

To: Finance, Resources and Customer Service Policy Board

On: 5 June 2019

Report by: Director of Finance & Resources

Heading: Non-Domestic rates (Scotland) Bill - call for evidence

1. Summary

- 1.1 The report of the Barclay Review of Non-Domestic rates (NDR) was published in August 2017, which included several recommendations for the Scottish Government to consider in relation to the reform of the business rates system. Some of these recommendations have been accepted and implemented, however some recommendations require changes to primary legislation. The Scottish Government introduced the Non-Domestic Rates (Scotland) Bill on 25 March 2019. The Local Government and Communities Committee issued a call for evidence in relation to the Bill on 9 April 2019, seeking views on the Bill, with the call for written views closing on Thursday 30 May 2019. The Call for Evidence is attached at Appendix 1 to this report. In addition, the Finance and Constitution Committee issued a call for evidence in relation to the Financial Memorandum accompanying the Bill, with responses due by 7 June 2019.
 - 1.2 Responses in relation to the Local Government and Communities Consultation have been developed for those questions relevant to the Council and are attached in Appendix 2. Board members will note that the Finance Resources and Customer Services Board meeting cycle did not fall within the timescale for submitting responses. The response has been submitted to the Local Government and Communities Committee subject to Council Board approval.
 - 1.3 The questions and proposed responses to the Finance and Constitution Committee are attached at Appendix 3.
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2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Agree the responses to the consultation questions outlined in Appendices 2 and 3.
- 2.2 Note that the response has been submitted to the Scottish Parliament Local Government and Communities Committee subject to Board approval.

3. Background

- 3.1 Over the period from July 2016 to August 2017, Ken Barclay led a review into the business rates system in Scotland under the following remit -
“To make recommendations that seek to enhance and reform the non-domestic rates system in Scotland to better support business growth and long-term investment and reflect changing marketplaces, whilst still retaining the same level of income to deliver local services upon which businesses rely.”
- 3.2 The Barclay review published its final report on 22 August 2017 and made 30 recommendations to The Scottish Government. In a statement to Parliament and accompanying publication on 12 September 2017, the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and the Constitution responded to 25 of the recommendations, accepting the majority, and noting that the remaining five required further engagement and consideration. Following that engagement, a further response was confirmed on 28 November 2017 in respect of council arm’s-length external organisations (ALEOs).
- 3.3 On 14 December 2017 an implementation plan including substantive responses to all 30 recommendations together with the Government’s implementation actions were published. Several Barclay recommendations can be, and have been implemented administratively, but others require the Government to bring forward legislation.
- 3.4 The Non-Domestic Rates (Scotland) Bill was introduced in the Scottish Parliament on 25 March 2019 by the Cabinet Secretary for Finance, Economy and Fair Work and on 9 April 2019 the Local Government and Communities Committee issued a call for evidence in relation to the Bill.
- 3.5 The Scottish Government indicate that the Bill delivers most of the recommendations of the Barclay Review of non-domestic rates that were considered to require primary legislation, with the Scottish Government main policy objectives stated as:
 - Deliver a non-domestic rates system designed to better support business growth and long-term investment and reflect changing marketplaces;
 - Improve ratepayers’ experience of the ratings system and administration of the system; and
 - Increase fairness and ensure a level playing field amongst ratepayers by reforming rate reliefs and tackling known avoidance measures.

- 3.6 The Finance & Constitution Committee also issued a call for evidence with regards the Financial Memorandum supporting the Bill, with responses due by 7 June 2019. The Financial Memorandum sets out the estimated costs of introducing the legislation and the additional receipts which are expected to be generated as a result of the changes proposed.
- 3.7 Council officers from finance, economic development and NDR administration services have developed responses to the proposed legislation framed around the questions posed by the calls for evidence most relevant to the Council.
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Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – There may potentially be costs incurred by the Council from the implementation of the Bill both directly through a more regular revaluation cycle which requires information to be gathered and additional responsibilities in terms of debt recovery; and indirectly through increased demands on the Assessor which require additional funding.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** - None
3. **Community/Council Planning** –
 - *Our Renfrewshire is thriving – the changes as a result of the Bill may increase NDR income collected and may lead to greater economic activity*
 - *Our Renfrewshire is fair - the changes introduced by the Bill may lead to greater collection of business rates and decrease rates avoidance*
 - *Reshaping our place, our economy and our future - the changes as a result of the Bill may increase NDR income collected and may lead to greater economic activity*
 - *Working together to improve outcomes – the proposed legislation will require greater cooperation between Council services and the assessor*
4. **Legal** – the legislation included in the Bill expands the debt collection powers of the council and would introduce new civil and criminal penalties for business rate payers in specified circumstances
5. **Property/Assets** - None
6. **Information Technology** – the legislation contained in the Bill will require changes to be made to Council and Assessor ICT systems.

7. **Equality & Human Rights**

- (a) The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.

8. **Health & Safety – None**

9. **Procurement – None**

10. **Risk - None**

11. **Privacy Impact - None**

12. **Cosla Policy Position – None**

List of Background Papers

- (a) None

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Call for Evidence on the Non-Domestic Rates (Scotland) Bill

The Local Government and Communities Committee would like to hear your views on the Non-Domestic Rates (Scotland) Bill.

The Bill was introduced in the Scottish Parliament on 25 March 2019 by the Cabinet Secretary for Finance, Economy and Fair Work. It is a Scottish Government Bill. The Bill and accompanying documents can be found [here](#).

The Bill delivers most of the recommendations of the [Barclay Review](#) of non-domestic rates that were considered to require primary legislation. It makes a number of changes in different areas, as outlined further below. The Scottish Government Policy Memorandum accompanying the Bill states (at paragraph 5) that its main policy objectives are to:

- Deliver a non-domestic rates system designed to better support business growth and long-term investment and reflect changing marketplaces;
- Improve ratepayers' experience of the ratings system and administration of the system; and
- Increase fairness and ensure a level playing field amongst ratepayers by reforming rate reliefs and tackling known avoidance measures.

The Committee welcomes answers to the following questions (feel free to answer as many or as few as you wish).

Overall programme of NDR Reform and the Barclay Review

The Committee welcomes views on:

1. The Scottish Government's overall programme of Non-Domestic Rates reform, and how the Bill fits into this.

2. How the Government has responded to the Barclay review, in particular on those recommendations it has rejected in full or part.

Specific proposals in the Bill

The Committee welcomes views on:

3. Section 2 of the Bill which provides that revaluation of properties subject to non-domestic rates would be carried out every 3 years rather than every 5 years.

4. Section 3 of the Bill, which (together with section 9) makes provision in relation to new or improved properties. These delay the point at which non-domestic rates are increased because a property has been expanded or improved, or at which a new build property begins to incur liability to non-domestic rates. The underlying aim is to incentivise development and investment in business properties.

5. Section 4, which aims to increase the degree to which parks are subject to non-domestic rates, in recognition of the commercial activities that take place in some parks (eg the running of a café).

6. Section 5, intended as a measure to address a perceived "loophole" that enables owners of holiday homes to avoid both council tax and non-domestic rates by making it more difficult to enter a home on the roll (and, through this, to then claim relief under the small business bonus scheme).

7. Sections 6-9, which aim to reduce the current high rate of valuation appeals, which the Scottish Government perceives as speculative. (Increasing the frequency of ratings revaluations in section 2 is also seen as a component of this reform.)

8. Section 10, which removes eligibility to claim charitable relief from non-domestic rates from mainstream independent schools, and section 11 which gives the Scottish Ministers the power to issue guidance to local authorities on the appropriate way to use their powers to grant sports club relief.

9. Section 12, which aims to address what the Scottish Government describes as a known tax avoidance tactic concerning unoccupied or under-used properties.

10. Section 13, which will enable councils to initiate debt recovery proceedings for unpaid rates sooner.

11. Sections 14, 18, 19 and 22, which together aim to strengthen the power of assessors to obtain the information they need to carry out their role, and sections 15, 16, 17, 20, 21 and 22 which give local authorities increased powers to obtain information from ratepayers, in order to ensure that the information they have is accurate, and to reduce the risk of fraud.

12. Part 4 of the Bill, which give the Scottish Ministers the power to make anti-avoidance regulations to prevent ratepayers gaining an advantage from avoidance arrangements that are considered artificial and sets out definitions of “advantage” and “artificial”.

Other

13. Do you have any other comments about the Bill? In particular, is there anything not in the Bill concerning non-domestic rates that should be in the Bill?

The call for written views will close on **Thursday 30 May 2019**.

Before making a submission, please read our [privacy notice here](#) about submitting your views to a Committee. If you are under 12 years old, please refer to the [privacy notice here](#). These tell you about how we process your personal data.

Please use [the template provided](#) to format your submission. This includes the Data Protection Form. Fill this out and return it with your submission. If you are under twelve years of age we will need the consent of your parent or guardian. [Please use this form](#).

We welcome written views in English, Gaelic, Scots or any other language. Due to the time required to process and analyse evidence, late submissions will only be accepted with the agreement of the Committee.

Written responses should be sent **electronically, in the above template format** to the following address. Ideally they should be no more than four sides of A4.

LocalGovernmentandCommunities@parliament.scot

If you cannot submit electronically you may send in a hard copy written submission.

If you are sending in a hard copy submission please print off and include a copy of the Data Protection Form. Please send them to:

Local Government and Communities Committee Clerk

Room T3.60

Scottish Parliament

Edinburgh

EH99 1SP

If you have any further questions regarding the Committee's scrutiny of this topic, please contact the Committee clerking team at the above e-mail address or call 0131 348 5232.

Views on the Scottish Government's overall programme of non-domestic rates reform and how the Bill fits into this.

Renfrewshire Council welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the call for evidence and would make the following points:

- Business Growth Accelerator – this will be positive in terms of investment and economic development in Renfrewshire;
- A new relief for day nurseries – this new 100% relief will be welcomed by the sector as it attempts to meet the government growth targets for 3-5yr olds;
- Town Centres - expanding Fresh Start relief – Renfrewshire Council welcomes this in terms of bringing vacant property back into use, but unsure why the RV value threshold is set at £65k. The largest town centre properties (once vacated) are often the most difficult to re-let / sell. It would be helpful if Fresh Start relief was applied to all town centre properties;
- A “rateable value finder” product should be used – to identify properties that are not currently on the valuation roll, so as to share the burden of rates more fairly – Renfrewshire Council accepts this is particularly important for towns centres such as Paisley, but also more generally, when it comes to the issue of vacant listed buildings (see below);
- To focus relief on economically active properties, only properties in active occupation should be entitled – this proposal is supported from a town centre regeneration perspective;
- To encourage bringing empty property back into economic use, relief should be reformed to restrict relief for listed buildings to a maximum of 2 years – Renfrewshire Council understand the Scottish Government have not accepted this recommendation from Barclay Review and have opted to extended this period to 5 years; noting that it is unclear when the clock starts for the 5 year period. Renfrewshire Council contends that extending to 5 years will do little to incentivise investment in empty listed buildings which is a particular issue in (although not exclusive to) Renfrewshire's town centres;

How the Government has responded to the Barclay review, in particular on those recommendations it has rejected in full or part.Out-of-town on-line storage and distribution centres

In Renfrewshire Council's view the fact that Scottish Government (SG) have taken the decision to not include a higher rate charge for large multinational retailers' out-of-town storage and distribution centres in the NDR Bill is a missed opportunity.

Retail as a sector has changed dramatically in the last 10 years. This is important as retail has been the principal space user and principal non-domestic rates contributor as a sector in town centres for as long as the system has existed. As the retail floorspace demand changes (partially as a result of competition from out-of-town and

online alternatives) the dynamics of town centres are altering. Property owners are struggling to come to terms with this change and, as a result, are facing a growing uncertainty over whether the retail sector in town centres will continue to play the role it has done in civic society.

The introduction of differential in the rates levied for large out of town on line storage and distribution businesses (or similar) the proceeds of which are reinvested into town centres (via the RCGF, Town Centre Fund, or similar) could play a role in helping to offset this structural transformation affecting the retail sector and assist traditional town centres to adjust and repurpose for a significantly smaller retail footprint in the future.

Listed Buildings

The SG acceptance of the principle to restrict empty property relief for listed buildings is a positive step forward. What is not clear, however, is the rationale for delaying this restriction to a particular period of time. We understand the proposal from SG is to delay the removal of the relief until the listed building has been vacant for 5 years.

In traditional town centres there is often a significant concentration of listed buildings as these locations were often the original centre of settlements where significant Victorian and Georgian investment took place in the buildings. Many of these buildings were built for commercial trading and remain as shop units today. Given the point made above, about structural change in the retail sector, there is now a high proportion of vacant shop units that are in listed buildings and benefit from 100% relief on business relief.

This has the effect of disincentivising owners from investing in such empty listed buildings, with the result of such buildings falling into disrepair. If an owner finds an occupier for the shop unit / building they immediately become liable for business rates (assuming RV is above SBBS threshold). Unless the owner can ensure that the tenant will also cover the non-domestic rates cost then they are faced with paying this alongside any investment required into making the floorspace occupiable. Listed buildings in a poor state of repair in most cases remain empty, with the NDR relief contributing to this.

The SG decision to only charge non-domestic rates on listed buildings that have been vacant for 5 years is counter intuitive in terms of regenerating town centres and the speed at which the retail and other service sectors are changing. What is also not clear from the proposed approach by SG is whether the building needs to be vacant for a period of 5 years consecutively. If a listed building is empty for 3 years then occupied for 12 months and then vacant for 2 years, does the non-domestic rates relief still apply for a further 3 years?

We would contend that 5 years is far too long a period. Such a proposal is likely to lead to the abuse of the non-domestic rates system with owners introducing pop-up

uses during the 5 years to try to get 10 years in total if the periods run consecutively. It is unlikely to trigger the investment that many of these listed buildings in town centres require.

Renfrewshire Council would recommend that 2 years is the maximum period allowed for relief to apply to listed buildings from the date of legislation enactment and that 100% non-domestic rates continues to be payable if the listed building becomes vacant again within 2 years of being occupied.

Section 2 of the Bill which provides that revaluation of properties subject to non-domestic rates would be carried out every 3 years rather than every 5 years.

A 3 year review cycle should result in the Assessor determining a rateable level which is more reflective of the current market conditions and may assist in reducing major movements valuations, which is to be welcomed.

It is likely to have resources issue for not only the Assessor, who will require to resolve the new mandatory proposal stage and subsequent appeals in a more diligent manner, but also for landlords/owners who own more than one property, (including local authorities) who have a large operational portfolio.

With a 3 year cycle, as opposed to a 5 year cycle, there will be less time available for both the appellant and the Assessor to determine whether the rateable value proposed is fair and reasonable. The introduction of a mandatory proposal stage as a precursor to a subsequent appeal will reduce the overall number of appeals but will still require all parties to document their reasons for a review and support the decision made. In such circumstances, the Scottish Government will require to provide adequate resource to Assessors to enable them to meet the workload demands of an increasingly regular revaluation cycle.

Section 3 of the Bill, which (together with section 9) makes provision in relation to new or improved properties. These delay the point at which non-domestic rates are increased because a property has been expanded or improved, or at which a new build property begins to incur liability to non-domestic rates. The underlying aim is to incentivise development and investment in business properties. Section 4, which aims to increase the degree to which parks are subject to non-domestic rates, in recognition of the commercial activities that take place in some parks (eg the running of a café).

Only properties in active occupation should be entitled – this proposal is supported from a town centre regeneration perspective;

Section 5, intended as a measure to address a perceived “loophole” that enables owners of holiday homes to avoid both council tax and non-domestic rates by making it more difficult to enter a home on the roll (and, through this, to then claim relief under the small business bonus scheme).

This is not a particularly relevant issue within Renfrewshire, however the principle of owners demonstrating evidence of letting or some other evidence of business operations is supported.

Sections 6-9, which aim to reduce the current high rate of valuation appeals, which the Scottish Government perceives as speculative. (Increasing the frequency of ratings revaluations in section 2 is also seen as a component of this reform.)

The description of the new process appears to transfer the responsibility for progression of a disputed rateable value. In order for this to work in a fair and transparent manner, the Assessor when issuing their Valuation notice, should also be required to provide to the appellant a copy of the revised summary valuation, a copy of the valuation scheme along with the evidence used by the Assessor to reach the proposed valuation and if possible a commentary on the Assessors thoughts on how they reached the valuation decision. This information currently only becomes available after an appeal has been lodged, and if the purpose of the move to a 3 year review process is to improve the accuracy of the rateable value for the subjects, and to remove from the appeals process, appeals that do not go anywhere, then an increased transparency is required from the Assessor.

The introduction of a mandatory proposal stage from any ratepayer wishing to appeal will reduce the overall number of appeals but will still require all parties to document their reasons for a review and support the decision made. In such circumstances, the Scottish Government will require to provide adequate resource to Assessors to enable them to meet the workload demands of an increasingly regular revaluation cycle.

The introduction of a fee to raise an appeal and the possibility that the original Rateable Value (RV) could increase as a result of a dispute is likely to deter speculative appeals for two reasons; once submitted an appeal cannot be withdrawn unless agreed by the Valuation Appeals committee (VAC); and, it is proposed that the fee would only be refunded where the appeal was considered justified. The level that fees are set at may have an impact however it is important to note that where a rateable value is close to a threshold for relief (such as SBBS) this may provide a greater to appeal.

It is noted that ratepayers, including local authorities, will look to check that when determining the RV the Assessor, has done so in a fair manner and that the valuation proposed is accurate and in accordance with the Scheme. It is noted that currently, it is often through the appeals process that anomalies are found and resolved, so it is important that when moving to the new 3 year review cycle steps are taken to ensure that a transparency exists enabling the appellant to check the proposed new valuation figure, before determining whether to lodge any appeal.

Section 10, which removes eligibility to claim charitable relief from non-domestic rates from mainstream independent schools, and section 11 which gives the Scottish Ministers the power to issue guidance to local authorities on the appropriate way to use their powers to grant sports club relief.

Renfrewshire Council is supportive of what is proposed and outlined in the Bill.

Section 12, which aims to address what the Scottish Government describes as a known tax avoidance tactic concerning unoccupied or under-used properties.

It is noted that this section of Bill provides powers for the first time in respect of unoccupied properties and this is to be welcomed in order that rates avoidance can be tackled. It is noted that this provision in the Bill will put the onus upon the ratepayer to provide evidence in respect of occupation and rate reliefs, however, the Bill or other legislation should be extended to provide a definition of “active occupation” in order to assist the local authority with the decision making powers that section 12 of the Bill is proposed to give them. At present, there may be inconsistency in how local authorities approach active occupation currently and it would assist if a statutory definition was provided.

Section 13, which will enable councils to initiate debt recovery proceedings for unpaid rates sooner.

This section of the Bill will allow councils to initiate recovery proceedings sooner and it is noted that the Bill has been drafted like the provisions for the recovery of council tax. This would then bring the recovery of council tax and non-domestic rates to be broadly similar and would allow a local authority to commence recovery in respect of non-domestic rates far sooner than under current legislation. It should be noted that the Bill as drafted would allow individuals and businesses to be treated the same in recovering any debt from them and as such the draft proposals make it fairer for all. The council tax recovery legislation seems to work well and has been bedded in for some time, and it would make sense if the non-domestic rates recovery legislation was along the same broad lines. By having a statutory framework in place for the recovery of rates this would also ensure uniformity across the councils in Scotland as currently they may apply their discretionary powers differently in respect of recovery. It should be noted that there would still be enough discretion in terms of negotiating payment arrangement for any arrears for council as there is with the recovery of council tax.

Sections 14, 18, 19 and 22, which together aim to strengthen the power of assessors to obtain the information they need to carry out their role, and sections 15, 16, 17, 20, 21 and 22 which give local authorities increased powers to obtain information from ratepayers, in order to ensure that the information they have is accurate, and to reduce the risk of fraud.

The Bill introduces new powers to local authorities to serve notices on persons such as proprietors, tenants or occupiers in terms of section 15 of the Bill. In principal this can only be welcomed as this will allow local authorities to seek information especially in cases where there is avoidance of paying non-domestic rates and this will hopefully reduce fraud. However, there should be scope given to extending the power to seek information beyond proprietors, tenants or occupiers to agents such as rating agents or letting agents. The penalties for rate payers are contained within section 20 of the bill and it is unclear how the figures have been calculated and while this is welcome, the rates of penalties specified within may not be a sufficient deterrent for a person that has been served a notice as £95 and £370 does not seem to be a huge monetary deterrent. If the penalties were to be low amounts such as a £95 penalty, then there may be little incentive for a local authority to recover this from a person as it may not be cost effective for the local authority to do so through the courts. It is not clear how the fine could be enforced from the Bill and in addition, there would be concerns in how penalties would be enforced especially against companies that may no longer be trading and as such may be too resource heavy for very little monetary gain. If the penalties were of a higher amount, then it would be perhaps more cost effective for a local authority to recover them and give an incentive for a person to provide the information as required.

Part 4 of the Bill, which give the Scottish Ministers the power to make anti-avoidance regulations to prevent ratepayers gaining an advantage from avoidance arrangements that are considered artificial and sets out definitions of “advantage” and “artificial”.

It is noted that the General Anti Avoidance Rules (GAAR) set out in part 4 of the Bill seem to broadly be along the same lines as the GAAR for Revenue Scotland. As such the GAAR that is proposed should be consistent with those existing provisions for other forms of taxation and this seems to be covered in draft Bill. However, it should be noted that where the pattern of behaviour among businesses who systematically avoid their NDR liabilities through winding up/phoenixing their business and continuing to trade under a different name from the same premises without contributing is growing and the GAAR should also aim to address this type of avoidance and it is not clear from this part of the Bill if the GAAR will cover this type of avoidance. In addition, the GAAR should be extended as to include individuals accountable for avoidance and as such penalties should be considered within any future legislation as a deterrent to individuals such as company directors who hide behind the company's corporate structure.

Do you have any other comments about the Bill? In particular, is there anything not in the Bill concerning non-domestic rates that should be in the Bill?

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

Yes, the Council provided a response to the Scottish Government consultation issued in Autumn 2018 with regards the proposed legislation required to put the Barclay recommendations into effect. There were no specific questions with regards financial assumptions, however the Council did highlight the need for increased costs (in particular for the Assessor) to be funded by the Scottish Government.

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

Yes.

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

Yes

Costs

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 anticipated financial implications are all referenced within the FM, however in some instances they are not quantified (nor to be fair could they be until actual costs are known eg IT system change costs).

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

The administrative costs as outlined appear reasonable, however there is mention (para 49) of a potential increase in costs for local authorities in their own rates liability of £1m. This cost is not included as a cost to local authorities in the summary of costs detailed at Table 5 in the FM. Further, as funders for Assessors, the Council believes there is significant risk of exposure to increased costs for those councils who fund “designated assessors” as outlined in paras 90 and 91 of the FM. As the designated assessor for telecoms, this places the 3 councils who fund Renfrewshire Valuation Joint Board at significant risk of increased demand for requisition from the Assessor, the potential costs of which are not recognised within the FM.

There is some risk around the assumption that in terms of penalties that the costs of administering these will be offset by the revenues raised from them (para 95) – the level at which these are set will be critical to the decision as to whether it is economically viable to pursue debts (for both the Assessor and the council).

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?

There are two potential areas of higher risk in terms of additional cost for Renfrewshire: firstly relating to the potential increased administration costs of more regular revaluations and potentially from the pursuit of debt; and the second as outlined above from increased financial pressure on the Assessor which would fall to requisitioning councils to fund. These costs should continue to be monitored and met by the Scottish Government in full as is the stated case for IT costs (para 79 of the FM).

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?

There is considerable uncertainty with regards moving the revaluation cycle out of line from England and Wales and the loss of economies in terms of valuation approach which are currently available. These additional costs could be significant for both designated assessors and funding councils.

Wider Issues

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?

The FM highlights costs which would be reasonably expected to be incurred, although the magnitude of these and significance to payers will not be known until some time after the legislation is put into effect. It is suggested that costs for those organisations administering the NDR systems be monitored to ensure that any unanticipated costs can be evidenced and appropriately funded by the Scottish Government.

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 Council is not aware of any other future costs.