

PE1678/Y

Petitioner submission of 23 September 2018

Comment:

SNH commissioned a Consultant pre 2007 to review the possible future of Rangering in Scotland (*were they looking at ways to trim their budget?*).

The Consultant's conclusions allowed SNH to prepare their 2007 report of possible outcomes, which sadly has been the very outcomes which have taken place systematically into 2018.

The SNH report was targeted to notify the Employers who were the recipients of Scottish Government and SNH Grant (*SCRA is not an employer of rangers, and had no levers to diverting such outcomes*).

In 2008, SNH produced the "2008 Strategy for Rangers in Scotland", knowing that their prior consultation highlighted the probable outcomes.

The Financial Crisis in 2010 saw a marked escalation in the loss of posts.

Question: Why was SNH, *who were, and still are*, the Government agency who absorbed the responsibility for Countryside Rangers from the merger in 1992 and now appear willing to drop their responsibility, overview and connection with the very professionals who help deliver these responsibilities daily to the people of Scotland and visitors to our country?

Further questions:

- Does SNH recognise the enhanced delivery of its corporate aims that are delivered by Ranger Services – both those in receipt of grant aid and also those with a historic grant aid connection?
- What reporting mechanisms exist for those services that currently receive grant aid? How is that information collated and used to demonstrate value for money? We are interested in the levels of accountability required from those in receipt of grant aid.
- The decision to withdraw grant aid support indicates that SNH does not believe these services offered value for money or enhanced SNH's corporate targets. What governance has been in place to monitor the activities of these supported services? What consultation took place prior to the decision to withdraw grant aid support?
- How many private and community based Ranger Services, previously funded by SNH, have succeeded in finding sustainable alternative sources of funding? What steps have SNH taken to protect the status of services they have funded

up until 2018? We are interested in the steps taken to protect the investment of public money put into these services.

- Does SNH believe that another agency (Government or NGO) should now have the strategic overview of Ranger Services and related countryside professionals working in Scotland?
- Will SNH convene a meeting of the Ranger development partnership and use that meeting to begin to address the issues raised by this petition and the adverse impact caused by the loss of posts in this sector?