

From: Viccie Masson **On Behalf Of** Stuart Black
Sent: 05 October 2016 17:12
To: Mark Wrightham
Cc: Nicole Wallace
Subject: FW: Scoping a strategic vision for the uplands

Dear Mr Wrightham

Scoping a strategic vision for the uplands

Highland Council is of the opinion that a strategic vision could be useful for the uplands, and that this must address multiple land uses including farming, tourism, forestry, game, nature conservation, energy, housing, transport and communications. It must integrate with planning legislation and clearly indicate where land use preferences are likely to take precedent. It is essential that any strategic plan for the uplands must be regionalised and give specific consideration to more local socio economic factors and address issues of land abandonment. Evidence provided for the Royal Society of Edinburgh's 2007 Inquiry into hill and island areas would provide a useful starting point.

The vision must also address the needs of people; not just the environment and hard landscape features. It should focus on a vision for sustaining and growing upland communities. Health care is also a major factor which should be considered. The Highland Council can advise on socio economic issues of most importance to remote rural communities.

In addition to the above comments it is fundamental to the success of any vision that a lead body is identified to take the document forward. Visions are useful but if drafted principally by agencies they can gather dust with little appearing on the ground. Therefore it will be important to involve the people or organisations that may be a position to deliver the vision when drafting it so that it has a chance of being meaningful and deliverable.

Yours sincerely

Stuart

J Stuart Black
Director