

Subject: Jedburgh Convention - Next Steps

Good Morning,

Thank you all for attending, or showing an interest in the Convention, which I understand from feedback was a success.

What we achieved:

We provided an opportunity for communities from across the South of Scotland impacted by renewable infrastructure to have a strong voice in relation to what is happening. For this voice to be joined with Community Councils in the Highlands and North East Scotland.

Our politicians, whether they had the decency to attend or not, have heard our message through some excellent press coverage. For Information, after the main Convention I was approached by John Redpath, an SNP Candidate standing in Ettrick Roxburgh & Berwickshire, who advised that he supports the Unified Statement and now intends to feed information to his party.

We have the opportunity to come together under the banner of the Unified Statement provided by Highland Community Councils. The Straw Poll taken on the day, which is not binding on community councils, indicated that the majority supported the Unified Statement. I have received some feedback suggesting changes to this document for one reason or the other. From experience, I have found that important documents can seldom be written by committee. With the document already agreed by 50 Highland Community Councils and echoed by 85 from NE Scotland, I believe that we would be stronger to retain the 4 points in the Highland Statement as is. Clearly, unlike the current style of our Scottish Government, we are looking to a democratic process and it is for individual community councils to decide.

What Next:

1. I would ask that you place the Unified Statement on the agenda of your next community council meeting for discussion and to decide whether or not your community is happy to sign up to it. NB you may receive a similar email from me soon, as I intend to send a letter to ALL community councils in East Lothian, Scottish Borders, Dumfries and Galloway and South Lanarkshire asking that they consider the Unified Statement at their next meeting.
2. As instructed by the Convention, a letter, ideally under the banner of all three Conventions will be sent to the leaders of each Party in the Scottish Parliament asking how they will reflect the views of our communities in their manifestos.
3. I will write to all councillors in SBC outlining the outcomes of the Convention and asking that cognisance is taken of our community views, both in locally decided applications and in relation to the SBC response to Sect 36 applications. It would be good if community councils in East Lothian, Dumfries and Galloway and East Lanarkshire did likewise.
4. I, along with others will be attending the Round Table Event to be held at the Scottish Parliament on 24th February between 1pm and 3pm.
5. I will consult with both Helen Crawford and Nicky Loosley how we can extend the reach of our influence to include ALL rural community councils in Scotland.

6. We need to organise a second Convention, ideally by April and before the Scottish Government Elections. Happy to accept suggestions for venue or for anyone who wishes to be involved in the organising of this to get in touch. The purpose of this event will be to provide feedback from community councils regarding the Unified Statement and consider next steps. While the first Convention was information gathering, the second will be decision making.

Feedback welcomed, but please keep your emails fairly short!

Bob