Local Government and Communities Committee

Common Good Property and Funds

Submission from North Ayrshire Council

1. Are the common law rules which define common good property adequate?

   Yes.

2. Do you think the record keeping of common good property and assets held by local authorities could be improved?

   The records for common good property and assets meet current record keeping requirements and holds all the necessary details required. Moving forward, the Community Empowerment Act may increase the demand for access to this information and improvements could be made to how this is presented publicly to increase relevance for the wider community.

3. Is there enough openness and direct engagement with local communities on common good property and funds and the use to which common good property and assets are put?

   North Ayrshire’s Locality Planning approach has contributed towards a sense of ‘localness’ and community representatives are becoming more informed in relation to common good property and assets and how they are accessed by the local community.

4. Are details of common good property and assets and income generated by their sale clear and transparent?

   Yes, clear records are kept of all assets and income generated is clearly reported to those responsible for governance and is accounted for specifically within the Common Good Account.

5. Any other issues relating to common good property, assets and funds which you wish to bring to the attention of the Committee?

   In general terms, the concept of common good is a historical anomaly and would benefit from consideration for abolition. The current system results in a two tier system for assets for Councils, with the Council’s main assets
being available to deliver services universally and another set of assets which can only be used to deliver a benefit to a particular area.

Often the current boundaries for localities no longer mirror the older Burgh boundaries which can present barriers to inclusion when considering accessing and using common good property and funds.

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