



scottish
community
development
centre

Useful summary of Community Empowerment Bill

Bill Contents

National Outcomes: Places a duty on Scottish Ministers to develop, consult on and publish a set of national outcomes for Scotland, which builds on the Government's internationally acclaimed "Scotland Performs" framework.

Community Planning: Places Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs) on a statutory footing and imposes duties on them around the planning and delivery of local outcomes, and the involvement of community bodies at all stages of community planning. Tackling inequalities will be a specific focus, and CPPs will have to produce "locality plans" at a more local level for areas experiencing particular disadvantage.

Participation Requests: Provides a mechanism for communities to have a more proactive role in having their voices heard in how services are planned and delivered.

Community Right to Buy: Amends the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003, extending the community right to buy to all of Scotland, urban and rural, and improving procedures. It also introduces a new provision for community bodies to purchase land which is abandoned, neglected or causing harm to the environmental wellbeing of the community, where the owner is not willing to sell that land. This is if the purchase is in the public interest and compatible with the achievement of sustainable development of the land.

Asset Transfer Requests: Provides community bodies with a right to request to purchase, lease, manage or use land and buildings belonging to local authorities, Scottish public bodies or Scottish Ministers. There will be a presumption of agreement to requests, unless there are reasonable grounds for refusal. Reducing inequalities will be a factor for public authorities to consider when making a decision. Relevant authorities will be required to create and maintain a register of land which they will make available to the public.

Delegation of Forestry Commission Functions: Allows for different types of community bodies to be involved in forestry leasing.

Supporter Involvement in Football Clubs: The Scottish Government is committed to the principle that supporters should have a role in decision-making, or even ownership when the opportunity arises, of their football clubs. The Bill as passed provides powers for Ministers to make regulations to facilitate supporter involvement and give fans rights in these areas. The

Scottish Government will shortly issue a consultation paper to explore the best way of taking this forward.

Common Good: Places a statutory duty on local authorities to establish and maintain a register of all property held by them for the common good. It also requires local authorities to publish their proposals and consult community bodies before disposing of or changing the use of common good assets.

Allotments: Updates and simplifies legislation on allotments. It requires local authorities to take reasonable steps to provide more allotments if waiting lists exceed certain trigger points and ensures appropriate protection for local authorities and plot holders. Provisions are made to allow the size of an allotment to be agreed between the person requesting an allotment and the local authority and to require fair rents to be set.

Participation in Public Decision-Making: A new regulation-making power enabling Ministers to require Scottish public authorities to promote and facilitate the participation of members of the public in the decisions and activities of the authority, including in the allocation of its resources. Involving people and communities in making decisions helps build community capacity and also helps the public sector identify local needs and priorities and target budgets more effectively.

Non-Domestic Rates: Provides for a new power which will allow local authorities to create and fund their own localised business rate relief schemes to better reflect local needs and support communities.