

The Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee

Green recovery

Community meeting hosted tsiMoray and the Scottish Parliament

12 August 2020, 2pm on Zoom

Scottish Parliament staff

Kate Smith, Community Outreach Team
Lena Phalen, Committee Engagement Unit

MSPs

Gillian Martin MSP, Convener, Environment Climate Change and Land Reform Committee

Participants – in total 4

Saorsa Seillean
individual
tsiMoray, Development Worker, Lossiemouth, Hopeman, Burghead, Spynie, Duffus
tsiMoray, Chief Exec

1. Do you agree or disagree that steps taken by the government to help the economy recover should be designed to help achieve Net Zero?

Agree 4
Disagree
Not sure

2. What do you think 'green recovery' should mean?

- Need way more green spaces for education, for children especially.
- A broader approach to planning, especially in cities.
- The voluntary sector has said for a while that as a society we live beyond means, and we don't share the resources we're extracting. Covid a warning sign that we have exceeded the limit of our resources. We need a green and just recovery. This is an opportunity to practice how we get together and respond to adverse events. Can't just go back to how things were before, we need to think about the future and make sure we can join the dots and ensure people don't fall between the gaps
- Some of the local schools already have involvement in these environmental issues - whether this will lead to more young people wanting this as their employment remains to be seen.

- The Princes trust survey on the mental health of young people show feeling of impotence about the state of the environment, a feeling that it's outside of their control. Inequality another issue.
3. How do the principles of sustainable development relate to your work, the people that you support?

Due to feedback in the two previous two community meetings about the questions being difficult we took this out it was followed up with an emailed question to which no one responded.

4. Have you seen positive environmental changes as a result of how communities have responded to the crisis?
- The local churches have been much involved in foodbanks (some setting up their own, others supporting existing ones).
 - Local Covid-19 support group. Members of the community helped out by for example picking up prescriptions for people who were shielding. Supporters and volunteers are plugging gaps but they also need support. There is a huge impact on them. It is hard to organise support for them. They do not necessarily have the skills or there is not the infrastructure to support them. Need to assess what people need and where it can be applied.
 - We see lots of organisations coming together, and mutual support groups. People are discovering the value of coming together. People reassess what is important.
 - Roads were quiet during lockdown but no more. People need to feel it's safe to use active means of transport. Infrastructure need to be there. There was more respect for cyclists and walkers during lockdown but this is beginning to erode. The respectful mindset needs to be encouraged.
 - Infrastructure important- to segregate roads from traffic.
 - Lots more people taking walks in the country rather than around the town as in the past. - there may be a need to ensure that access continues to be available. The tension between the benefits of excluding cars from town-centres and the access needs of the disabled has become a major issue.
 - Hard keep 2 meters distance, people end up in the road.
 - Examples of a surgery in Lossiemouth where the surgery was closed and people were having to travel far on public transport (using a number of buses, and taking all day) to reach a different surgery. The community has come together and recharged the local community minibus to take people to the surgeries so they don't have to take public transport. Little villages weren't really working together before. This group now want to set up a Moray wide transport hub. Transport and fuel poverty biggest challenges.

- More groups have come together, positive. That joining up of efforts something we can capitalise on. There's a tendency of groups to become isolationist. Collaboration and recognition of what others can bring to the table important.
 - Hopefully more people have become aware of the need for us to move more quickly to become carbon-neutral - we need to capitalise on this.
 - Important consider what we prioritise and invest in. Shortening food chain, planting trees. Retro fitting better insulation, energy efficacy measures.
5. Do you think that government, employers and or others should take steps to encourage lifestyle to change to be more compatible with reaching net zero?

Agree 4

Disagree 0

Not sure 0

6. What are the key barriers to delivering a green recovery in the voluntary sector?
- Getting resources has become much harder in recent years in the voluntary sector. Covid brought flurry of resources. It has not necessarily been well-coordinated or focussed. Many focussed on the short term and not so well considered, for example not using local produce. Short term needs to be met but long-term vision also needed, including local organisations to support it.
 - There needs to be much more urgency devoted to major problems, particularly homelessness.
 - There is an artificial tension between economic recovery, sustainability, and justice. If we hurry to build back what we had before Covid we miss the chance to build for the future.
 - There are barriers to empower local people. There needs to be local solutions for people desperately in need, and money to support local projects.
 - People have come together locally rapidly, effectively. Early attempt by public sector to coordinate efforts came across as attempt to direct it. Created unnecessary tensions. Public sector should oversee, identify and bridge gaps. A planned approach should be taken to support what was happening on local level. Invest in what is actually happening already.
7. What does your sector need to help protect the environment and to support the communities you work with?
- [Saorsa Seillean](#) described the project they have set up. It has been set up by one person who has requested to take over an acre of land owned by the [Altyre Estate](#) in order to create a wildflower meadow of pollinators to aid recovery of pollinators and biodiversity. It has only been open for visitors for 4 weeks and they already have over 100 people have come to visit. They have listed on the Moray Covid-recovery page and people hear about it through that and it is supporting the communities wellbeing and recovery. They are developing

further to support people who have mobility issues as the land is on a hill. They would like to run educational sessions for children and invite specialists to talk about the environment. Potential to spread across Scotland. Encourage individuals to look and see what they can do. Hoping more estates will be encouraged to give over land. It was pointed out that this is entirely dependent upon the good will of land owner and through individual funding.

- Value in investing in local community projects. Rather than control and direct community responses, investing in communities and people who know what they want to do and what they need. Local people are at foreground looking after environment and each other after Covid, but sometimes support is needed. Someone that can connect people is important.
 - Need to exist somewhere where people can go with their energy and ideas and get support.
 - Strong support from the government is needed. People will recognise genuine commitment.
8. What key policies, actions and immediate priorities are needed to deliver a green recovery in the voluntary sector community?

Question mostly responded to already above

- One of the major barriers is the lack of investment in community development. Something that local authorities used to do... community animators, community connectors, community development workers. Communities have the understanding and, ideas, solutions to do thing themselves but they need resources to facilitate these projects and ideas. They need a post, a key person to bring it all together. It needs investment, rather than trying to control and direct community responses. Support community responses and what they need to do. We need strong support from Scottish Government, commitment and genuine support, to enable people. Put local people in the foreground. Investment is needed.
- Interested in seeing a wellbeing economy which is what the voluntary sector wants. No tension between the social and environmental sector but resources are not distributed in fair way. There is plenty for all of us, we need to share more equally. False dichotomies is missing the point. Two sides of same coin.