

Community Planning Management Committee – 8th August 2007

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From: newslink@newslink.co.uk [<mailto:newslink@newslink.co.uk>]

Sent: 19 June 2007 16:35

To: Carol Airlie

Subject: DRIVE TO END SILO WORKING STARTS IN RURAL AREAS

From: SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE

DRIVE TO END SILO WORKING STARTS IN RURAL AREAS

Nine key organisations working in rural affairs and environment have been tasked to draw up proposals to deliver a single rural and environmental service within a year.

The aim of this request from Ministers is to build a simpler, more efficient service, operating as a single body, but without any change in legislation. Ministers believe that it should give lighter touch environmental governance, better protection for the environment, a stronger focus on green issues and cut through unnecessary red tape.

Speaking in Grantown on Spey after meeting with the chairs of various bodies, Michael Russell, Minister for Environment, said:

"We are all committed to improving the delivery of public services and to reduce the burden of regulation on business, including the land management sector.

"The new Scottish government is determined to ensure that lighter touch environmental governance benefits everyone who comes into contact with the rural and environmental agencies. We need to end duplication and working in isolation. That is particularly true at the farm gate where farmers routinely face inspections from multiple organisations.

"Bodies like SNH and SEPA and both national parks do an excellent job. As I have seen over the last few weeks, so do their hard-working staff.

"Significant progress has already been made with the On the Ground programme over the last 18 months in closer working.

"But much more can and needs to be done to deliver more efficient and effective environmental governance in Scotland.

"Today I have asked the chairs of the relevant organisations meeting here to develop proposals over the next three months with a view to the new system being up and running by summer 2008."

NOTES TO NEWS EDITORS

The nine key organisations are:

SNH, SEPA, Forestry Commission Scotland and Forest Enterprise, Cairngorm National Park Authority, Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park Authority, Deer Commission Scotland (DCS), Crofters Commission, Scottish Executive Rural Payments & Inspections Directorate and the Animal Health Agency. In addition a number of other bodies, including CoSLA, who are

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not directly or indirectly part of the Scottish Executive's Rural and Environment portfolio, will be invited to participate in the work.

Significant progress has already been made through the On the Ground programme, to support closer working and by encouraging co-location such as SNH and DCS in Inverness

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