

Proposed Wellbeing and Sustainable Development (Scotland) Bill

Introduction

A proposal for a Member's Bill to ensure policy development and implementation by public bodies is in line with principles of sustainable development and wellbeing by introducing a duty for public bodies to promote these principles and establishing a Commissioner for sustainable development and wellbeing.

The consultation runs from 14 December 2022 to 24 March 2023

All those wishing to respond to the consultation are strongly encouraged to enter their responses electronically through this survey. This makes collation of responses much simpler and quicker. However, the option also exists of sending in a separate response (in hard copy or by other electronic means such as e-mail), and details of how to do so are included in the member's consultation document.

Questions marked with an asterisk (*) require an answer.

All responses must include a name and contact details. Names will only be published if you give us permission, and contact details are never published – but we may use them to contact you if there is a query about your response. If you do not include a name and/or contact details, we may have to disregard your response.

Please note that you must complete the survey in order for your response to be accepted. If you don't wish to complete the survey in a single session, you can choose "Save and Continue later" at any point. Whilst you have the option to skip particular questions, you must continue to the end of the survey and press "Submit" to have your response fully recorded.

Please ensure you have read the consultation document before responding to any of the questions that follow. In particular, you should read the information contained in the document about how your response will be handled. The consultation document is available here:

[Consultation Document](#)

[Privacy Notice](#)

I confirm that I have read and understood the Privacy Notice which explains how my personal data will be used.

On the previous page we asked you if you are UNDER 12 YEARS old, and you responded Yes to this question.

If this is the case, we will have to contact your parent or guardian for consent.

If you are under 12 years of age, please put your contact details into the textbox. This can be your email address or phone number. We will then contact you and your parents to receive consent.

Otherwise please confirm that you are or are not under 12 years old.

No Response

About you

Please choose whether you are responding as an individual or on behalf of an organisation.
Note: If you choose "individual" and consent to have the response published, it will appear under your own name. If you choose "on behalf of an organisation" and consent to have the response published, it will be published under the organisation's name.

an individual

Which of the following best describes you? (If you are a professional or academic, but not in a subject relevant to the consultation, please choose "Member of the public".)

Member of the public

Please select the category which best describes your organisation

No Response

Please choose one of the following:

I am content for this response to be published and attributed to me or my organisation

Please provide your Full Name or the name of your organisation. (Only give the name of your organisation if you are submitting a response on its behalf).
(Note: the name will not be published if you have asked for the response to be anonymous or "not for publication". Otherwise this is the name that will be published with your response).

Catriona McKay

Please provide details of a way in which we can contact you if there are queries regarding your response. Email is preferred but you can also provide a postal address or phone number.

We will not publish these details.

[REDACTED]

Aim and approach - Note: All answers to the questions in this section may be published (unless your response is "not for publication").

Q1. Which of the following best expresses your view of the proposed Bill? (Please note, that this question is compulsory.)

Fully supportive

Please explain the reasons for your response.

A clear definition of sustainable development is critical. We can no longer afford to prioritise economic interests over a more equal society and serious and potentially catastrophic environmental concerns.

Q1. Which of the following best expresses your view of the proposed Bill? (Please note, that this question is compulsory.)

Currently the term 'sustainable' gets used liberally in legislation and planning without any sense of what it actually means. A lack of a clear definition allows all kinds of abuse of the system, e.g. in planning. Unscrupulous developers use the word sustainable to describe development applications that are anything but, greenwashing their plans in order to further their own commercial interests. Planning departments and regional councils need a robust and well defined framework for sustainable development against which they can properly judge their own plans and the many private development applications on which they must make informed judgements.

Q2. Do you think legislation is required, or are there other ways in which the proposed Bill's aims could be achieved more effectively? Please explain the reasons for your response.

Top down legislation is required. It is clear that private commercial interests cannot be trusted to police themselves and make the necessary changes to their business practices that will benefit the planet or society. Greed wins every time. Furthermore, regional authorities need an example set at the level of national government to force them to create local development plans that are fit for the future. As a current example, take Scottish Borders Council's draft LDP which is currently with the Scottish Reporter. SBC's draft LDP still prioritises economic interests over social wellbeing or the environment. What's more, they have largely ignored consultation comments from the public and community councils asking them to strengthen their policies, to provide a proper definition of sustainable development, and to properly reference the twin crises of the climate emergency and biodiversity loss and the SDGs within their legislation. Even with the recent adoption of NPF4, SBC are still dragging their heels when it comes to updating policy to properly reflect the national framework.

Q3. Which of the following best expresses your view on whether 'sustainable development' should be defined in legislation?

Fully supportive

Please explain the reasons for your response, including any views on what the definition should include.

For all the reasons previously stated. While there is no clear definition in our legislation, authorities and private business will continue to define sustainable in a way that suits their own purposes and not those of society or the environment.

Q4. Which of the following best expresses your view on whether 'wellbeing' should be defined in legislation?

Fully supportive

Please explain the reasons for your response, including any views on what the definition should include.

The level of injustice in our society has risen to a level that I have not known in my lifetime. We are regressing rather than progressing. I think basic standards for the wellbeing of individuals and communities are mandatory. Furthermore, I agree with the proposal that the definitions for sustainable development and wellbeing should be separate to minimise confusion and misinterpretation.

Q5. Which of the following best expresses your view on whether there should be a Commissioner for sustainable development and wellbeing?

Fully supportive

Please explain the reasons for your response, including any views on what the key functions of the proposed Commissioner should be (see pages 19 to 20 of the consultation document), what model of governance could be adopted (see page 22 to 23), and whether the Commissioner could play a role in strengthening existing duties or legislation.

Enforcing legislation is as important as creating it. Both business and government need to be held to account.

Q6. What, in your view, should the title of the proposed Commissioner be?

Please explain the reasons for your response.

Commissioner for Sustainable Development and Social Justice

Q7. Which of the following best expresses your view on whether there is a need for duties for public bodies to promote sustainable development and wellbeing in policy development and implementation?

Fully supportive

Please explain the reasons for your response including views on any barriers to implementation of these duties and on how the effectiveness of implementation could be measured.

For all the reasons already stated. We cannot afford to wait, we are in the middle of an environmental catastrophe and don't have another decade to waste. All of the decisions we make now in terms of policy and implementation need to have the principles of sustainable development front and centre - and these principles need to be upheld.

Financial Implications

Q8. Any new law can have a financial impact which would affect individuals, businesses, the public sector, or others. What financial impact do you think this proposal could have if it became law?

no overall change in costs

Please explain the reasons for your response, including who you would expect to feel the financial impact of the proposal, and if there are any ways you think the proposal could be delivered more cost-effectively.

Let's take delivery of renewable energy as an example - how can any costs to the individual be any worse than the current cost of living crisis is now?

Equalities

Q9. Any new law can have an impact on different individuals in society, for example as a result of their age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership status, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

What impact could this proposal have on particular people if it became law? If you do not have a view skip to next question.

Please explain the reasons for your response and if there are any ways you think the proposal could avoid negative impacts on particular people.

I think this will ultimately improve the lot of common folk, regardless of age, disability, gender, sex, etc

Sustainability

Q10. Any new law can impact on work to protect and enhance the environment, achieve a sustainable economy, and create a strong, healthy, and just society for future generations.

Do you think the proposal could impact in any of these areas? (If you do not have a view then skip to next question)

Please explain the reasons for your response, including what you think the impact of the proposal could be, and if there are any ways you think the proposal could avoid negative impacts?

I believe enshrining proper definitions of sustainable development and wellbeing in law can only have a beneficial impact on the environment, a sustainable economy, and the creation of a strong, healthy, and just society for future generations. The only downside will be for rabid commercial interests who are set on asset stripping the environment and society for their own short term financial gain - and that will be an upside for everyone else.

General

Q11. Do you have any other additional comments or suggestions on the proposed Bill (which have not already been covered in any of your responses to earlier questions)?

No Response