MENTAL HEALTH (SCOTLAND) BILL; FINANCIAL MEMORANDUM

SUBMISSION FROM FIFE COUNCIL

Consultation

Did you take part in any consultation exercise preceding the Bill and, if so, did you comment on the financial assumptions made?

1. Fife Council has participated in the consultation process to date with a primary focus on the impact of legislative change on service users who experience mental health difficulties and the resultant additional responsibilities to be placed upon mental health officers.

If applicable, do you believe your comments on the financial assumptions have been accurately reflected in the FM?

2. Fife Council has not provided comment thus far on financial assumptions.

Did you have sufficient time to contribute to the consultation exercise?

3. More time to allow consultation with other local authority partners would have been preferred.

Costs

If the Bill has any financial implications for your organisation, do you believe that they have been accurately reflected in the FM? If not, please provide details.

4. The FM indicates that there would be few additional costs to local authorities in relation to the changes in the Bill.

There is a lack of detail regarding the new proposed duties for mental health officers which makes it difficult to quantify the financial implications for local authorities and also the additional workload likely for a workforce which is already working to capacity. The suggestion that there would only be 20 hearings per year in respect of the new section 87A appears to be an underestimate and it is suggested that more detailed analysis is required in relation to both section 87A and 153A. Fife Council believes that a comprehensive review of additional professional responsibilities to be placed on the mental health officer including additional travel, additional training required in relation to forms/reports for example needs to be undertaken in order to provide a realistic response to the question of financial implications to local authorities. This will also inform future workforce development, training requirements and associated costs.

Do you consider that the estimated costs and savings set out in the FM are reasonable and accurate?

5. Estimated costs in the FM appear to primarily relate to the Mental Welfare Commission. Table 1 lacks sufficient information to be able to work out whether costs are reasonable and accurate. For example does the £15k relate to a national training programme aimed at mental health officers?

If applicable, are you content that your organisation can meet any financial costs that it might incur as a result of the Bill? If not, how do you think these costs should be met?
6. Unfortunately, it is not possible to provide a meaningful response until it is clearly known what additional responsibilities will be placed upon mental health officers.

**Does the FM accurately reflect the margins of uncertainty associated with the Bill’s estimated costs and with the timescales over which they would be expected to arise?**

7. As Fife Council considers that there may be an underestimation in the costs associated with new responsibilities, at present we would not be able to comment on this other than to say that it does not appear to reflect the margins of uncertainty.

**Wider Issues**

*Do you believe that the FM reasonably captures any costs associated with the Bill? If not, which other costs might be incurred and by whom?*

8. The answer to this question is ‘no’ on the basis that there is insufficient detail available to quantify costs to local authorities.

**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?**

9. It is not possible to quantify any costs associated with future legislation.