

Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Strategic Development Planning Authority

**To: Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Strategic Development Planning Authority
Joint Committee**

On: 10th September 2018

**Report by
Stuart Tait, Manager**

Planning (Scotland) Bill Update

1. Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Joint Committee on the matters relating to the ongoing consideration by the Scottish Parliament of the Planning (Scotland) Bill.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Joint Committee notes this report and the progress and Parliamentary scrutiny of the Planning (Scotland) Bill.

3. Context

- 3.1 The Joint Committee are aware of the most relevant aspects of the Bill as it pertains to Clydeplan. These are:
- the removal of the statutory requirement to prepare Strategic Development Plans; and,
 - a requirement on a planning authority or, two or more planning authorities, to provide information to assist the Scottish Ministers in their preparation of the National Planning Framework.

4. Parliamentary Scrutiny

- 4.1 The Parliamentary scrutiny process has been ongoing since the Bill's publication in December 2017. The process is being scrutinised by the Scottish Parliament's Local Government and Communities Committee to which Clydeplan gave both oral and written evidence. The transcript of the Clydeplan oral evidence session can be viewed at www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=11405&mode=pdf.
- 4.2 The Local Government and Communities Committee's Stage 1 Report concluded in respect of Strategic Development Planning as follows:
- "95.....we do not consider that the current statutory framework for regional planning should be repealed unless a more robust mechanism is provided to that currently proposed in the Bill."*

- 4.3 The report also stated that it is unclear that removing SDPs from the statutory planning system will lead to simplification, streamlining, cost savings or more effective regional planning and considers there are risks if regional planning becomes voluntary.
- 4.4 A debate on Stage 1 of the Bill was held in the Scottish Parliament held on 29th May 2018. The Bill was introduced by Kevin Stewart MSP, Minister for Local Government, Housing and Planning who stated:

“The Bill seeks to remove strategic development plans from the system, but I have always been clear that a strong continuing role for strategic planning in Scotland will remain through the national planning framework and regional partnership working across the country. However, strategic development planning in Scotland has had challenges as well as successes, and we need the system to change so that planning can better respond to the world that we live in.....I understand the concerns that have been raised by some about political support and resources being available for strategic planning, so we will look at lodging an amendment at Stage 2 to introduce a clearer duty for planning authorities to work together on strategic planning. I want to ensure that we avoid being too prescriptive about that to ensure that we allow for different approaches that reflect local circumstances”

- 4.5 In closing remarks on the debate there were two specific references to Clydeplan firstly from Monica Lennon MSP, Vice Chair of the Local Government and Communities Committee, who stated:

“Scotland has a successful history of strategic planning. Clydeplan, for example, is an award-winning strategic development plan authority. However, the Bill seeks to abolish SDPs without showing any evidence as to why they are not working. There is really not a lot of evidence on that. To say, on the one hand, that we need to abolish SDPs, and, on the other, that we should allow them to continue on a voluntary basis does not make much sense, even to an old veteran planner such as me”.

- 4.6 Secondly Adam Tomkins MSP, Deputy Convener of the Finance and Constitution Committee, in the same debate stated that:

“...it is cities and their regions that drive economic growth. The one respect in which that truth is recognised in the existing Scottish planning system is in the importance of strategic development plans, not least in the city that I represent, where the Clydeplan is now around 70 years old. It is cities, working in close collaboration with their regions, that drive economic growth, and we need a planning system that recognises and encourages that rather than one that dilutes it”.

- 4.7 The acknowledgement of the history of successful joint working of Clydeplan is welcomed as consideration of these matters continues through Parliament. The full report on the debate can be viewed here www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=11566.

- 4.8 In June, the Convenor of the Clydeplan Joint Committee wrote by email to all of Scotland's 129 MSPs to highlight the important role of strategic planning in Scotland and the positive experience of Clydeplan (refer Appendix). The Convenor's email was tweeted by Clydeplan and a news item placed on its website. The item was retweeted notably by the RTPi and HoPS, and the Convenor also received a number of direct responses.
- 4.9 The Ministerial commitment to bring forward an amendment at Stage 2 to introduce a clearer duty for planning authorities to work together on strategic planning is welcomed. Clydeplan and the other SDPAs met with the Scottish Government on 7th August 2018. The Assistant Chief Planner was able to confirm that a Scottish Government amendment will be being promoted for consideration by the Local Government and Communities Committee at its meeting on 12th September. Details of the amendment will be advised to the Joint Committee at its meeting.
- 4.10 At the time of writing, some 100 amendments are being promoted as published in the daily lists available online at:
www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/Bills/106768.aspx.
- 4.11 Of particular note, Andy Wightman MSP has promoted an amendment to not remove SDPs and it is anticipated that other MSPs may lodge similar amendments in relation the retention of SDPs and/or based on the enhanced duty for authorities to work together on strategic planning. All amendments will be debated through the Local Government and Communities Committee and ultimately determined at Stage 3 by Parliament, most likely towards the end of 2018.

Appendix

Councillor O'Neill's Email to Scottish Parliament MSP's

Dear MSP Colleagues,

I am writing to you in my role as Convenor of Clydeplan, the Strategic Development Planning Authority for the Glasgow City Region, Scotland's largest city region. Clydeplan consists of 8 Local Authority areas which makes up a third of Scotland's population generating a third of Scotland's GVA.

The Clydeplan Joint Committee is aware that matters relevant to the possible future role for strategic planning and the proposal to remove the statutory requirement to prepare Strategic Development Plan for Scotland city regions will be debated by yourself as the Planning (Scotland) Bill progresses through the Scottish Parliament. At its last meeting the Joint Committee thought it timely to apprise you of the valuable work being undertaken by Clydeplan within this important area.

For over 70 years strategic planning has been central to the regeneration and economic revitalisation of the Glasgow city region through periods of significant structural economic change. The two Strategic Development Plans which have been developed and prepared by Clydeplan have been delivered on time and on budget. Both Strategic Development Plans have been robustly scrutinised through an independent examination process before final approval by Scottish Ministers. As such they have formed a credible and effective component of the development planning system, guiding and steering Local Development Plans and decision making which reflects the success of Clydeplan's joint working ethos and the commitment of the constituent local authorities and wider stakeholders.

The latest Clydeplan SDP, which was approved by Scottish Ministers in July 2017, through its Vision and Spatial Development Strategy sets the strategic planning policy context for supporting its network of strategic centres, enabling the delivery of over 110,000 new homes, facilitating climate change mitigation and adaptation, maximises the benefits of green infrastructure and promotes sustainable transport. I have attached an overview of the Clydeplan SDP for your information.

Clydeplan and its joint working process across its eight local authorities can be seen as an exemplar for Scotland in how local authorities can effectively work together on strategic planning issues in support of delivering inclusive economic growth. Clydeplan is of the belief that this successful model should be enhanced as part of any new Planning (Scotland) Bill.

Continuing support, including cross party support, exists across the 8 Glasgow City Region local authorities for the continuation of a strategic planning function with any new Planning (Scotland) Bill. Strategic planning is seen as important in supporting the aims both locally and nationally for achieving sustainable and inclusive economic growth within this city region. Some of our recent work is exemplified within the latest Annual Report (see attached) and I would also direct you to Clydeplan's website www.clydeplan-sdpa.gov.uk for more information.

We hope that you take these matters into consideration during your Parliamentary deliberations as they relate to the future role of strategic planning in Scotland.

Kind regards

Councillor Lawrence O'Neill

Ward 4 - Kilpatrick (Faifley, Duntocher & Hardgate)

**Convenor of Clydeplan, Strategic Development Planning Authority for the
Glasgow City Region**