

Consultation on dangerous buildings bill

Measures aimed at making it easier for local authorities to recover money spent when repairing dangerous buildings are to be examined by the Scottish Parliament's Local Government and Regeneration Committee.

The Committee want to hear from those who would be affected by the Bill including business, local authorities and other organisations about whether the legislation goes far enough and will work in practice.

Introduced by David Stewart MSP, the Defective and Dangerous Buildings (Recovery of Expenses) (Scotland) Bill seeks to bring in 'charging orders' which will allow local authorities to recover their costs and expenses where they have carried out work to defective and dangerous buildings.

Committee Convener Kevin Stewart MSP said:-"Safeguarding the public from defective and dangerous buildings is an important role for local authorities across Scotland. Clearly any measures which seek to improve the ability of local authorities to undertake these repairs are to be welcomed."

"However, what our Committee wants to know is whether the proposals contained within the Bill will work in practice and if this is really the best way to ensure that local authorities are confident they can recover costs of bringing buildings back into a good state of repair. Only by hearing from those who would be affected can we ensure if this is indeed the case."

The Committee is keen to hear from all those who have an interest in the Bill. In particular, the Committee would like to know:

- What are the advantages and disadvantages of the proposed Bill?
- Whether the Bill will improve local authority's ability to undertake repairs to dangerous and defective buildings.
- Where the initial capital required can be found?
- Where the owner of a building is not known how will the Bill improve on the current situation?
- Why is the approach in this Bill preferable to that of the Scottish Government in their recent Community Empowerment consultation?"

The Defective and Dangerous Buildings (Recovery of Expenses) (Scotland) Bill was introduced to the Scottish Parliament on 30 October 2013. Information about the Bill can be found via the attached link:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/Bills/69042.aspx>

The main principles of the Bill will allow local authorities to make charging orders (which secures the debt to the property) for recovery of expenses incurred where they have carried out work on defective or dangerous buildings.

The closing date for submissions is 31 January 2014

Submissions should be limited to no more than eight pages of A4. Responses should be sent, wherever possible, electronically and in MS Word format to: DDbuildingsbill.lgrc@scottish.parliament.uk

Responses can also be sent by post to:

Clerk to the Local Government and Regeneration Committee
Committee Office
Room T3.40

Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP