

FINANCE COMMITTEE CALL FOR EVIDENCE

COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT (SCOTLAND) BILL: FINANCIAL MEMORANDUM SUBMISSION FROM NORTH LANARKSHIRE 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. Yes, comments were provided on the consultation exercise preceding the Community Empowerment and Renewal Bill however no comments were made at that time on the financial assumptions.

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

2. N/A see response above.

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

3. Yes

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. Further work would be required within the Council to determine the full effect of the financial implications and to quantify the costs associated with all of the issues highlighted below.

National Outcomes – It is envisaged that there would only be minor additional costs to the Council for responding to National outcomes due to our continued involvement in consultations and statutory reporting, however the level of any additional resource allocations will be dependent on the reporting requirements set out by the Scottish Ministers.

Community Planning – Some additional resources are likely to be required in respect of facilitating the additional Community Planning legislation.

Participation Request – Some additional resources and costs are envisaged to meet the demands of Participation Requests. Additional costs will be demand driven by the number of participation requests received.

Community Right to Buy - It is understood from the FM that the provisions for the Community Right to Buy would not impose additional costs on local authorities however this needs to be clarified by the Council through additional work to quantify the impact, as mentioned above.

Asset Transfer Requests – The FM provides no prediction on the anticipated costs, further work would be required by the Council to fully assess the financial implications and costs as a result of this provision.

Common Good Property - The Council does not currently classify any asset that it holds as common good.

Allotments - The statutory requirements have the potential to require additional Council resources; however this will be demand led.

Non-Domestic Rates - A reduction in rates, due to a localised rates relief scheme would require alternative Council funding to meet the associated shortfall in NDR income. The current NDR scheme is a non-discriminatory rates scheme; the new localised relief scheme has the potential to benefit larger/Council Tax rich local authorities at the expense of other local authorities. The additional impact of this is not currently quantifiable.

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

5. The Financial Memorandum provides limited detail of the estimated costs and savings associated with the implementation of the Bill. As stated above, further work would be required by the Council to determine the full effect of the financial implications and to fully quantify the costs associated with all of the provisions of the Bill.

If applicable, are you content that your organisation can meet any financial costs that it might incur as a result if the Bill? If not, how do you think these costs should be met?

6. The Government should consider allocating additional funding to aid in the implementation of the policy objectives of the Bill.

Does the FM accurately reflect the margins of uncertainty associated with the Bill's estimated costs and with the timescales over which they are expected to arise?

7. The FM does not provide quantification of costs and as such, no comment can be made on the accuracy of the margins of uncertainty. Further work is required by the Council to establish the full financial impact of the Bill's provisions.

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. Where appropriate, the Government should allocate additional funding to aid in delivery of the policy objectives.

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. No