**Note of the LINK Planning meeting held on 8 May 2019 at the LINK office, Edinburgh**

Attending: Clare Symonds (PD), Arina Nagy-Vizitiu (WTS), Charles Strang (APRS/SCNP), Beryl Leatherland (SWLG), Diarmid Hearns (NTS), Sue Hamilton (PD), Daphne Vlastari (LINK AM), Alice Walsh (LINK DO).

Apologies: Aedán Smith (RSPB), Fergus Boden (FoES), Janine Ballantyne (NTS), Gus Jones (BSCG), John Mayhew (APRS).

1. **The Planning Bill.**

Review of progress to date: Daphne reported what she had learned from attending the recent Conservative Party conference re the Bill. There will be a cross party meeting this week for parties to discuss what amendments they agree on. Labour is not functioning well on Planning. The timetable for Stage 3 will be confirmed in the next few weeks. The work on the Bill meantime is being done by the Chief Planner. Noted that Kezia Dugdale will be replaced by S Boyack, current LINK Fellow, though possibly not until the Bill is concluded. **Daphne will email Sarah Boyack.**

Next steps for Stage 3: We expect it to be completed by mid June and take more than one day, possibly three. Amendments will be organised in advance. The researcher has advised that that amendments that come in not pre-agreed is bad tactics. They are trying to get cross party agreement on the commonalities. Parties will work with Govt when they approve and work in concert against Govt when they do not; ie Conservatives will work with Govt against ERA, and Greens and Labours will work against them. **Action to set up a meeting with the researcher Gavin and Graham Simpson.** Clare has written to Labour Alex Rowley and Monica Lennon, and has organised a meeting with Colin Beattie.

Helen has contacted Andy Wightman about the hilltracks amendments, with supportive material, hoping to meet him shortly. That meeting can include other issues within the LINK briefing, though a **separate meeting would be useful to check where he stands on several issues**.

Briefing: Timing is best over the next week or so. Additional material has come from Bruce and Beryl, with more to come from Arina, if the Forestry Amendment will stand. **Daphne will help with editing it and circulating**. We will focus on the key issues, pushing on those that might fail because of lack of agreement between the parties.

Media and campaign strategy: PD had several ideas (circulated to participants) and sought ideas. What to put on the side of the bus. The aim is to get the attention of the media and Govt rather than influence the public, publicly asking MSPs to act on behalf of communities. There was discussion, with suggestion of hiring a bus to park outside Parliament with the appropriate pity message based on fairness and justice, the difference in how developers and communities are listened to. A social media focus would also help. Timing for the first 2 weeks of June. **PD will pursue**.

E-Action: LINK has worked with 38 Degrees on the FFSN campaign, which gained 6k signatures in very little time. Daphne will inquire about the possibility of collaboration on the planning e-action. **Daphne would contact Fergus and Mary to help with the refocus of the e-action** held on the FoES website referring to the National Performance Framework wording on empowered local communities, asking MSPs to support the amendment which will be put forward by Labour and the Greens. It was agreed to focus on ERA, as other issues are too technical for an e-action. This is urgent and should go live week of 20 or 27 May.

Spoof planning notices (see Clare’s email of 23 April): Clare encourage people to write them, print them off and attach them to lampposts. The aim is to pique media interest and grab the attention of MSPs. PD have had thousands of shares on social media. Charles was encouraged to help develop good examples.

1. **Beyond the Planning Bill.**

People are now thinking of the next stages (conferences etc), the National Planning Framework (due 2020), and secondary legislation to follow. **We have to influence that thinki**ng.

We discussed having a workshop or series of workshops to be informed about and explore how planning can work better for our agenda, as so much will happen after the Act. Clare has been in touch with Cliff Haig, and with Laurie McFarlane of the New Economics Foundation, linking planning to the economics agenda. Matthew Crighton would be speaking at PD’s conference on 11 May on the links to the neoliberal agenda. This relates to discussions within the Group last year about needing to be more agenda setting, the potential conference (which PD has taken forward in part with next Saturday’s event), and what we would do following up a conference. Clare will also be talking to Glasgow University to get more academic leverage.

There are two purposes in holding such events, both to understand the next wave of detail on NPF, 2ndary legislation and Local Place Plans (reacting to the Govts agenda) and setting our own agenda.

Adding to the Group’s plan so far (in the Work Programme), this be assessment of the Planning Bill and lessons learned; assessment of secondary legislation and liaising with Govt, including meeting the Minister, to share understanding what we want from it and for the NPF. The proactive part would be the conference or series of smaller workshops on particular aspects. We discussed updating LINK’s 1999 [Planning and Sustainable Development Audit](http://www.scotlink.org/files/publication/LINKReports/ScottishEnvironmentAudits3-PlanningAndSustainableDevelopment.pdf), to contribute to the evidence base. The end of the Planning Bill would be a good time for reflection on what has changed in 20 years. Daphne noted the IPCC report talks of a sustainable economy and the problem of overcoming vested interests, so for these recommendations to be adopted by Govt requires a step change. We should look at the IPCC report, and ask what is needed from the planning system. The [Raynesford Review](https://www.tcpa.org.uk/news/press-release-raynsford-review-of-planning-to-be-launched-on-20-november-2018) in England, commissioned by the TCPA, was a big piece of work. We could do an equivalent smaller version. Scotland has a new bill with untested provisions. Scotland’s questions before the bill were about housing and deregulation. The RR is what you would do if looking at it holistically. Too late? Not if the findings were timed to coincide with NPF 4, changing its core messages, potential for solving some of the wider climate, nature issues, some top line environmental messaging. The Raynesford Review is relevant as Scotland usually follows England in planning policy. We cannot afford a review on that scale, but can use it as a lens and do a quick and dirty version of it.

**Action**: **All to read the 1999 Audit as a starting point to assess if updating it in current context would be worthwhile, funded by the LINK DPF. If so, it needs a steering group (potentially Clare, ?Aedán, ?Diarmid) to agree the brief, terms of reference, commission a consultant by summer for completion in October.**

Potentially launch it at a conference, looking at themes from it, referencing Raynesford, and what is happening abroad. Look at other issues that impact on planning decisions such as market forces, local governance review, land review agenda, bringing in people from other disciplines, also forestry and SNH.

Diarmid offered to do drafts for the workshops and the report. Workshops could inform the report, and vica versa. The workshops themselves would involve a lot of work by staff and members, so we should be very clear what we want to get out of them, and what they contribute to.

**3. Integration with other groups.**

Work ahead will involve other groups, and NEN through the national planning framework. Sections in the 1999 Audit are on rural Scotland, involving Food and Farming and Forestry Subgroups.

**4. AOB**

Board meeting discussed the DPF bid for the Environmental Justice Centre. UN House is reaching out to help us to get it started.

Principles and Governance Consultation response. Daphne asked members to sign up to it by the end of the day. PD supported it.

Flamingo Land in the LL&T NP, a good case study of how local place plans might not work, as there had been a good charrette carried out showing much local opposition. Nick Kempe will be speaking about it at PD’s conference. There is a Community Charter movement, which started from fracking activists in Falkirk, looking at a life plan, rather than local place plan.

PD Conference is on Saturday at 10.15 at Glasgow Trades Hall. Spaces still available, so come if you can.

Charles asked if there was any discussion on the Audit Scotland report 4 to 5 years ago on fees for planning departments, as there is no sense that anyone is taking these sound recommendations forward. No one had any intelligence to offer. He would investigate further. It would be topical in terms of the financial memo for the Planning Bill.

Arina suggested we ask the Minister for a meeting ahead of Stage 3. **Daphne will email**, on the basis of supporting some issues at Stage 3, and looking forward to the NPF.