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PUBLICATION OF REPORTS FOLLOWING A REVIEW OF PARTS OF THE COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT 2015

Dear Convener,

In July 2024, I wrote to the Committee with an update on the Local Governance Review and the review of parts of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 (the Act), and I committed to providing further updates on these important areas of work. I am pleased to inform you that the review of parts of the Act has now concluded and on 31 March 2025 the Scottish Government will publish the findings of this work.

Two parts of the Act were extensively reviewed (Part 3: Participation Requests and Part 5: Asset Transfer) resulting in two Findings Reports:

Findings Report: Review of Participation Requests - Part 3 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015

Findings Report: Review of Asset Transfer - Part 5 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015

The Scottish Government has committed to taking action in collaboration with a wide range of stakeholders to take forward the findings. An assessment of Part 2: Community Planning was undertaken and forms part of a separate Update and Findings report which also includes an update on all the other eight parts of the Act:

The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015: Update and Findings Report

The Scottish Government believes that further empowerment of communities is important for shaping and delivering sustainable, prevention-focused and place-based services that improve outcomes for local people. A key feature of the next steps in Scotland's community empowerment journey will be delivering the Local Governance Review.

The Democracy Matters Steering Group has been assembled to ensure that the policy development phase of Democracy Matters proceeds in the same open spirit as the engagement process, taking a co-production approach to model development, ensuring that decision making models deliver on the ambitions set out by communities. I co-chair this group with the COSLA Vice President, Councillor Steven Heddle and membership includes the community sector, local government, equalities groups and other important interests. I am also working closely with COSLA to develop Single Authority Models of local governance. Quarterly meetings with the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care and local leaders from Orkney, Western Isles and Argyll and Bute will drive progress over 2025.

I look forward to continuing my engagement with the Committee on these areas of work as we deliver on our plans for public service reform and further empowering Scotland's diverse communities.

Yours sincerely,

Ivan McKee
Minister for Public Finance