

Finance Committee

Community Justice (Scotland) Bill

Submission from Aberdeenshire Adult Services (Communities Directorate)

Response

1. Did you take part in any consultation exercise preceding the Bill and, if so, did you comment on the financial assumptions made?

Aberdeenshire Council Adult Services (Communities Directorate) has engaged in the previous consultation exercise and also provided/ will provide separate submissions re the redesign (April 2013) and the Community Justice Bill (Aug 2015).

It is difficult to make an accurate assessment prior to the operational impact of the allocated resources becoming apparent.

2. If applicable, do you believe your comments on the financial assumptions have been accurately reflected in the FM?

N/A

3. Did you have sufficient time to contribute to the consultation exercise?

Yes

4. If the Bill has any financial implications for your organisation, do you believe that they have been accurately reflected in the FM? If not, please provide details.

The two immediately noticeable areas for Aberdeenshire are:

- The costs attached to the dissolution of the Community Justice Authorities
- The cost attached to the transition of responsibility from the CJA to the Community Planning Partnership. The main concern for Aberdeenshire Council is that although there is initial transitional funding for up to three years, this will not cover the additional performance reporting that will be required of the local authority.

These are addressed within p 19 of the Financial Memorandum

5. Do you consider that the estimated costs and savings set out in the FM are reasonable and accurate?

Yes - as stated at Q1, it is difficult to make an accurate assessment prior to the operational impact of the allocated resources becoming apparent.

6. If applicable, are you content that your organisation can meet any financial costs that it might incur as a result of the Bill? If not, how do you think these costs should be met?

It is anticipated that Aberdeenshire will be able to meet the above.

If there is a deficit in the funding provided, it is anticipated that the Scottish Government will address this with the required extra funding.

7. Does the FM accurately reflect the margins of uncertainty associated with the Bill's estimated costs and with the timescales over which they would be expected to arise?

This appears to be the case.

8. Do you believe that the FM reasonably captures any costs associated with the Bill? If not, which other costs might be incurred and by whom?

This appears to be the case.

If there is a deficit in the funding provided, it is anticipated that the Scottish Government will address this with the required extra funding.

9. Do you believe that there may be future costs associated with the Bill, for example through subordinate legislation? If so, is it possible to quantify these costs?

The main issue, as discussed in the Community Justice Bill response will be the resourcing of additional reporting and performance requirements on CPPs. This will have implications beyond the initial period where transitional funding is available. As the requirement will be on all partners, it is likely that the local authority will need to provide consultation and a resource to partners, such as local third sector organisations, who have not been subject to such a level of scrutiny previously. As this will include planning, analysis and supporting any Community Justice strategic group(s), there are resource implications.