EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) BILL
WRITTEN SUBMISSION FROM SOUTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

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

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

3. Did you have sufficient time to contribute to the consultation exercise? The Council has no issues with the consultation process.

SOUTH LANARKSHIRE RESPONSE
The Council has no issues with the consultation process.

Costs
4. 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.

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

6. 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?

7. 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?

SOUTH LANARKSHIRE RESPONSE
1. Improving the attainment levels of pupils from the most deprived backgrounds

The costs are listed as being minimal. The Scottish Government has made £100m available via the Scottish Attainment Challenge Fund. However, there is a lack of clarity and transparency over how this money has been allocated and how it is connected to the Bill and the ‘Getting it right for every child’ agenda.

2. Expand Gaelic Provision.

The cost for the Council to promote Gaelic education is minimal since this is already done. The cost to expand is also minimal as the Council already provides beyond the total £200,000 expected at 75% grant (currently £148,000) / 25% council, and the Council spends £500,000 at 30% grant / 70% council.

Currently the Council has a Gaelic nursery class; houses a Gaelic playgroup; has primary and secondary school provision.

It is agreed that the costs of assessment of parental requests will be minimal.
The level of Capital spend needed is a reasonable assumption since the Council would look to adapt existing accommodation if required. However, if further expansion was to take place under this new legislation then the Scottish Government should fund the full additional cost and not expect the 75%/25% split to continue. There are currently no plans to expand provision and we would not be able to do so unless full funding for both capital and ongoing revenue spend was made available.

3. Extending rights to children under ASN legislation

The Council agrees that the expected costs will be minimal since we are already involved in tribunals.

4. Section 70 complaints

It is agreed that there are likely to be very low numbers of complaints therefore costs will be minimal.

5. Early Learning and Childcare - children with guardians

It is agreed that the numbers involved should be very low therefore the costs should be minimal.

6. Margins of uncertainty

It is proposed that the margins of uncertainty should be monitored to identify changes and funding should be adjusted accordingly if demands are materially more than anticipated or timelines are moved.

Wider Issues

8. 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?

9. 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?

SOUTH LANARKSHIRE RESPONSE

The Council considers that the overall costs appear reasonable. The Scottish Government should monitor changes and associated future costs and ensure funding follows if required.

In addition to the questions below, please add any other comments you may have which would assist the Finance Committee’s scrutiny of the FM.

SOUTH LANARKSHIRE RESPONSE

No further comments