SCOTTISH INDEPENDENCE REFERENDUM BILL

Written Submission from Sallie Condy on behalf of
Glasgow Council for the Voluntary Sector (GCVS)

Submission relevant to the Public Awareness and Understanding key theme.

It is requested that due consideration be given to the provision of measures as part of a public awareness campaign for those adults and young people that face challenges with their literacies skills, given that these could impact their ability to participate in the referendum.

The Scottish Survey of Adult Literacies (SSAL) (2009)\(^1\) states that

‘around one quarter of the Scottish population (26.7%) may face occasional challenges and constrained opportunities due to their skills….. Within this quarter of the population, we find that 3.6% (one person in 28) faces serious challenges in their literacies practices.’

Individuals will not have a wealth of literacies practices from which to draw in order to participate in the referendum, so it will be essential to ensure that information is provided in an accessible way.

It is suggested that the measures for this should include an easier to read guide and an associated publicity campaign to raise awareness that it is available. The guide would for example encourage participation by explaining registration and the process needed to vote, along with explaining what will happen at the polling station. The guide could be made available in hard copy or electronically for download.

In order to fully utilise this resource, it will need to be available by April 2014 in order to allow ample time for learning providers to work with individuals. The availability of the guide could be promoted for example via the Big Plus Campaign and Education Scotland networks.

Intermediaries and support agencies, such as GCVS, play a key role in ensuring individuals with literacies issues are effectively supported and it will therefore be important to make provision for this as part of the Bill, if the legislation is serious about engaging with the many individuals in Scotland who face these challenges.

21 May 2013

\(^1\) Scottish Survey of Adult Literacies (SSAL)(2009) Scottish Government
http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2010/07/16144921/0