Local Government and Communities Committee

Planning (Scotland) Bill

Submission from NHS Grampian

NHS Grampian (NHSG) welcomes the opportunity to submit a response to the Local Government and Communities Committee’s call for Views on the Planning (Scotland) Bill which was introduced into Parliament by the Scottish Government on 4 December 2017. It is understood that responses provided will then inform the Committee’s scrutiny of the Bill.

NHS Grampian have reviewed the proposed changes identified in the Planning (Scotland) Bill and is broadly supportive of the aim of the Bill which is to simplify process, improve performance and trust within the planning system and empower people and communities.

However, NHSG feel that the Bill lacks detail and would wish to have seen a greater level of detail included within the paper in order to envisage how proposals are implemented in practice. NHSG appreciate that the responsibility for providing more detail may be on the Local Authority’s and therefore until further detail is provided NHSG are unable to provide an informed response at this time and therefore not in a position to address the 10 questions the committee has set out.

That said we are supportive in principle of the NPF and LDP processes being extended for a 5 year to 10 year period, but again how that will operate in practice does give us some concern and importantly the resource levels provided by Local Authorities to make that process and thereafter applications remain a concern.

We are unclear at this stage from the proposals as to the Local Place Plan and the value that this makes to a community and are concerned that perhaps more affluent communities may well be more able to respond to this than that of the communities that from a health perspective we really need to be better supporting. We are unclear as to when and how this inter-relates with the LDP process and would welcome further proposals on this.

The current role of Strategic Development Plans is an important aspect for the NHS and allows us to be sighted on the future development of communities and perhaps new communities, and this allows us to plan in advance as to how those communities will be supported principally by Primary Care. Whilst we are not opposed to the removal of the Strategic Development Plan’s, we remain concerned as to what will be put into place to facilitate the NHS to plan for the scale of development anticipated by Local Authorities as opposed to have to react to these changes once they occur. We would welcome more clarity on this.
However, NHSG would like to take this opportunity to welcome the inclusion of “Medical Facilities” within the Infrastructure Levy. This is being viewed by the NHS as being in addition to that of Developer Contributions, but again this requires more detail to allow us to formally respond to how this would work in practice, but certainly the principle is welcomed.

Alan Gray
Director of Finance