FINANCE COMMITTEE CALL FOR EVIDENCE
HOUSING (SCOTLAND) BILL: FINANCIAL MEMORANDUM
SUBMISSION FROM NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

Consultation
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 were fully involved in the consultation exercise and where financial implications could be quantified full comment was made.

Do you believe your comments on the financial assumptions have been accurately reflected in the FM?
2. The Financial Memorandum is generalising all comment gained through the consultation exercise therefore it is difficult to assess, however in general it looks as if all comments have been taken into account when reviewing the potential financial impact.

Did you have sufficient time to contribute to the consultation exercise?
3. Sufficient time is usually given in relation to any consultation. However difficulties can arise in relation to the availability of resources to undertake the detailed analysis required.

Costs
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. In relation to Part 1, Right to Buy, the assumptions made are in agreement to those reflected in our response. In relation to other areas within the Bill no monetary value was given but there was a belief that there would be a potential increase in costs associated with the introduction of the legislation.

5. The Financial Memorandum has tried to identify these costs and have recognised that there will be some cost increases associated with the legislation.

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?
6. The estimates costs and savings contained within the Financial Memorandum have been based upon averages over the whole sector. It is not possible to accurately assess the actual impact of the changes in costs (if any) until the legislation is introduced and changes pertaining to the legislation as a whole incorporated into current workloads are assessed. It is therefore too soon to assess the accuracy of the projected cost outlined in the Financial Memorandum.

7. The most significant cost on local authorities is set out in paras 70-73 in relation to the provisions for short SSTs and the associated need to provide housing support services. The cost is estimated to be £764k per annum across all local
authorities. However this should be viewed with some caution since it is based on national costs and statistics from earlier years as well as assumptions on the type and provider of support that may not be an accurate reflection of costs at a local level.

8. In general the FM appears to provide estimates only of set-up and annual costs without any reference to a projection over 15 years.

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?

9. Until changes are implemented it is difficult to accurately assess the costs associated with this. If actual costs of implementation look to be adverse then some assistance should be given by the Scottish Government to ease the burden during the implementation phase and also for any recurring costs.

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?

10. The Financial Memorandum reflects that the costs stated are estimates and recognises that a number of assumptions surrounding the changes in relation to both actual costs and volumes can change and inevitably have an effect on the estimates costs currently identified.

Wider Issues

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

11. The Financial Memorandum looks as if most costs have been identified but again it will not be known until the implementation stage if there are indeed any hidden costs associated with its introduction and implementation.

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?

12. It would not be possible to quantify these future costs until the subordinate legislation was known and in place.