

# 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.

on behalf of an organisation

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".)

*No Response*

Please select the category which best describes your organisation

Representative organisation (trade union, professional association)

**Optional: You may wish to explain briefly what the organisation does, its experience and expertise in the subject-matter of the consultation, and how the view expressed in the response was arrived at (e.g. whether it is the view of particular office-holders or has been approved by the membership as a whole).**

The Scottish Co-operative Party is the political party of the co-operative movement in Scotland.

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).

The Scottish Co-operative Party

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.**

It is a simple, common-sense idea, when a Government makes decisions, they should take into account not just the needs of the current generation, but future generations too. We are aware of the similar legislation in Wales and believe that this has been effective and that this is something that should be adapted to suit Scotland's needs.

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.

We believe that there is a need for legislation because this is an area of policy where definitions are required and if we are serious about making a difference then legislation is required. It is important that there is a clear definition of both wellbeing and sustainable development in Scots Law.

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

Fully opposed

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

As we said in our previous response defining 'sustainable development' is very important. As the consultation document makes clear the term sustainable development is used in many pieces of Scottish legislation but there is no clear definition as to what it means. This makes the current legislation ineffective and inefficient. It also means that monitoring the effectiveness of sustainable development clauses in current legislation is difficult if not impossible as it is not comparing like with like or with a commonly agreed understanding of what the term means.

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.**

As with our previous answers we believe that this terms should be defined. 'Wellbeing' is fast becoming one of the latest buzzwords but it is clear that without a definition in legislation that people and organisations can have a very wide range of meanings. As with the previous answer this make comparison very difficult and it is difficult to know how effective the use of the term has been without being sure that everyone means the same thing when they speak about it.

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

Fully supportive

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

**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.**

Having someone with a focus on this area of work and on ensuring that legislation and policy is developed with regard to sustainable development and wellbeing is important. Again, we are aware of the Welsh precedent and think that this has worked well and that such a post in Scotland has the potential to make a difference to policy development and ensure that the needs of future generations are taken seriously in the development of policy.

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

Please explain the reasons for your response.

Whilst we have no strong views on the title of the Commissioner we note that in Wales the job title is the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales and think that this gives a clear indication of the role of the person. We wonder whether Future Generations Commissioner for Scotland would likewise be an appropriate title.

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.**

We believe that putting a duty on all public bodies makes sense. There is little point in creating abstract legislation about wellbeing or sustainable development unless it becomes an everyday part of the policy process and something that all public bodies need to pay attention to.

## 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?

some increase 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.**

We believe that it is likely that this proposal would cause some costs to go up in the short term, we also believe that by taking a sustainable development and wellbeing approach that some costs would go down which may lead to this being balanced. In the long term we are clear that taking on board the needs of future generations should lead to a reduction in costs and that the public sector of the future will not be paying for the mistakes of the current generation.

## 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.

We believe that this legislation should have a positive impact on equalities.

## 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?

All too often, we know that short-term wins are too often prized over long-term strategy. This is especially true on key issues like climate change, where decisions being made right now are affected what kind of planet we leave behind for future generations. By its very nature this Bill would improve sustainability.

## 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)?

We fully support this legislation and call on all MSPs to support it. This is an idea that has been developed in Wales and has been praised for its impact. We the public sector at all levels in Scotland to protect the future and put a well defined idea of wellbeing and also of sustainable development at the heart of all that they do. We are pleased to say that around 100 of our members and supporters have taken the time to tell the Scottish Co-operative Party that they agree with our approach to this Bill.