

PE1369/B

Mr Fergus Cochrane
Clerk to the Public Petitions Committee
The Scottish Parliament
TG.01
EDINBURGH, EH99 1SP



17 December

Dear Mr Cochrane

PETITION PE1369

I refer to the above petition that I presented on behalf of South Ayrshire Youth Forum on 29 October 2010 calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to require local authorities, under the “Power to Advance Wellbeing” provision (Part Three) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 2003, to undertake impact assessments when considering the provision of local leisure and cultural facilities.

Firstly, I would like to thank the Scottish Government for their quick response to our petition. However, we would like some clarification on the following points:

- How do Ministers promote the process of Community Planning as the key overarching framework to improve the planning and provision of services with specific reference to social factors such as the promotion of good physical and mental health, looking after the needs of children and young people, access to the arts or leisure facilities?
- We would further invite the Public Petitions Committee to write to C.O.S.L.A. to ask for a response on the number of local authorities who have used the “power to advance wellbeing” and have consulted young people on budget decisions and have undertaken an impact assessment.
- The Scottish Government’s response highlighted the UK Government’s new Equalities Act imposing a duty on local authorities to assess the impact of their proposed policies and practices on equalities groups (including young people). We are not sure what difference this will make when the existing human rights legislation, in particular article 12 and 31, say that children and young people have those rights currently, but they are not being implemented with any rigour. How is the implementation of current legislation monitored and recorded?
- Would the Public Petitions Committee invite a response from the Children’s Commissioner to enquire if he is aware of any research that has been carried out in the use of the impact assessments developed by S.C.C.Y.P. and whether changes have resulted from the impact assessment?

We would be delighted if the Public Petitions Committee would continue to raise these issues on our behalf.

Yours Sincerely
Jodie McCoy
Chair, South Ayrshire Youth Forum