

Consultation on the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Bill

Response Questionnaire

Chapter 5 – Wider Policy Proposals

Please read the draft Bill provisions before you answer these questions. You do not need to answer all the questions in this questionnaire, only answer the questions that you have an interest in. Separate questionnaires are provided for each chapter of the consultation paper.

Please make sure you also return the Respondent Information Form with your response, so that we know how to handle it.

5.1 Scotland Performs – embedding the outcomes approach in legislation.

Q70 We invite your views on the proposal to include in the Bill a provision that places a duty on Ministers to develop, consult on and publish a set of outcomes that describe their long term, strategic objectives for Scotland, and include a complementary duty to report regularly and publicly progress towards these outcomes.

We agree with this proposal, particularly the desire to see greater co-ordination and stronger links between what is happening at a local level and how this relates to policy objectives at a national level. Objectives at all levels must be streamlined by consenting parties and led in a bottom-up way by those operating at the local level wherever possible.

5.2 Subsidiarity and local decision-making

Q71 Given the actions that the Government and others already take to enable and support local democracy, together with the additional measures proposed in this consultation, are there any other actions we could take to reflect local democracy principles that would benefit communities?

We have submitted a response to the recent COSLA consultation and this can be used as the basis for this section. Our guiding principles in the consultation are below. In addition we would emphasise that a far larger proportion of local authority funds for public expenditure should be raised at a local level than is currently the case. There should also be serious moves towards hyper-local neighbourhood democracy.

Services are best delivered at the most local level possible, with the greatest

level of democracy possible.

We need to empower our streets, neighbourhoods and community organisations in concrete and practical ways.

We need to understand that democracy is not just about elected representatives or local authorities but is also about direct community democracy.

We need to begin the process of a real shift in the delivery of services from the public sector to community control and ownership.

We need to redefine what we mean by “public service” and recognise that social enterprises and third sector organisations are also public service organisations.