

## Supplementary Evidence Submission from South Lanarkshire Council on the Bail and Release from Custody (Scotland) Bill Financial Memorandum

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

We responded to the original consultation in December 2021 but not on funding 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

4. If the Bill has any financial implications for you or your organisation, do you believe that they have been accurately reflected in the FM? If not, please provide details.

See question 5

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

*South Lanarkshire council would make the following observations*

1. **52. If the court was to consider the information provided by justice social work in 77,000 cases, it is estimated from information suggested by the SCTS that there would be additional costs of approximately £700,000 per annum. We would have concerns that the data used to forecast the number of bail cases from 2016-2020 is dated and does not accurately reflect current numbers.**
2. **53. This is based on an assessment of an additional 2 minutes of court time being necessary per case. We believe that this timing estimate is considerably inaccurate in relation to information sharing between court officials and social work and would suggest that this could be more like 20-30 minutes per case taking into account foot travel between court rooms/clerk offices and consideration of information received.**
3. **82. It is estimated the annual cost of a full time justice social worker amount to £52,000. This equates to an estimated hourly cost of £29 (£52,000/(35 hours per week x 52 weeks). It is estimated an average length of assessment will take 90 minutes. With an estimated 57,750 assessments to be carried out, this equates 86,625 hours of work time. This would cost an estimated £2.512m (86,625 hours x £29 per hour)<sup>10</sup>. We would suggest that the estimated annual cost of a full time social worker does not accurately reflect larger local authorities grading for qualified social workers. I have illustrated the costs below at the top of a qualified workers band.**

Basic	On costs	Salary cost
£44,966	£13,624	£58,590

*We would also challenge the assumption that a bail supervision assessment will take 90 minutes as current timescales are informing us assessments average 2 hours. This is not taking into account EM assessments, which good practice would indicate should always be considered if bail supervision is manageable. This could add a further 30 mins – 1 hour if there are complexities around tenant contact/vulnerable adult and children information to access. We note that elsewhere in the FMO reference has been given to court and SPS staff in relation to training needs being factored in, this is also the case for justice social work given the change to practice and assessment.*

4. **130. The estimated unit costs of statutory throughcare is £9,034 per year. This includes supervision of the individual. It is recognised that it is challenging to accurately estimate the unit costs of social work activity but this provides a notional cost. The maximum period an individual could spend on a reintegration licence is 180 days (6 months), so the estimated additional costs for each person released on a reintegration licence are taken to be £4,517.** *The figure of the unit cost for statutory throughcare has some vintage in respect of being from 2016-2017 we would observe. This is particularly relevant to increased staff salary costs. It is not clear if this estimate considers additional work overall for the period from 180 days to the parole hearing, for example update on LSCMI and risk of serious harm, reports, accommodation costs and resettlement costs if initial accommodation changes.*
5. **141. As noted at paragraphs 129-131 above, the introduction of the reintegration licence for certain long-term prisoners will require Justice Social Work (JSW) to provide supervision support to individuals released on this licence. These will be individuals which JSW will supervise on their release on parole licence under existing arrangements but it could mean that more individuals are supervised for longer.** *It should be noted that there will be a considerable addition to the work that justice social work are required to provide to support a person in the community on an integrated licence prior to their parole. This would include preparing the person for the parole hearing and expectations if long term release was not granted. This work would have previously been part of the prison based social worker and would transfer to the community. This will impact on costings of a social workers time.*

**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?**

As outlined in question 5 we believe there is an underestimation of the funding to meet the additional requirements. Given that there will be less people in prison as a result of the measures the funding should be transferred from SPS to local authorities.

**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?**

We note that there has been an acknowledgment of the difficulty in accurately identifying assessment numbers and people released from prison.