FINANCE COMMITTEE CALL FOR EVIDENCE

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE (SCOTLAND) BILL: FINANCIAL MEMORANDUM

SUBMISSION FROM FALKIRK COUNCIL

Did you take part in either of the Scottish Government consultation exercises which preceded the Bill and, if so, did you comment on the financial assumptions made?
1. Yes, we took part and commented on the financial assumptions.

Do you believe your comments on the financial assumptions have been accurately reflected in the FM?
2. Partly. The financial implications of providing additional childcare hours appear to have been taken into account but there are still a number of concerns regarding the other elements of the Bill.

Did you have sufficient time to contribute to the consultation exercise?
3. Yes.

If the Bill has any financial implications for your organisation, do you believe that these have been accurately reflected in the FM? If not, please provide details.
4. Partly. There are still some concerns:

- Whilst the overall funding for additional childcare hours appears to have taken account of national estimates, there doesn’t appear to be a common approach to models of implementation across Scotland. If a prescriptive approach is adopted then the costs for some Councils might be different from their original assumptions.

- The estimates for relating to back filling posts for GIRFEC training would seem reasonable but we would contend there should also be an additional allowance to cover costs in year 1 whilst Councils embed this in to their CPD programmes e.g. venue costs, travel and subsistence.

- The allocation of 3.5 hours mentioned in paragraph 51 underestimates the potential complexity of the role. There is also the potential problem of non-availability of teachers during school holidays and other periods when they are contractually unavailable.

- In relation to extending through care and aftercare support, the estimate of £2,000 for furnishing is unrealistic and our experience is that this is closer to £3,000. Our experience also suggests that emergency payments are more likely to be £1,000 per annum as opposed to £200.
• The estimate of £2,100 per annum for support costs is also less than we are experiencing and again the figure is closer to £3,000.

**Do you consider that the estimated costs and savings set out in the FM and projected over 15 years for each service are reasonable and accurate?**
5. Estimating the potential costs and savings is clearly a difficult task and we have the following concerns:

• See comments in the answer to question 4.

• There is no substance behind the estimated avoided costs shown in table 28 and the margin for error is significant.

• For Kinship Care, there is a concern that some aspects of the Bill may generate a demand that is difficult to quantify until guidance is produced and the cost of supporting carers to apply for the new order is known.

**If relevant, are you content that your organisation can meet the financial costs associated with the Bill which your organisation will incur? If not, how do you think these costs should be met?**
6. Not entirely. Given all of the uncertainties above, we have concerns about how some of the potential costs associated with the Bill would be met.

7. In the current climate of limited resources and increasing demand, it is important that any costs arising from implementing new requirements are met by the Scottish Government.

**Does the FM accurately reflect the margins of uncertainty associated with the estimates and the timescales over which such costs would be expected to arise?**
8. There are concerns about the estimated avoided costs in table 28 and the margin for error is considerable. In relation to paragraph 52, it is equally likely that the early intervention approach of the Named Person will increase awareness of more children who will require additional support. Please also see the responses to earlier questions regarding our concerns. Under the circumstances, it would give greater comfort if there was an undertaking to review costs in the light of experience and that any increase would be funded by the Scottish Government.

**Do you believe that the FM reasonably captures costs associated with the Bill? If not, which other costs might be incurred and by whom?**
9. Please see the answers to previous questions. The costs identified are wide ranging but there are significant concerns regarding some of the estimates which have been provided.

10. Future costs could be significantly affected by the outcome of the National Foster Care Review and they could also be affected by anything included in the guidance which we don’t know about as the guidance has still to be produced. Concerns also remain regarding the potential costs for provision of counselling as
our current experience is that commissioning parenting capacity assessments from third sector organisations costs an average of £2,500 per assessment.

_Do you believe that there may be future costs associated with the Bill, for example through subordinate legislation? If so, is it possible to quantify these costs?_

11. See comments in the answer to question 8.