

## NATIONAL ISLANDS PLAN REVIEW – CONSULTATION

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### 1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 Scotland's first ever [National Islands Plan](#) was published in 2019. It is now being reviewed as required by the Islands (Scotland) Act 2018, which may lead to the publication of a new National Islands Plan. The Act requires a review of the Plan within 5 years of initial publication. This review provides an opportunity to reflect on changes in circumstance for island communities since 2019.
- 1.2 The Islands (Scotland) Act 2018 requires that a consultation must take place as part of this review. This will provide Scottish Government with information on what may need to be revised before any new Plan is laid before parliament.
- 1.3 The aim of this review is twofold. Firstly, it will provide a detailed overview of the impact of the current National Islands Plan since its publication. Secondly, it will inform a new National Islands Plan.
- 1.4 The review was launched on line on 1 August 2023 with a closing date of 9 October 2023. Island in person events as well as on line and stakeholder events will be held to discuss the review and to give island communities and stakeholders the opportunity to provide feedback. Over the coming months, Scottish Government are planning to hold island based, in person events to discuss the review with island communities. Details of these events are currently being confirmed and will be made available in due course. It is understood that there will be a total of 2 of these island based events held in Argyll and Bute. Scottish Government will also be holding a series of stakeholder events, again these details will be made available in due course.

### 2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee:-

- a. Note the National Islands Plan Review online consultation announced by the Scottish Government on 1 August 2023 with a closing date of 9 October 2023; and
- b. Given the timeline for the response, agree that the formal response to the consultation from the Council be prepared and shared with Members of the Argyll Islands Sounding Board for their views and input with the final response being delegated to the Executive Director with responsibility for Development and Economic Growth in consultation with the Leader, Depute Leader, Leader of the largest Opposition Group and the Policy Lead for Islands.

### **3.0 DETAILS**

- 3.1 Scotland's first ever [National Islands Plan](#) was published in 2019. It is now being reviewed as required by the Islands (Scotland) Act 2018, which may lead to the publication of a new National Islands Plan. The Scottish Government wants to work together with Local Authorities, island communities and relevant sectors and partners to ensure this process is as thorough and effective as possible, providing the opportunity for feedback from those most impacted by the National Islands Plan.
- 3.2 The review was launched online on 1 August 2023 with a closing date of 9 October 2023 and a copy of the consultation questions are attached at Appendix 1 of this report. Over the coming months, Scottish Government are planning to hold island based, in person events to discuss the review with island communities. Details of these events are currently being confirmed and will be made available in due course. It is understood that there will be a total of 2 of these island based events held in Argyll and Bute. Scottish Government will also be holding a series of stakeholder events, again these details will be made available in due course.
- 3.3 The results of the written consultation will be combined with quantitative and more qualitative data gathered through the meetings detailed above with key partners across the islands and direct engagement with island communities. Scottish Government will then use this information to inform any review and the decision as to whether a new National Islands Plan is required.
- 3.4 The consultation is specifically aimed at:-
  - People who live on Scotland's islands, and any groups who represent them.
  - People who have an interest in Scotland's islands.
  - Organisations and people working on and with Scotland's islands, across the public, private and third sector.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

- 4.1 Given the timescale for responding, it is proposed that a draft to each of the 11 online questions is prepared and shared with Members of the Argyll Islands Sounding Board for their views and their input with the final submission to the consultation being delegated to the Executive Director with responsibility for Development and Economic Growth in consultation with the Leader, Depute Leader, Leader of the largest Opposition Group and the Policy Lead for Islands.

## **5.0 IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Policy – The Scottish Government’s National Islands Plan (NIP) seeks to support islands communities and address those issues and challenges most affecting Scotlands islands.
- 5.2 Financial – No direct financial implication in regard to the consultation response itself however the successful delivery of the current NIP and the associated actions contained within it is reliant on sufficient financial resources also being made available by Scottish Government to local authorities.
- 5.3 Legal – None.
- 5.4 HR – None.
- 5.5 Fairer Scotland Duty:
- 5.5.1 Equalities – None.
- 5.5.2 Socio-Economic Duty – None.
- 5.5.3 Islands – The NIP has been developed by the Scottish Government to help support our island communities.
- 5.6 Climate Change – None.
- 5.7 Risk – None.
- 5.8 Customer Service – None.

**Executive Director with responsibility for Development and Economic Growth:**  
Kirsty Flanagan

**Policy Lead for Islands and Business Development:** Councillor Liz McCabe

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## **APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 – National Islands Plan Consultation Questions