

Local Government and Communities Committee

Consultation of the Scottish Parliament on the Scottish Government's Revised National Outcomes

Submission from Christopher Bruce

"We live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe"

The premise that "We live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe" can only be an aspiration for that is certainly not the case now, 2018.

The "Haves" are generally nervous of the "Have nots" and the groups don't mix well because the disparity between high and low is too great. That needs to be addressed.

We want the communities to be inclusive, and some are without a doubt but many aren't.

Resiliency comes in many forms, there is emotional resiliency, financial resiliency, health resiliency, and in communities where there are many old folk or people out of work, all those areas become severely strained with one or the other having a direct impact elsewhere, compounding the pressure.

Safe. Safe from what? Crime? I need never lock my house or my car but I'd be a fool to behave that way in a city. I am not protected by the police. They are there, but not close by. If they came to my aid the instant I called, they would arrive 60 minutes later at best. This is true of the ambulance and the fire engine. Should that make me feel safe? It does not.

'Empowered'? I have seen the democratic powers of the parish and community councils at all levels, degraded year on year, to the point that they are a shadow of democracy. A ghost in the machinery of governance.

The way the money due from the public is calculated, the way it is collected, the way it is transferred to central government and the way it is then donated back to the authorities is wrong and a direct assault on democracy.

Local governments are without power to deliver what their electorate want, pay, and vote for.

That is taxation without representation. It is unfair and undemocratic. It MUST be changed.

"We tackle poverty by sharing opportunities, wealth and power more equally"

I am deeply impressed by your efforts and success in this area already but I am acutely aware that without the full power of a state, you are limited in your

endeavours.

You will address the issue of gender inequality by creating laws that punish discrimination severely. You will be able to address the burning issue of land usage and associated taxation. You will eventually be able to balance the tax burden fairly and perhaps rid us from all these differing taxation caches and have just one that captures local taxation, national taxation and health taxation.

Industries will need to be encouraged, time limited allowances could be made to help burgeoning industries. Science needs good educational foundations. It is good then, that we have them, but they must not be throttled by myopic ministers, failing to understand how research and development works.

"We grow up loved, safe and respected, so that we realise our full potential"

It seems obvious but in truth, we have grown up in a disrespectful atmosphere engendered entirely by England's ruling class needing to keep the northerners in their place.

It has been invasive and insidious and many Scots believe they live in a country of scroungers and benefit cheats. They do not, but the newspapers and the BBC refresh the image day after day.

That has to change.

Our children are loved and protected, in general, Scots are well respected around the world but not South of the border because those English living there, have also been fed with the same disingenuous pictures of the Scot and Scotland.

Scots were known as the engineers of the world. With great universities and great minds we carved a place in the world, despite the weight around our shoulders. That will come again.

Independence will require civil and social engineers in great numbers, employment will be more than sufficient. Income over expenditure for the masses will fall on the positive side and short term pay day loan companies can move back south of the border.

Full employment, clear lines of opportunities for school and college leavers. Career trail wide enough to encourage a nation.

High employment leads directly to lower crime figures.

In our own Scotland we will be loved, we will be safer than we are now, especially when we move the nuclear bombs away from Glasgow.

We are widely respected and our youth and our future will realise our full potential.

Of the eleven options, the following is by far the most important:

We respect, protect and fulfil human rights and live free from discrimination.