

## Mandatory training on planning for elected members - consultation

26/October/2023

Built Environment Forum Scotland (BEFS) is an umbrella body for organisations working in the built environment in Scotland. Drawing on extensive expertise in a membership-led forum, BEFS informs, debates and advocates on the strategic issues, opportunities and challenges facing Scotland's existing built environment. BEFS is a supporting member of the [Climate Heritage Network](#).

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Other relevant consultation responses from BEFS can be seen below, as many issues overlap and demand associative consideration:

- [DRAFT NATIONAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK 4 \(NPF4\) CONSULTATION \(31/03/2022\)](#)

In forming this response BEFS received detailed views from Members both in writing and through a roundtable discussion.

BEFS statement:

BEFS fully supports the proposal for mandatory training on planning for elected members. We would consider that good decision making for people and places recognises the National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) view that *'Scotland's rich heritage, culture and outstanding environment are national assets which support our economy, identity, health and wellbeing'*, whilst delivering against the spatial principles within NPF4. Alongside the training requirements proposed (BEFS supports the list in Question 4) BEFS would suggest (in relation to Question 5) that recognising wider current issues relating to planning should be considered such as

- a fabric first approach to maintaining Scotland's existing building stock (alongside appropriate retrofit), which can contribute very real benefits towards net zero;
- informed planning decisions around the challenges posed by the potential closure of places of worship in Scotland, and what this means for communities;
- the role and capacity of local authorities in Local Development Planning and Local Place Plans – as well as local authority estate rationalisation

BEFS notes that consistency within decision making could also be supported by data being available on planning decisions for elected members, and BEFS would support case studies to enable good decision making to be showcased.

BEFS also wishes to note that planning decisions put to elected members have been made by skilled, trained, planning professionals and their views and experience is designed to help elected members make good decisions for their places, now and for the future.

Question 9 – BEFS recommends that when there is significant change to local or national planning relevant to the elected member training be refreshed.

BEFS recognises that current training for elected members is delivered by PAS (formerly Planning Aid Scotland) and the Improvement Service. Continued sector input through the IS, PAS, RTPI, RICS and other accredited bodies would be welcomed. Further, an understanding on the considerations of planning decisions relating to existing and historic buildings and places can only contribute to better, greener and more sustainable outcomes for all Scotland's places. For more on this we would refer to the [Historic Environment Policy for Scotland \(HEPS\)](#).

BEFS responses to a number of Consultations in relation to the Built Environment can be found at:

<https://www.befs.org.uk/resources/consultations/>

### **RESPONDENT INFORMATION**

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Responding on behalf of an Organisation - **BEFS** (Built Environment Forum Scotland)

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The Scottish Government would like your permission to publish your consultation response. Please indicate your publishing preference: **Publish response with name**

We will share your response internally with other Scottish Government policy teams who may be addressing the issues you discuss. They may wish to contact you again in the future, but we require your permission to do so. Are you content for Scottish Government to contact you again in relation to this consultation exercise? **YES**

I confirm that I have read the privacy policy and consent to the data I provide being used as set out in the policy. **I CONSENT**