Scottish Ambulance Service

Call for Evidence Response to:
COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT (SCOTLAND) BILL

The Scottish Parliament’s Local Government and Regeneration Committee has launched a call for written evidence as part of its Stage 1 consideration of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Bill. This Government Bill was introduced into the Scottish Parliament, on 11 June 2014.

Organisations are invited to submit written evidence to the Committee setting out their views on the provisions of the Bill. The Committee has stated it would be helpful if written submissions could address the following questions —

1. To what extent do you consider the Bill will empower communities, please give reasons for your answer?
   SAS Response
   There is an opportunity for communities to become more involved in the design and delivery of services through improved use of local assets. The Scottish Ambulance Service is supportive of this approach and recognises the benefit for communities where improved partnerships with traditional service providers leads to increased community resilience. An example of this exists on the Ardnamurchan peninsula where the community have redesigned the use of a local building to allow them to access clinicians and care advice via a tele-health link.

2. What will be the benefits and disadvantages for public sector organisations as a consequence of the provisions in the Bill?
   SAS Response
   The benefits to public sector organisations will be an increased opportunity to co-design and produce a local service model which the community recognises as being fit for purpose and supports. This will help address areas where delivering traditional a service model is impractical and/or unaffordable. It will also offer opportunities for public services to have access to local buildings, which have passed into community ownership, in support of delivering the service locally e.g. for the SAS increasing the number of stand-by and deployment points.
   In terms of disadvantages there is a potential risk within Part 3: Participation Requests which could result in ill informed challenges to public service delivery which requires mitigation through effective ongoing local engagement.

3. Do you consider communities across Scotland have the capabilities to take advantage of the provisions in the Bill? If not, what requires to be done to the Bill, or to assist communities, to ensure this happens?
   SAS Response
   Broadly, we are confident that communities have the capability to take advantage of the Bill. Where there are difficulties in individual cases partners within public sector organisations should be able to effectively assist communities to achieve their aims obviously dependant on the issue.
4. Are you content with the specific provisions in the Bill, if not what changes would you like to see, to which part of the Bill and why?

**SAS Response**

*The provisions within the bill seem reasonable however guidance is required to ensure there is consistency within the partnership process. This is particularly relevant to the Scottish Ambulance Service given that, as a national service, we will engage with all 32 Community Planning Partnerships across Scotland.*

5. What are your views on the assessment of equal rights, impacts on island communities and sustainable development as set out in the Policy memorandum?

Having reviewed the Bill in the context of these questions I have provided responses to the questions I feel are relevant to the business of the Scottish Ambulance Service.

I’d therefore ask the Executive Team to endorse the response to this call for evidence request.

Drew Wemyss

Head of Strategy Implementation