



Lauderdale Community Council

Proposal for Lauderdale Community Council to sign up to the Unified Statement for the South of Scotland Convention of Community Councils; subject to LCC being content with the final wording.

Context

On the 17th January the Energy Sub Group (ESG) and the Community Council Chairman attended the *Community Council Convention on the Impact of Major Energy Infrastructure in the Scottish Borders*.

Around 40 community councils from the Scottish Borders, East Lothian, Dumfries and Galloway and South Lanarkshire were represented; as well as campaign groups, environmental groups and politicians. A selection of community councils and represented groups gave 2-minute presentations to express their views and share their experiences. Guest speakers from the Highland convention and the North East Convention described their journey to adopting a unified statement.

Elected and prospective politicians were then given an opportunity to respond. Unfortunately, an invitation for the Energy Minister to attend was declined.

The mood of the meeting was generally concern for the cumulative impact of energy developments and a feeling communities were not being listened to. Not all community councils represented were against individual renewable developments in their area.

The convention agreed that going forward it would widen its scope to cover the whole of the South of Scotland. Community council representatives were asked to go back to their full council with a proposal to sign up to a unified statement, based on the Highland statement, requesting a pause in renewable energy infrastructure developments until the Scottish Government has in place a clear strategy for the transition to renewables. (draft statement attached). The precise wording of the statement will be agreed at the next convention – expected around March.

The ESG recommends that Lauderdale Community Council sign up to the Unified Statement for the South of Scotland Convention of Community Councils; subject to LCC being content with the final wording.

In making our recommendation we considered the following:

- This statement merely calls for a pause and does not change our agreed strategy of consulting our community about individual developments, as they arise, in an unbiased way.
- We note that the community expressed concern about the cumulative impact of energy developments in Lauderdale in our most recent survey. 72% of Lauderdale

respondents were opposed to most or all energy developments in our area. 88% cited “large scale change of land” use as being an important factor in their decision making. We believe that in signing the statement we would be reflecting the wishes of the Lauderdale community

- We regard being a signatory to the USCCC as support only for what is written in that statement.
- We believe we will have a stronger community-based voice by joining with other community councils. The Highland Convention has already secured a round table event at the Scottish Parliament in February, which includes representation from the South of Scotland Convention.

Unified Statement of the Convention of Community Councils

Our Community Councils

- RECOGNISE the impact of Climate Change on our planet but OPPOSE an unjust and unnecessary industrialisation of Rural Scotland.
- CALL for our elected members to URGENTLY support and protect our communities at NATIONAL level, given that community consultation is inadequate and LOCAL DEMOCRACY is being overridden, with decisions made by Community Councils and Local Authorities consistently disregarded by the Scottish Government.
- CALL upon the Scottish Government to undertake a PLANNING INQUIRY COMMISSION to address the whole cumulative impact of all major renewable energy infrastructure developments, including transmission, storage and generation with all ancillary infrastructure on our communities and landscape, rather than the salami sliced approach which has thus far been taken.
- CALL for a PAUSE of all major applications, given the impact upon our communities, which may hasten depopulation in some areas until a clear NATIONAL ENERGY POLICY is in place and an ECONOMIC IMPACT ASSESSMENT undertaken given that tourism is a major part of our rural economy.

