (session 6), Tuesday, 01 February 2022

## Evidence session on the Fourth National Planning Framework (NPF4)

### Note by the Clerk

#### Introduction

1. The National Planning Framework is a long-term plan for Scotland that sets out the Scottish Government's view where development and infrastructure is needed. The NPF is currently in its [third iteration](#), dating from 2014.
2. Published on 10 November 2021, during COP26 in Glasgow, the [Draft Fourth National Planning Framework](#) (NPF4) provides a statutory strategy and framework for land use out to Scotland's net zero target year of 2045. The draft recognises that significant progress must be made to reach net zero, as well as the interim target of a 75% emissions reduction by the end of this decade.

#### Parliamentary scrutiny of draft NPF4

3. The Scottish Parliament has a statutory right to be consulted on a draft of framework and has 120 days to respond. The Local Government, Housing and Planning (LGHP) Committee of the Scottish Parliament is leading on scrutiny of draft NPF4.
4. Given NPF4's scope and importance, other Parliamentary committees are sharing in this scrutiny. These include the Net Zero, Energy and Transport (NZET) Committee which has agreed to focus on themes in NPF4 most relevant to its own remit: net zero emissions, land use and the natural environment, transport, infrastructure, waste and recycling, and energy.

#### Evidence session on 1 February: NPF4 and energy

5. The NZET Committee is taking evidence over two days: on 1 and 8 February. On 1 February, the Committee will hear from a panel of experts and stakeholders in energy policy:

- [Dr Niall Kerr](#), Interdisciplinary Research Fellow - Energy and climate policy, University of Edinburgh
  - [Morag Watson](#), Director of Policy, Scottish Renewables
  - [Elizabeth Leighton](#), Secretariat, Climate Emergency Response Group
  - Kirstanne Land, Senior External Relations Manager, [SSEN Transmission](#)
6. The LGHP Committee carried out a call for written views on NPF4 and all responses can be found [via this link](#). Two of the bodies giving evidence on 1 February provided submissions:
- [Scottish Renewables - Response 459824617](#)
  - [SSEN Transmission - Response 560256263](#)
7. The Scottish Parliament Information Centre (SPICe) has been producing a series of blogs on NPF4. The blog on [NPF4: Mainstreaming Climate Change?](#) considers the National Spatial Strategy which sets out overarching principles and a vision for sustainable, liveable, productive and distinctive places, and the 18 National Developments supporting delivery. Another blog on [NPF4: Energy for electricity and heat](#) summarises proposed [National Planning Policy](#) which is relevant to delivering decarbonised heat and electricity.
8. Key current public consultations on devolved energy policy that are also relevant to this session include:
- The [Draft Hydrogen Action Plan](#), which seeks to put a framework in place to achieve 5GW of hydrogen capacity by 2030.
  - The [Onshore Wind Policy Statement](#) considers how support can be strengthened to ensure that an additional 8-12 Gigawatts is installed by 2030.
  - A call for evidence on a [new dedicated National Public Energy Agency](#) which aims to support a coordinated approach to switching heating systems and improving energy efficiency.

## Next steps

9. On 8 February, the NZET Committee will take further evidence, focussing on NPF4 and transport, the environment, waste and the circular economy. After discussing all the evidence, the Committee will write to the LGHP Committee with its concluded views on the draft.
10. The LGHP Committee is expected to report on the draft in March, with a Parliamentary debate taking place shortly afterwards, near the end of the 120-day period. The Scottish Government is expected to reflect on the report and the debate, and to produce a final NPF4 this summer.