

Economy and Fair Work Committee
Wednesday 11 June 2025
19th Meeting, 2025 (Session 6)

Community Wealth Building (Scotland) Bill (Stage 1)

Note by the Clerk

Background

1. The Community Wealth Building (Scotland) Bill (“the Bill”) was introduced by the Scottish Government on Wednesday 20 March 2025. The Bill, and its accompanying documents, [can be found on the Parliament’s website](#).
2. The Economy and Fair Work Committee has been designated as lead committee for scrutiny of the Bill at stage 1. Parliament has set a deadline of 21 November 2025 for completion of stage 1, including the stage 1 chamber debate.
3. The role of the Committee at stage 1 is report to the Parliament on the general principles of the Bill, to inform the chamber debate. The scope of this Bill is around the strategic framework for CWB in Scotland. During Stage 1 scrutiny, the Committee will wish to consider any fine-tuning or improvements needed to the Bill, whether legislation is required at all and whether the Bill is the right solution for the issues identified.
4. The Bill aims to ensure Community Wealth Building (CWB) is implemented consistently across Scotland as an economic development tool by—
 - placing a duty on Scottish Ministers to publish a CWB statement setting out the measures they will take to facilitate CWB;
 - requiring local authorities and ‘relevant public bodies’¹ to publish and implement a CWB plan for their area; and
 - requiring ‘specified public bodies’² to have due regard to CWB guidance when developing their corporate plans and associated delivery strategies.

¹ “**Relevant public bodies**” are listed as— Colleges, health boards, Scottish Enterprise, South of Scotland Enterprise, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Skills Development Scotland, regional transport partnerships.

² “**Specified public bodies**” are listed as— Creative Scotland, Crown Estate Scotland, Highlands and Islands Airports Ltd, Historic Environment Scotland, Integration Joint Boards, National Park Authority, NatureScot, Scottish Police Service, Scottish Canals, Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service, SEPA, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, Scottish Forestry, Scottish Funding Council, Scottish Futures Trust

5. A SPICe briefing on the Bill is [available on the Parliament's website](#).

Community Wealth Building

6. CWB is an approach to economic development that tries to use the power of 'anchor organisations' to grow and retain wealth within a local economy. Anchor organisations can be public, private, or third sector bodies that have a large enough presence in a local area to be able to change economic outcomes.
7. Under the CWB approach, these types of organisations might, for example, use their spending power to procure locally, pay the real living wage, or facilitate community ownership of land or assets.
8. Scotland's local authorities are currently working using their own CWB models. However, these are not always underpinned by formal plans and the extent of implementation may vary.

Committee Role and Scrutiny

9. The Committee considered and agreed its approach to stage 1 scrutiny at its meeting on 2 April 2025 and launched a call for views on 4 April, which ran until 26 May. [97 responses were received and are available online](#).
10. Committee members also undertook a visit to Alloa and will visit Irvine to see different approaches to CWB in action. Formal evidence sessions on the provisions of the Bill will take place over four weeks in June.
11. Following the conclusion of evidence gathering, the Committee will report and recommend whether the Parliament should support the general principles (the main purpose) of the Bill.

Other Committee Scrutiny

12. The Local Government, Housing and Planning Committee [wrote to the Committee on 21 May](#) setting out its pre-legislative work on CWB.
13. The Finance and Public Administration Committee (FPA) ran a call for views on the Financial Memorandum accompanying the Bill. The call for views received 9 submissions which [are available online](#).
14. The FPA Committee agreed to share these submissions with the Economy and Fair Work Committee, as the lead Committee, to consider as part of its

Stage 1 scrutiny. The FPA Committee will not publish a report on the Financial Memorandum.

15. The Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee considered the delegated powers in the Bill at its meeting on 3 June and agreed to [write to the Scottish Government](#).

Witnesses

16. The Committee will hear evidence today from—

- Dr Emilia Crighton, Director of Public Health, NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde;
- Jane Martin, Managing Director, Innovation and Investment, Scottish Enterprise;
- Hayley Mearns, Chief Executive Officer, Voluntary Action Angus; and
- Jackie Taylor, Executive Director Finance and Corporate Resources South Lanarkshire Council.

17. A written response to the Committee's call for views was received from [South Lanarkshire Council](#).

Clerk to the Committee
June 2025