COMMUNITY CHARGE DEBT (SCOTLAND) BILL

SUBMISSION FROM GLASGOW CITY COUNCIL

Community Charge Debt (Scotland) Bill

(1) What is your view on the purpose of the Bill and broadly, are you supportive of it?

Our understanding is that the background to the Bill was in response to a suggestion from some Councils that the expanded Electoral Registers would be used to pursue outstanding Community Charge. Based on the figures for the City of Glasgow, the Council does not believe that the peak in voter registration recorded ahead of September 2014 Referendum can be attributed to people with Community Charge debt re-engaging after a quarter of a century. This is evident from comparing collection rates over time and from the fact that the overwhelming majority of additional registrations in Glasgow were from new voters aged 16 to 17 years old.

Our debt policy is aimed at breaking the cycle of debt for the individual and to direct resources at current collections which benefits people and services.

(2) Do you have any views on the level of financial settlement that is proposed with the Bill?

It is our understanding that the calculation of the financial settlement reflects the amounts intimated to COSLA from individual councils as to the impact of the Bill.

(3) Does the settlement figure accurately reflect the total community charge debt that would be recoverable by local authorities, given the operation of the law of prescription?

The answer as given to question 2 applies.

(4) The Scottish Government considers that, beyond the financial settlement that will be provided to affected local authorities, the Bill will have no financial implications (costs or savings) for the Scottish Administration, local authorities, other bodies, individuals or businesses. What is your view of this assessment?

The assessment is reasonable.