Scottish Rural Parliament

Pàrlamaid Dhùthchail na h-Alba

Response from workshops: 8th November 2014

(Draft)

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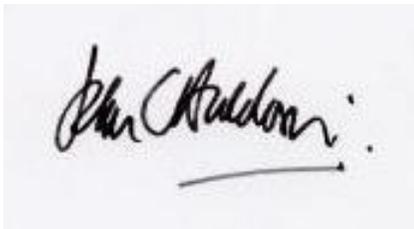Information is ordered by theme and source.

Executive Summary

This report contains a summary of all of the report forms produced from Thursday 6th November to Friday 7th November. Where appropriate and submitted, reports from the fringe events are also included, as well as the Friday morning key theme workshops and the Friday afternoon Open Space workshops.

As you will see, a great variety of activity has taken place over these days and recommended action points range from the simple and straightforward to the more complex. The impact of these actions, however straightforward, is not to be underestimated; even the simplest actions can have an impact which is felt far and wide.

It was our ambition that we would be able to demonstrate at the end of our first Scottish Rural Parliament, that by bringing people together, who all have rural in their hearts and minds, we would be able to find a new and different set of solutions to the challenges our communities face. This is an initial record of all of those ideas and potential solutions. Their range demonstrates the sound depth of experience that we have amassed.

Our more detailed report will be available within a few weeks, once we have had time to consider all of the information we have gathered from Twitter debates, from workshops and from local events held everywhere from Shetland to Canonbie. We hope you have enjoyed contributing to this great collection of ideas and commitments.

Yours aye,

John C Hutchison

Chair

2. <u>**Rural Businesses and Employment**</u>

2.1 Overview (taken from form submitted from Fri workshop)

Each workshop gave a different priority to the main barrier:

Workshop 1: Planners & planning regulation. The needs of rural businesses must be taken into account more by planners.

Interestingly, 'planning' was not raised as an issue in Workshop 2.

Workshop 2: Infrastructure: transport, connectivity (broadband, mobile coverage), housing.

These issues were also raised as important by Workshop 1.

2.2 Action points (taken from any forms submitted, open space, fringe, workshops etc that you would categorise under this theme)

Action	Who	When
Access to finance/capital/loans There is a low risk acceptance by banks/funding agencies A change of mindset is needed, with more acceptance of risk Other options are needed if banks will not fund, e.g. rural business loans	Funding organisations	
Infrastructure to support jobs Connectivity: broadband and mobile, including IT support Better roads Housing for workers, including access to land	Scottish government:	*Should be a priority*
De-cluttering the business advice landscape There is a lot of advice out there: need a gateway service, appropriate to size of the business		
Solution-focussed bureaucracy Bureaucrats need to be more sympathetic and understand rural needs		
Access to land For businesses & housing		
Succession planning		

Particularly in family-owned businesses, there can be no forward plan on how the business will continue when the (elderly) owner retires		
Public procurement It needs to be made easier for SMEs to be successful in bidding for public procurement contracts		
Better connection between Education & Business		
Planning & Regulation A greater awareness is needed amongst planners on the needs of rural businesses Streamlining of planning/regulation is needed Realistic interpretation of planning guidance is needed	Local authorities	
Skill shortages Young people not always motivated to stay in rural areas		

3.   Access to broadband

3.1   Overview

A very wide ranging and interactive discussion about broadband provision.

There needs to be clear communication about what Community Broadband Scotland is doing – transparency and information.

The government should provide 100% broadband and mobile phone coverage and universal service obligations.

Government should support a social enterprise like Community Energy Scotland to have scale to fill the gaps.

3.2   Action points

Action	Who	When
The Scottish Government provide 100% coverage for all Scottish citizens	Scottish Government	2017
A universal service obligation for broadband and mobile. Level playing field for all.	ditto	207
Increased communication by non – internet means to householders about Digital Scotland Superfast plans and CBS	CBS	Now
Support for individual households in "not spots". May be 120,000 households		

4.   Transport infrastructure

4.1   Overview

Key themes:

- Need more partnership working between the statutory, private and community sectors to find solutions to integrate/link up transport schedules more effectively in rural areas.
- Community/third sector transport solutions need more commitment and longer term funding, but there is an issue with volunteer fatigue and finding/retaining office bearers for committees. There is one rule for the private sector and another for the private sector – the voluntary sector is the poor relation.
- Substandard roads in rural areas
- Lift/car sharing schemes and support for social media/web based schemes
- Deregulation versus regulation of transport services. Regulations are preventing solutions and some solutions need not be expensive.
- Bus passes for older people AND young people….age discrimination.
- Cross border integration of regulations on transport issues….major obstacles for school children and older people living in border regions

The group identified a number of recommendations below but there was a clear message that integration of transport schedules and support for community transport initiatives were the most important. The group was quite divided on the issue of de/regulation with some believing that the answer is for transport authorities to have more control over the delivery of services, whereas a minority preferred the idea of operators coming up with solutions.

4.2   Action points

Action	Who	When
Need more partnership working between the statutory, private and community sectors to find solutions to integrate/link up transport schedules more effectively in rural areas. This may involve reviewing some regulations in order to achieve better integration.	Scottish Govt to lead with local authorities, private & community providers	ASAP
Strengthen regional transport partnerships so that they have regulatory powers. These could allow services in rural areas to be much more coordinated.	Scottish Govt?	ASAP

Focussing on the cost per passenger does not value rural services properly. There needs to be another way of valuing rural transport services that takes in social, environmental, as well as economic value	Scottish Govt?	ASAP
More support for informal lift-sharing schemes, especially web based and social media based schemes	Local authority and third sector	ASAP
10.15 Session Key Interventions:- 1) Review of trunk Roads 2) OYSTER Card for Scotland (all Public Transportations), To include concessions for young AND old. 3) Specify Ferry Services with Flexibility in mind for further connections. START/BASE Ferries ON Islands. 4) Promote development of small scale public transport units e.g. Post Bus vehicles, including Hail and Ride for Council vehicles. 5) Centralized Call Centre to coordinate Volunteer drivers.	SG and TS SG, TS and Operators TS, SG LA/RTP, Community Councils, Operators. LA, Community Councils, SG LA,SG and 3rd Sector	Now
11.45 Session Key Interventions:- 1) Subsidize Car Hire at Railway Stations/Interchanges with Public Trans Ticket. 2) Trunk road improvement A82/3 3) More Passing Loops on West Highland Line. 4) Make Fit for Purpose Ferries. 5) More bike spaces on trains AND buses. 6) Move Freight off Roads onto Rail. CONCLUSION: INVEST MORE IN INFRASTRUCTURE!	Operators SG TS TS SG NR TS CMAL TS Operators SG TS NR FOCs	

5.   Issues of land use and planning

5.1   Overview

There was a clear feeling that representative Community Councils are key to community involvement in planning but that not all CCs are actually representative. Effective and appropriate engagement with communities was a clear message, but communities must feel their views are making a difference. The process must be made less onerous for community members to understand and get involved in – possibly with funding available for CCs to buy in support. Being able to influence the local planning process. It was agreed that Third party(objectors) right of appeal against approval of planning permission should be reconsidered. The second workshop contained members from communities where fracking development take place. These representatives felt particularly disenfranchised from the decision making process. The second workshop had some heated discussions on the current planning structures and whether committee decisions or delegated decision making is more effective or appropriate.

There were specific issues and recommendations made which are listed below:

Where planners visit CCS to discuss planning applications for that ward, the process is more positive, although there was recognition of the volume of CCs in some local authority areas.

Are CCs truly representative of communities? – although we need to start somewhere with local involvement. How representatives CCs are or aren't came up in 2 groups – CCs can be unrepresentative - work needs to be done.

Planning is key to vibrancy of an area. Engagement in local development planning framework is a start. Although councils do publicise consultations on local plans, often people don't find out until afterwards – can we make it more personal. Also, rural communities sometimes have to travel long distances to designated points to see plans / participate in consultations on issues that affect their community. Development plan is a very long process – by the time it's published, things are changing. Communities should be able to influence what they think shouldn't be dealt with by delegated power –planners sometimes don't always understand (or aren't experts in the issue) e.g. fracking, renewables. Example of fracking in an area where it wasn't designated a major development so therefore no community consultation.

Community members are usually engaging in their own time – need to move away from a highly legalistic process with huge documents to something that is community friendly. Communities do not always understand how the planning process works

Not always enough community involvement to be able to influence plans and strategies i.e. renewables and wild land.

Will always be disputes between public sector needs and local community needs – how do we resolve these?

Translating consultations in to action!!!! Sometimes communities don't feel their views are listened to. Needs to be dialogue. People can feel that they give their views, it goes to Council committee, and the community can feel they vote the way they had already decided.

Sometimes use one arm of national policy to challenge or change another arm of national policy

Does decision making have to be devolved to a smaller area to make it more effective?

Is there a need for funding to be available to pay for local advocacy to ensure community views are properly represented? This point was made in both workshops.

Should community led initiatives be treated differently from private development? Point also made, though that planning permission lies with the land rather than the applicant

One delegate wanted it recognised that there is a huge amount of scope for corruption within planning. Planning process wields huge amount of financial power. Individual example given.

5.2   Action points

Action	Who	When
Co-ownership of wind initiatives – part state ownership	Scottish government	
Need for more community engagement and consultation	Scottish Natural Heritage	
Ability for communities to request that certain issues are not dealt with by delegated powers	Local authorities	
Better training for councillors and planning officers on issues they are being asked to make decisions on –not just the planning process but the actual subject matters e.g. wind power, fracking etc.	Local authorities	
Clarity of information for general and individuals as to how the planning process works and easy access to that information	Local authorities	
Co-ownership of wind initiatives – part state ownership	Scottish government	

5.   Issues of land use and land reform

5.1   Action points

Action	Who	When
Define the vision – what outcome is land reform trying to achieve?	Scottish Government	
A new process; acceptance, equality of position, everyone; strengthenings will follow	Everyone	
Share success stories of community land ownership	All share stories	
Tackle absentee land ownership and neglected land management; breakup large estates for common good	Scottish Government	
Land Value Tax	Devolve powers to Scottish Government …. So UK Government	
Tackle absentee land ownership and neglected land management; breakup large estates for common good	Scottish Government	
More people on the land; all interested and taking responsibilities	Bottom up and top down	
Incentives for landowners to engage; remove forestry incentives	HMRC (redistribute tax incentives)	
Comprehensive landownership map integrating all data, land capability, local development pans, access public benefit	Collaboration between all data holders; coordinated by Scottish Government	
Devolved powers to community groups for management of public land; lead by examples	Scottish Government	
Transparency of land sale. Heads up to community before sale, new legislation	Scottish Government	
Increase dialogue; make best use of existing partnerships and local knowledge		
Voluntary agreements with communities, land ownership, land access, liaison groups, framework for landowners		
Invite the world bank to Scotland to reassess land governance	Rural Parliament invites	
Increase statutory powers in relation to land ownership; change mindset and interpretation of ECH; start here and demand debate with Scottish Government	Rural Parliament	

6. Protecting natural assets and adapting to environmental change

6.1   Overview

The group identified that climate change is, and will increasing have far reaching implications for rural communities.
They identified many different impacts and suggested actions that could address these.
They noted that adapting to climate change cannot be addressed in isolation – needs to be considered in context of wider social and economic change- should not be side-lined as an environmental concern.

6.2   Action points

Action	Who	When
Devolved powers to local communities	Scottish Government (and UK Government)	
Use curriculum for excellence as starting point	Communities and Scottish Government	
Role of communities and acceptance of responsibility if we want to drive changes	Communities	
Imbalance of power/power equality re planning process, weighted pro-business not communities Should focus on local communities as guardians of natural assets, consultation needs to be formalised into process, not just a group of individuals	Rural Parliament and Scottish Government	
Funding problems – process is too complex and require central government coordination	Scottish Government	
Enable neighbourhood planning	Scottish Government	
Adapting to climate change requires a holistic approach. It's not a single issue that can be addressed by any one sector or stakeholder. It will impact all areas of life in Scotland Needs people to work together to understand and address the impacts. Needs to be considered at all levels and as part of policy development and implementation Should be recognised as a major issue not side-lined.	Communities Government Expert groups	
Joined up utilities improvements –need a joined up approach to improving the resilience of utilities (energy, water, transport, communication systems) **-** move away from separate agencies dealing with individual issues to a joined up, efficient and cost effective response.	*SG*	

Will require change in legislation SG to establish mechanism for joint delivery of all utilities to remote rural communities.		
Strategic issues Climate impacts (e.g. more heavy rainfall in west of Scotland and severe weather) could add to current west – east migration of people. Need to factor in to horizon scanning.	SG Strategic planning authorities	
Managing increased risk of flooding - Take proactive action. Need to move away from waiting for a flood event to happen before taking action. Need proactive, planned response to coastal, river and surface water flooding Catchment management Communities should be involved with catchment management to address flood risk and identify where natural flood risk management could be introduced. Communities hold local knowledge that should inform how land is managed to reduce flood risk. Health and wellbeing More support needed for people who have been affected by flooding – mental health impacts can last a long time.	Government Public bodies Communities Agencies Planners Government Landowners Health service providers	
Coping with disruption caused by severe weather events- Communities need to become more resilient so that they are less affected when transport links, energy and communication systems go down. This should include local food growing and reduced dependency on transported food. People are being stranded by roads closed by landslides and cancelled ferries. Need investment to reduce likelihood of impacts (e.g. landslides) and help people cope when disruption occurs.	Community Contingency / planning Local people Farmers	
Buildings need to be climate ready Buildings that are damp or overheat will affect human health. New building should be designed and built to be resilient to future climate change (more severe weather, rainfall and increased temperatures.	People who commission new buildings Building standards Architects and designers	

Refurbishment of existing buildings should include increasing resilience alongside measures to improve energy efficiency etc. Home owners need advice and info on increasing the resilience of their properties (e.g. flood protection)		
Education need to reskill people with how to deal with climate impacts (e.g repair buildings, construct buildings that are flood resilient) Create local skills networks	Communities Education system	
Support people to adapt - Anyone who does home visits to support people should provide advice on how to deal with severe weather effects e.g. mould in buildings, fuel poverty	Existing health, social, home energy advice services	
Coastal change and flood risk - Coastal erosion and flooding will affect coastal communities. People will lose their land and homes and will have to relocate. Need to recognise that this issue is happening and support people through this difficult process – in some cases will need to accept loss of land and property.	Government Spatial planning Communities	
Food and farming - Different model is needed for food and farming e.g. agroforestry and need to protect productive land from development Support for local food production. Concern that new pests and diseases could impact livestock farming – need more info about risks and management of these May be more opportunities to grow different crops in warmer climates. Better growing conditions (warmer temperatures) could lead to more opportunities to grow our own food – need more info on what might be possible.	Researchers Planners	
All public policy - All policies should have a sustainability and resilience impacts assessment to ensure that they are forward looking and support resilience to climate change impacts. Need to create policy and take action that is based on the assumption that climate is changing – no use basing policy and decision making based on past climate. Otherwise policy will contribute to and exacerbate climate impacts rather than support increased resilience. Statutory duty requited. Particular concern re. agriculture and food policy	Government	
Trees and forestry More advice needed to inform long term investment in tree species- tree nurseries and growers need information on the species they should be growing Forestry sector stakeholders need to meet regularly to inform decision making.	Government policy Plantations Forestry commission Forestry stakeholders	

Need a reforestation policy – trees that will be resilient to climate change impacts. Need to consider biodiversity and species diversity. e.g. need to more away from Larch which is being impacted by climate change. Pests and diseases already affecting some species. Needs resilient reforestation policy. Need to consider resilience to long term climate change.		
Food production - Agri and food policy needs to be built around science of sustainable farming. Modern food production methods account for more impacts on climate than any other single human activity. Need to train future farmers in agro ecological method	Government Agricultural colleges ad courses	
Land management needs to address drainage and flood management of surrounding infrastructure (roads, railways, bridges etc.) Better education for land use sector on how to manage land to support wider resilience to climate change impacts. Concern that flooding (all types) and rising sea levels/ coastal change will affect high value agricultural land – risk of this should be assessed. Communities have local knowledge about land and should be involved in decisions around land use and changes to address flood risk, no native species, protection of the natural environment (in particular SSI's etc.).	Regulators Government policy Land owners Scottish Natural Heritage	
Funding - LEADER should have a funding category for climate change as a priority to support all of the above	EU rural policy	
Community engagement Public bodies need to be brave and link weather event impacts to climate change to drive behaviour change People need more information about climate change impacts	Public bodies Communities	

7. Strengthening communities

7.1 Overview

What works:

Volunteers, skills, community engagement/backing, enthusiasm, grants!; collaboration; integration; flexibility; social enterprises; networking; leadership; will power; technology; revenue funding; expertise

Obstacles:

Assumption that community council/LA represents community view and they don't necessarily; capacity training issue; distrust – legitimacy; more effective ways of engaging; multiple methods of engagement; good mobile signal/broad band; lack of joined up info on funding; lack of time in general; bureaucracy; cash flow – spend before claim funding; centralisation

Issues:

- Passion and creativity = commitment and dedication
- Local outcomes and benefits
- Leadership
- Knowledge of resources – reaching common ground – partnership in all sectors
- Community led – legitimacy
- Culture and confidence (feudalism)
- Communication – 2 way/engagement
- Persistence
- Focus on imaginative solutions/Achievable bite sized chunks

2nd Group Overview: The group identified a number of recommendations below but there was a clear message that consultation and participation were the most important. The group showed consensus on a number of issues; notably that the reliance on volunteers made some services fragile and that a more equal relationship between community and governance is needed to morally and practically perform.

7.2   Action points

Action	Who	When
Support for solutions focussed approaches		
Evidence based/legitimate – led by local communities should inform community council		
Joined up simplified funding – addressing up front cash flow; development officer to support		
Leadership and skills development (based on consensus)		
Improve communication – mobile/technology; 2 way up and down; inter generational/cross sector		
Actively support networking and collaboration between orgs and communities		
Develop rural rural alternative to SIMD		

Improve communication – mobile/technology; 2 way up and down; inter generational/cross sector		
Actively support networking and collaboration between orgs and communities		
Empower youth		
Remove barriers to rural funding/devolve funding decisions to local communities		
How do we prevent burn-out after volunteers have active in one big project?		
Local control of financing including 'common good' fund	Restructure local government & community planning boards	
Transferring of Public Lands for Housing or other development	Clear, accessible support: funds & advice	
Transport solutions to tackle physical isolation	Government infrastructure	
Unloading local knowledge and expertise where needed - peer-peer/sharing info - Sharing success - Communication	Embedded in community	
Mature partnership between local/central government & agencies	Local/central government & agencies	
Funding of community councils & similar groups	Legislate to empower community councils to take on development trust opportunities (as an option) & restructure community councils	
Good youth organisation	Partnered with the trust or community (Umbrella Organisation)	

8. Governance and Participation

Question 1. Structure and membership	Action	By Whom
Do we want another rural parliament	Yes , let's do it again probably in two years time.	
Legal entity	Yes, build from an adapt from what we have in the legal structure of Scottish Rural Action	

membership	Membership is essential to the operation of the company and for credibility several categories of membership to reflect civil society– individuals 16+, community organisations, regional networks and organisations, (all voting) National non statutory organisations (voting or non-voting to be resolved) , business and business organisations, statutory bodies, international organisations, trade unions (non-voting) Membership structure and voting arrangement will accord with equalities and inclusion requirements.	
Governance and participation structure	Issues and proposals come from voting membership. . Issues may emerge from non-voting entities and can be encouraged from other levels. All of these are then considered by the assembly and passed to the membership for consultation. The outcomes are then passed to the board for implementation. The board is accountable to the assembly and through it to the membership. The online platform is an integral part of this structure.	
Elections to the board	Various options exist including 1. Nominations from the assembly to accord with a geographic and membership profile followed by voting by all members in the appropriate category. 2. Nominations from the membership followed by voting by all members. 3. A combination of one and two above The term to be served will be three years extendable by one year. No dual membership of board and assembly is allowed There should be robust compliant and transparent voting processes used throughout.	
Assembly composition	Members will be nominated to reflect geography and membership categories, and voted on by these constituencies. The term to be served in the first instance will be three years, extendable by one year. No dual membership of assembly and board is allowed.	
Number and makeup	There are 15 board members, and it is proposed to further discuss the number of assembly members. (possible range 50 – 100)	
Question 2 member participation and engagement		
Online platform	To be used to convey materials for discussion and opinion and to host open space and other digital events. This will be a two way process and can be used for creating the agenda for the assembly. Some parts of the online platform will be open to affiliates and followers, not	

	just to members. This will be further defined. The platform will also be used to recruit members and essential to keep everybody in touch with topics, agendas and progress. Web casts, pod casts, a dedicated radio channels and skype will be used to aid communication and to promote transparency. Online surveys and opinion capture will be imbedded in the process. Webinars will be used including to cover board meetings. There should be a repository/library of historic data, and a social media structure of excellence for schools.	
Influence strategic direction of board	This is the job of the assembly taking the lead from the membership as described The wider membership should be directive , the assembly should be directive and the board should be non-elitist and instructive.	
Engagement with members	Regional meetings, thematic meetings and work groups will support and involve members, feeding ideas and proposals into the assembly agenda. In between its meetings the assembly will be sending matters back to the members for consideration, comment, support and change. There should be open access and transparency so affiliates and followers can access areas for information, reserving specific relevant matters to members. Board and assembly meeting should be seen to be on a journey, no fixed locations using fit for purpose venues that are accessible.	
Opportunities/activities	As above plus other good ideas. The board and assembly may subcontract some work and consultations to existing national organisations to consult and involve local organisations. SRP could offer opportunities under the Scotgrad graduate placement scheme. Use of Youtube and other secure video portals to tell each other stories, sharing case studies and innovations with resources available through these contacts. Potential of partnership with the OU in capacity building and training of organisations and leaders. Recruiting ambassadors to do face to face workshops/ podcasts and other events. Offering local newspapers/magazines material online for publication.	
Question 3		
Fulltime rural movement ?	There exists an increasingly strong range of organisations delivering beneficial impacts diverse in nature and geographic reach. Let it flourish . a strengthened movement could deliver.	
Functions	It is a catalyst to rural development; share experiences and achievements, accelerate the growth and the impact; don't reinvent the wheel, but adapt and own it. There is a need to	

	connect rural areas and groups latterly using positive energy. We can use "the watering can idea " and key ambassadors for themes. We can filter into other networks which already exist , using their membership to cascade communication both upwards and downwards. Using an online presence as a "hub" for rural issues like the "environment web". Task groups will work between the two year span of the rural parliament. There will be benefits to linking across Europe on specific themes.	
Who should be included	As wide as possible including local businesses, social enterprises, community groups, individuals, arts and culture, local representatives of NGO's	
What would it look like	Something that is accessible locally and which offers lots of connections and support	
Question 4 other issues	The venture needs good resources to ensure all communications work! We strive to secure all party support for this venture and the organisation itself is non party political. The involvement of youth is seen as essential – could this be through a youth rural parliament or in some other way, or a youth section of the SRP? The rural movement/ parliament must be able to actively influence policy decisions at different government levels. Holyrood needs to consult with the rural movement/ parliament in relation to rural policies.	
	There has to be a commitment from the start to undertake an evaluation of the first two years of work with recommendations. This will require funding at the inception.	

9. Local democracy

Local democracy had not been identified as a specific theme for the Rural Parliament during the research/information gathering phase in the run up to SRP. However, because it consistently came up as an issue which was having a serious impact on almost every other area under discussion, it was agreed that the programme should include an opportunity for delegates to consider the issue. Andy Wightman and Lesley Riddoch both spoke from the perspective that local democracy in Scotland has effectively long since ceased to exist, that the current local authority arrangements have been enfeebled by successive national governments, that they have very little fiscal autonomy, are too large in scale, too few in number and too remote from citizens to be in any way considered as recognisably local.

Key points/questions raised:

- Community councils. Debate swung between scrapping them completely on the basis that they were no longer fit for purpose with their reputation being beyond the point of repair or revitalising them with new powers and appropriate level of resources. A show of hands (approx. 100 in attendance) suggested that over 2/3 would scrap them and start again.
- Despite the broad consensus in the room that fundamental change is required, there was an equally fundamental question to which no one had an obvious answer – where to start?
- The consensus that change is required is not necessarily universal. A recent Scottish Parliament (Local Government and Regeneration Committee) enquiry concluded that there was no public appetite for change. Those who hold power are unlikely to want to give it away.
- What issues/powers are appropriate to devolve to communities? This could be determined by applying the principle of subsidiarity ie to the lowest, most local level that is appropriate and feasible.
- If a genuinely local level of democracy was in place, what part should party politics play in it?
- In the absence of any genuine local democracy, what we have witnessed has been the proliferation of self-organising voluntary activity (development trusts etc). This has been very empowering for those involved and has brought about real change on the ground but has distinct limitations and should not be treated as a substitute for a system of truly local democracy which enshrined in law.
- The Scottish Rural Parliament has gathered here for the first time. Hundreds of people. Why are we not utilising its voice. To this end, someone in the audience proposed the following motion….
  ……that this Rural Parliament proposes a new system of local democracy is designed to replace the present structures of local government in order to devolve real power to a community level.

Local Democracy Workshop – Motions from floor (Peter Dahl)

Motion:

This Rural Parliament advocates a new democratic structure to replace the existing levels of local govt. to devolve real powers to local communities

Motion:

To prevent the 'industrialisation' of large swathes of rural Scotland.

SRP advocates that Scottish Govt. funds an information campaign to ensure that the people of Scotland are:

- Made aware of the 14th round of DECC licensing and potential impacts on communities
- Consulted on whether this Westminster driven activity should be permitted
- Protected from known dangers

Motion:

To tackle climate change now and at source

SRP advocates that the Scottish Govt continue to implement plans and actions to reduce fossil fuel extraction and use: In particular, to ask for an immediate ban on onshore gas extraction, in favour of the existing policy of promoting/signposting the development of renewable energy

10. <u>Fringe Workshops</u>

Fringe Workshop: Improving Board Effectiveness

Overview

The group felt that over the last decade people were no longer engaged with clubs/organisations that gave them experience of governance and therefore people did not consider applying for board roles as they don't understand what they do.

It was also noted that many public sector roles expect big business experience which excludes those who work in rural communities and therefore their voice is heard in the boardroom.

Action	Who	When
Consider how best to raise awareness of what boards do to encourage people to apply for roles	Scottish Government	
Provide training for those involved in non -executive directorship recruitment for the public sector on unconscious bias.	ditto	
Ensure public sector roles are advertised in a way that does not exclude rural based individuals	ditto	
Greater understanding of what good governance looks like	ditto	
Consider how best to raise awareness of what boards do to encourage people to apply for roles	Scottish Government	

Fringe Workshop: Land use or strategy

Overview:

Community Participation in land use decisions needs to supported and improved

Many people don't know about the land use strategy so we need to see examples of how it works

The next Land use strategy needs to be shorter and clearer using accessible language	Scottish Government	June 2015

| The next land use strategy should look to a 50-80 year vision for land | "   " | |

Fringe workshop: Issues for Young People in Rural Scotland

Involve young people in the solutions to problems they face, capturing innovation and their lived experience

Do not give up on rural, do not assume that it will be difficult, a determination to find a way**.**

Action	Who	When
Access to public transport for young people in rural areas, make it a propriety e.g. free bus places	Scottish Government	
Reduce travel costs for young people, e.g. reduce driving test fees in rural areas (no car, job)	"	
Address access to mental health services- early intervention, counselling as opposed to mental health service which young people feel stigmatises them	"	
Address access to sexual health services, usually urban centric	"	
Address access to land for rent/to buy for farming, small scale food production, start up business with grants for purchase of live stock	"	
Reduce tedious complexity of Scottish Government's own funding programmes	"	
Prioritise funding for youth services, e.g. in third/voluntary sector, can act as a one stop shop for activities/sport/arts in rural areas	"	
Increase access to further education opportunities, fast becoming centralised	"	
Increase access to work experience opportunities, for 18-30 year olds	"	
Increase access to affordable housing opportunities, e.g. Rural Ownership Grant Scheme to build own house, or shared equity through Housing Associations	"	
Enable young people from local community groups to be involved in the Rural Parliament (different to or additional to Scottish Youth Parliament/Young Scot routes)	Scottish Government	
Enable young people to have a voice via a local structure such as the Highland Youth Parliament, in local decision making	Local Government	
Access to public transport for young people in rural areas, make it a priority, e.g. free bus places for free, access in evenings/weekends, use of council vehicles, addressing monopolies of private bus companies	Local Government	
Prioritise young people in the solutions to problems they face, capturing innovation and their lived experience	Local Government	