LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

CALL FOR VIEWS ON THE NON-DOMESTIC RATES (SCOTLAND) BILL

SUBMISSION FROM MADELEINE FRASER

The quality of education at Fettes and full-boarding ethos necessitates fees at the higher end of the range in Scotland but Fettes continues to be a not-for-profit organisation and has passed the test set by OSCR (the Scottish Charity Regulator) to validate its charitable status.

There are 24,000 registered charities in Scotland and of these it is only the 60 independent schools that have been singled out for the removal of charitable rates relief.

There is an implicit assumption that all our families would be able to afford increased fees. However, the proposed removal of business rates relief will not improve access to high quality education within Edinburgh since it will force us to increase fees and reduce our ability to provide bursaries.

Any gain to government in terms of tax raised is likely to be more than offset by the cost of additional pupils going to the state sector and the loss of income to the Edinburgh economy from overseas pupils.