RURAL ECONOMY AND CONNECTIVITY COMMITTEE

SOUTH OF SCOTLAND ENTERPRISE BILL

SUBMISSION FROM SCOTTISH LOCAL AUTHORITIES ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (SLAED)

1. Do you agree that a South of Scotland Enterprise Agency should be created?

1.1. SLAED is a network of senior officials from economic development teams across all 32 Scottish local authorities. SLAED is the national voice for local economic development services in Scotland, linking the work of our member councils, also in collaboration with wider partners.

1.2. Our primary objectives are:
   1.2.1. To promote sustainable economic development and well-being,
   1.2.2. To promote best practice and increased impact in the delivery of economic development services through collaboration and benchmarking, driving a culture of continuous improvement, and
   1.2.3. To inform and influence economic development policy and programmes.

1.3. SLAED supports the creation of the South of Scotland Enterprise Agency not only to enable Scotland as a whole to be transformed into one of the most vibrant rural economies in Europe, but to drive the country’s shared economic objectives towards a strong, diversified, sustainable economy, built upon cohesive and enterprising communities, rich in economic and social opportunity, where a varied and skilled workforce enjoys pay and conditions commensurate with the best in Scotland. Entrepreneurship and innovation should be commonplace, with young people confidently looking forward to high quality educational, training and employment prospects as stepping stones to realising their full potential in the South of Scotland.

1.4. We envisage the South of Scotland Enterprise, along with the other economic agencies such as Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Scottish Enterprise, Skills Development Scotland and Scottish Funding Council will be critical in providing the relentless emphasis on geography and place needed enabling for Scotland as a whole a step change in the economic development. This new Agency It will need to ensure seamless access to local, regional, national and international markets. This new agency must be cognisant on innovation, investment, innovation and inclusive growth as key drivers of the national economy but tailored locally and working collaboratively with other national talent pipelines such as the Business Gateway. The new agency is a key outcome of the Enterprise and Skills Review which recognises that inclusive economic growth can only be generated within the towns and rural communities as a new approach. So whilst nationally the challenges are different, economy is different and, as the Scottish Government’s creation of the Agency attests, specific challenges necessitate particular solutions.

2. Do you agree with the proposals for the body's constitution, purposes, powers and duties? If you do not agree with the proposals, please set out specifically what you would like to change.
2.1. The proposals for the South of Scotland Enterprise Agency’s constitution, purposes, powers are consistent with those establish Scottish Enterprise and Highlands and Island’s Enterprise.

3. Is there anything else that should be included or excluded from the Bill?

SLAED, as the national group of Economic Development professionals for Local Authorities, and given the discretionary nature of economic development, asks that the role of local government is formally recognised in the legislation.

Scottish Local Authorities Economic Development (SLAED)
7 January 2018