

Ministerial meetings with Gladman

The Minister for Local Government, Housing and Planning has met with Gladman once.

21 March 2017 Meeting with Gladman Graduates –
Minister for Local Government and Planning –



Committee room 6, Scottish Parliament

No official outputs or minutes were taken given that it was a roundtable discussion but the questions passed to us in advance of the meeting are provided below.

Gladman Graduates - questions asked of Minister

1	<p>With regard to providing more employment opportunities for those who have completed a masters in planning in Scotland (in which you are able to get both tuition and living costs loan).</p> <p>The context for this question is that the majority of people on my course did not have a planning background and the course (looking at others across Scotland it seems to similar) was more of a conversion masters. However, upon graduating there were very few employment opportunities in Scotland, with myself moving down south and others now solely apply for England as there are far more jobs down South.</p>
2	<p>Based on experience, coming from university straight into planning, in university there wasn't much guidance on APC (Assessment of Professional Competence) and becoming a chartered planner. Yes the accredited course meant you had to do specific core modules in order to gain the accreditation, but the questions is should there be more guidance/advice on how to become a chartered town planner? Whilst I have been working there have been opportunities for APC workshops, but in terms of aims and goal settings, there wasn't a great emphasis on becoming chartered. Perhaps one of the core modules should be career planning and succeeding in the APC process such as: meeting the key competencies, to the structure of the APC process, to gaining sufficient experience guidance on that could be better. In my opinion by studying a planning degree, the aim should always be to become a chartered town planner, however there wasn't such a push at university, so should this become part of a core module like other aspects of planning?</p>

3	<p>My topic is focused on bringing new, young talent into the profession. In a nut shell, what does the Scottish Government want to be achieved in order to make planning a more attractive 'career' to young people (16-18) deciding their futures? How exactly does the Minister think this should be facilitated and is enough being done at grass routes to highlight the rewards of being a planner? How can youngsters be attracted into Local Authority Planning without straying into the 'perks' and incentives of the private sector.</p>
4	<p>In terms of my experience in Local Government a lot of my decision making and assessment is on scale, siting, design and impacts upon neighbouring properties e.g. overbearing, overshadowing, how well does a design fit. My degree contained very little detail on any of these subjects and how to assess, it has been a very much learn on the job experience. I agree that some of this by its nature has to be learnt on the job, however I would think some of this assessment and understanding of the terms should be included at degree level. Is design assessment seen as a priority in degree outcomes?</p> <p>I agree with the consultation that development finance and economics should be a priority, I found my degree did prepare me well for this. However, I find all material is very focussed on major developments and how to assess for developer contributions. However, for many rural areas major developments are limited, the skills and knowledge of development finance and economics need to be context specific – e.g. understanding why a rural area is not attractive to large housebuilders and what are the barriers to small, local builders and what impact does what planners request have an impact on this – e.g. even materials can have an impact. What can be done to ensure planners understand the real economic opportunities, barriers and challenges for developers in their area? I feel this is essential to move to ensure planners are instrumental in delivering development.</p> <p>Planning is a very varied profession and the courses aim to prepare students for work in any sector, in any country.</p> <p>The Graduate Intern Scheme is useful, however I do think that planners benefit from life experience before joining the profession. Has there been any consideration to including an international exchange scheme within the graduate scheme e.g. a year of the scheme is spent in another country in another authority and Scotland receives graduates from other places? This would make the scheme attractive to young people wishing to travel and gives some life experience resulting in a well-rounded planner.</p> <p>In terms of the digital transformation, the advertisement of application in the local press is becoming outdated has consideration been given to how this could be achieved digitally and legislation altered? I am interested in the digital transformation and think this will aid in including people in decision making however does open up possible issues such as excessive numbers of representations.</p>
5	<p>How is the planning system going to adapt its resourcing in technology in order to engage more graduates into planning? (i.e. People respond to and engage more with social and interactive platforms now than before, so how is the planning system going to adapt to deal with this constant use of technology to make planning information even more readily available and engaging).</p>

6	<p>As a planning student about to finish my degree, I was fortunate to secure a year out work experience with Gladman. Compared to those in my year who did not get year out experience, I have been able to secure an offer of employment relatively easily. I think more should be done to encourage work experience for young planners to open up more opportunities. Most people in my class would agree that the university course alone does not prepare you for going straight into a job.</p> <p>Universities and employers have in the past held differing views but increasingly there is an understanding that planning education should be rounded to provide opportunities in any area of planning in any country and that planning practice has some responsibility for specific on-the-job training.</p>
7	<p>Has there really been enough time since the 2006 reforms for it to be the right time to consider more?</p> <p>As an example, the 2014 publication of SPP (which was 'only' policy rather than broader change, such as legislation) is still causing problems (eg: LDP/SDP/SPP compliance, and housing numbers depending on the publication/adoption dates of various tiers of plans).</p> <p>How can this sort of ongoing uncertainty either be avoided, or mitigated in the case of future/additional change?</p>
8	<p>My query relates to the level of commitment throughout the planning system to ensure delivery of housing in Scotland, and how this is, in practice, filtered through at all levels; officer, politicians, Reporters...</p> <p>There was much expectation following the publication of SPP, and subsequent re-calling of a series of major applications (100+ units), but this initiative was withdrawn following the initial review of the planning system in 2016, we understand so that the SG could concentrate their effort on taking forward the recommendations from the review.</p> <p>Where does this leave us in terms of the practical application of SPP and the policy presumption in favour of development that contributes to sustainable development? No Planning Authority that we are aware of will ever over-ride their development plan (even when recognised as outdated) in support of the SPP policy principles.</p> <p>How do you see the reform of the planning system ensuring a positive impact, or can more be done in the short term?</p>
9	<p>It is often the case at a local level that the people who object to new development are the same people who are complaining that the post office is closing, the bus service is being reduced, the local GP surgery and schools are at capacity etc. without appreciating that new development can create the revenue and demand to support and improve these services. How will the community empowerment initiatives proposed in the planning review be tied to the growth and delivery objectives at strategic and national levels?</p>

Planning Review Working Groups

██████████ of Gladman attended all 3 working group sessions as a representative of Homes for Scotland and the Minister for Local Government, Housing and Planning addressed the working groups rather than met with them.

12-13 September 2016 - Sheraton, Edinburgh

Outputs and delegates from the September 2016 meeting can be found [here](#)

20 March 2017 – Sheraton, Edinburgh

Outputs from the March 2017 meeting can be found [here](#) .The same delegates were invited.

2 October 2017 – Radisson Blu, Edinburgh

Outputs from the October 2017 Meeting can be found [here](#) . The same delegates were invited.