Finance and Constitution Committee Questionnaire

This questionnaire is being sent to those organisations that have an interest in, or which may be affected by, the Planning (Scotland) Bill — Financial Memorandum (FM).

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

Consultation

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

Yes, however the comments related to requiring further information to be able to make an assessment of the financial implications.

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

n/a

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

Yes.

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.

The lack of details on the key elements in the Bill and the general lack of financial precision at this time is concerning to North Ayrshire Council (NAC), which essentially means that the financial data set out in the Financial Memorandum has to be, by definition, based on estimates. It is therefore difficult to provide any definitive response on the costs and savings outlined.

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

SGP: Although NAC has no cost at present, there may be future costs related to informing the regional partnership that will in turn inform the national plan. In addition there would be increased costs to NAC in the more integrated and consultative engagement in the NPF and SPP

10year cycle: Currently legislation requires that the plan is updated as and when it is required. The process of maintaining the plan is continuous as the others Council plans that are created and updated will then require to be reflected in the LDP.
There may be additional resources required for gate checks for the preparation of the plan. There would be no staff time savings due to the ongoing nature of maintaining the LDP.

There would be savings in non-staff costs but these would be minimal. Therefore only marginal savings may occur as a result of this change.

Supplementary Guidance: There remains a cost to NAC to provide guidance on similar matters. The main difference is that the provision of this guidance is no longer statutory.

It is expected that there would be no change in costs NAC.

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?

There are no forecast additional costs for NAC at this time.

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?

Due to the limited estimates in the costings it is difficult estimate the margins of uncertainty, other than it is unlikely to result in any local savings.

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?

There may be additional costs related to gatechecks for the preparation of the LDP.

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?

The Infrastructure levy may result in additional cost if it is collected locally, however this would be the preference in North Ayrshire. The locally collected levy should then be gathered at a national level and distributed across Scotland on an equitable manner based on need.

Additional costs would arise through the need for negotiations, assessments and legal and financial administration.