

# Proposed Youth Work (Scotland) Bill



A proposal for a Bill to ensure accessible, well-funded, and high-quality youth work services across Scotland, supporting the holistic development, well-being, and social inclusion of young people, and ensuring equal opportunities for all, regardless of background or circumstance.

Consultation by Martin Whitfield MSP, Member of the Scottish Parliament for South Scotland

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## Foreword



I am proposing this Bill to ensure that every young person in Scotland, regardless of their background or location, has access to high-quality youth work services. Youth work is an essential form of informal education that enables social, emotional, and educational development. It happens in diverse settings, such as youth projects, community centres, and detached programmes, and plays a vital role in helping young people develop key life skills, build self-confidence, and engage positively with their communities.

This Bill aims to make youth work more accessible and sustainable across Scotland, ensuring that young people have the support they need to reach their full potential. By removing barriers to access, particularly for those from disadvantaged or marginalised backgrounds, we can ensure that no young person is left behind. The legislation will help level the playing field by ensuring equitable access to well-resourced, inclusive services, supporting the well-being of young people from all walks of life.

Youth work benefits young people and also strengthens the fabric of our communities. It facilitates social inclusion, mental well-being, and civic engagement, empowering young people to take an active role in shaping their local environments. By investing in youth work, we are investing in the future of Scottish communities, creating spaces where young people can thrive, develop, and make meaningful contributions.

Ultimately, this Bill will help build stronger, more resilient communities across Scotland by ensuring that youth work is recognised as a vital service. By providing young people with the tools and opportunities to grow, we are securing a brighter, more inclusive future for all, where every young person can realise their full potential and contribute to a thriving Scotland.

**Martin Whitfield MSP**

## How the Consultation Process works

This consultation relates to a draft proposal I have lodged as the first stage in the process of introducing a Member's Bill in the Scottish Parliament. The process is governed by Chapter 9, Rule 9.14, of the Parliament's Standing Orders which can be found on the Parliament's website at: [Scottish Parliament Standing Orders](#)

At the end of the consultation period, all the responses will be analysed. I then expect to lodge a final proposal in the Parliament along with a summary of those responses. If that final proposal secures the support of at least 18 other MSPs from at least half of the political parties or groups represented in the Parliamentary Bureau, and the Scottish Government does not indicate that it intends to legislate in the area in question, I will then have the right to introduce a Member's Bill. A number of months may be required to finalise the Bill and related documentation. Once introduced, a Member's Bill follows a 3-stage scrutiny process, during which it may be amended or rejected outright. If it is passed at the end of the process, it becomes an Act.

At this stage, therefore, there is no Bill, only a draft proposal for the legislation.

The purpose of this consultation is to provide a range of views on the subject matter of the proposed Bill, highlighting potential problems, suggesting improvements, and generally refining and developing the policy. Consultation, when done well, can play an important part in ensuring that legislation is fit for purpose.

Details on how to respond to this consultation are provided at the end of the document.

Additional copies of this paper can be requested by contacting me Martin Whitfield MSP, The Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh EH991SP  
tel: 0131 3485827  
email: [martin.whitfield.msp@parliament.scot](mailto:martin.whitfield.msp@parliament.scot)

Enquiries about obtaining the consultation document in any language other than English or in alternative formats should also be sent to me.

An on-line copy is available on the Scottish Parliament's website <https://www.parliament.scot/> under Bills and Laws/Proposals for Bills.

## **Aim of the Proposed Bill**

### **Purpose and Vision**

Youth work is a vital part of Scotland's commitment to ensuring that every young person can succeed, regardless of their background, location, or circumstances. It provides opportunities for learning, personal development, and community engagement that complement formal schooling. However, youth work services across Scotland are inconsistent, leaving many young people—especially those in rural or deprived areas—without the support they need to thrive.

This proposal for a Bill seeks to create a legal requirement for local authorities to ensure that youth work services are universally available, including universal, targeted, and detached youth work across various settings including schools and community spaces. Doing so guarantees that all young people have equitable access to the support needed to succeed in life.

### **Rights and Legal Obligations**

This Bill aligns with Scotland's commitment to uphold young people's rights under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). It will provide local authorities with a clear conduit to meet their obligations under the UNCRC by ensuring that youth work services become a key part of their strategy to support young people's development and well-being. The proposal for a Bill provides the mechanism through which local authorities can meet their legal duty to respect, protect, and fulfil the rights of young people, ensuring their voices are heard, and their needs met.

### **Cost-Saving Benefits**

Investment in youth work is an ethical obligation and a financially prudent decision. This proposal for a Bill provides a framework that will save public funds in the short, medium, and long term by reducing the need for costly interventions later in life, such as mental health care, unemployment benefits, or involvement with the criminal justice system.

Short-term savings can be achieved through the immediate reduction in crisis interventions by providing early support to vulnerable young people.

Medium-term savings will result from the enhanced resilience, educational attainment, and well-being of young people who engage with youth work services, reducing the strain on health and social services.

Long-term savings will be realised through the prevention of social exclusion and the creation of empowered, confident young adults who contribute positively to society, lowering unemployment rates and having to rely on welfare.

## **Ensuring Every Young Person Succeeds**

This proposal for a Bill's core mission is to ensure that every young person in Scotland has access to the opportunity to succeed. Whether through universal, targeted, or detached youth work, this legislation will ensure that services are accessible, inclusive, and adaptable to the needs of all young people, helping them to overcome barriers and unlock their full potential.

This will be achieved through:

Universal youth work, providing open access to community-based programmes that offer a range of activities designed to build confidence, life skills, and social inclusion.

Targeted youth work, focusing on those most at risk, including young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, those with protected characteristics, those facing social, emotional, or educational challenges, ensuring that no young person is left behind and equality is at the heart of this proposal for a bill.

Detached youth work, taking youth work into the spaces where young people naturally congregate, such as streets and parks, ensuring engagement with young people who may not traditionally access structured services.

School-based youth work, offering essential support that complements formal education, promoting mental health, emotional resilience, and core skills that are crucial for young people's success both in and beyond school.

This proposal for a Bill aims to encourage personal growth, improve well-being, and create a more equitable society by ensuring that youth work reaches young people wherever they are.

Investing in our young people has never been more critical. As pressure on our workforce and public services grows, we are investing in the future of our economy, health services, and communities by ensuring that all young people have access to the opportunities and support they need to succeed.

Youth work plays a pivotal role in this, helping young people build the skills, confidence, and resilience required to become active contributors to society. In the face of an ageing population, ensuring that every young person reaches their full potential is not just a matter of social equity—it is an economic necessity.

## **A Framework for Local Authorities**

The proposal for a Bill will place a legal duty on local authorities to develop comprehensive Youth Work Strategies, aligned to a National Youth Work Strategy, tailored to the needs of their communities. This framework will ensure:

Youth work services are designed to reflect the needs and voices of young people, involving them directly in shaping programmes and policy.

Local authorities fulfil their obligations under the UNCRC by respecting young people's rights to participate, develop, and access support.

Youth work is integrated into broader community services and social policies, creating a holistic approach that brings together education, health, and social care.

Consistent and sustainable funding models are put in place, allowing local authorities to deliver high-quality youth work services that are resilient and adaptable.

These strategies will help create local mechanisms for ensuring that every young person has equal access to youth work, thus upholding their rights.

## **Detail of the Proposal for a Bill**

The Youth Work (Scotland) Bill will propose a transformative framework designed to guarantee equitable access to youth work services for all young people aged 11 to 25 across Scotland. This proposal for a Bill aims to address the significant gaps in youth service provision that currently exist, especially in rural or economically deprived areas, by ensuring that youth work is accessible, sustainable, and supported by a strong legal foundation. By doing so, the proposal for a Bill seeks to foster an inclusive environment where young people, regardless of their background, can thrive.

## **The Importance of Youth Work**

Youth work is a vital practice that provides informal educational opportunities, empowering young people to develop life skills, confidence, and meaningful engagement with their communities. Youth work is flexible, tailored to individual needs, and helps address the diverse challenges faced by young people today. It creates safe spaces for young people to express themselves, engage in their communities, and develop as active citizens. However, despite its critical importance, youth work services in Scotland face significant barriers related to funding, resulting in provision varying widely between local authorities.

The Bill addresses the three core principles of youth work that are widely recognised across the sector:

- 1. Young people choose to participate:** Participation in youth work is voluntary. Young people engage because they want to, whether to socialise, learn new skills, or take part in enjoyable activities. They are free to decide whether to engage or walk away, ensuring that their involvement is truly self-driven.
- 2. Youth work meets young people where they are:** Youth work recognises the young person's current life experience and uses it as the starting point for their development. This means youth work is tailored to the individual, allowing young people to grow at their own pace in a supportive environment, while working in partnership with youth workers and peers.
- 3. Youth work is a partnership in learning:** Youth work is an equal partnership between the young person and the youth worker. The young person is seen as an active participant in their learning process, with opportunities and resources to shape their own development. The relationship between the youth worker and the young person is central to fostering growth and learning.



## **The Need for Legal Obligation and Comprehensive Strategies**

Currently there is no legal obligation for local authorities to ensure that youth work services are provided consistently across Scotland. This has resulted in significant inequalities in access, particularly in rural areas or regions with limited resources. The proposal for a Bill seeks to establish a legal obligation for local authorities to guarantee that youth work services are available in their areas.

The Requirements for Community Learning and Development (Scotland) Regulations 2013, place duties on local authorities to work with partners and communities to co-produce and secure the delivery of CLD in their area and publish a 3-yearly CLD Plan. But despite this requirement youth work services are not accessible to all our young people and budget cuts continue to diminish youth work services.

Local authorities will be required to develop Youth Work Strategies tailored to the needs of their communities, and commit to building strong partnerships between local authority youth work services and voluntary youth work organisations, ensuring that the services provided are relevant, inclusive, and responsive.

Organisations such as YouthLink Scotland, the national agency for youth work, have long advocated for a right to youth work. YouthLink Scotland and its member organisations which includes national voluntary organisations and local authorities have consistently called for greater investment and recognition of youth work, emphasising its role in promoting social inclusion, reducing inequality, and supporting young people's well-being. Additionally, the National Youth Agency in England has highlighted the importance of legal frameworks that protect and promote access to youth services, particularly for marginalised groups.

The proposal for a Bill recognises the need for extensive consultation with young people, families, and community stakeholders in the creation of these strategies. By involving the very people who will be impacted, the strategies will reflect the true needs of young people and ensure that resources are directed where they are most needed. The Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland has also been vocal in advocating for the rights of young people to be involved in decisions that affect them. This proposal for a Bill aligns with that principle.

## **International Comparisons**

The Youth Work (Scotland) Bill draws heavily on successful international models, particularly from Finland, Germany, and other European nations, where youth work is enshrined in national law. These countries have established comprehensive frameworks that ensure the consistent delivery of youth services, with a strong focus on social inclusion, youth empowerment, and preventing marginalisation.

### Finland

In Finland, the Youth Act mandates that every municipality must provide youth work services. The primary focus of Finnish youth work is on preventing social exclusion and promoting active citizenship among young people. The legal framework ensures that youth work is embedded in the responsibilities of local governments, with provisions made for the delivery of services in rural as well as urban areas. This system guarantees that young people, regardless of their geographic location, have access to consistent, high-quality youth work services. Finnish youth work is also integrated with other social services, allowing for a holistic approach to the support of young people.

### Germany

Similarly, in Germany, youth work is safeguarded by both federal and regional legislation, supported by dedicated funding streams to ensure sustainability. The German system recognises the critical role youth work plays in fostering active citizenship, preventing social exclusion, and supporting the personal development of young people. Youth work in Germany is coordinated at the federal level under the Social Code (SGB VIII), which outlines the rights of young people to receive support. This framework also encourages partnerships between youth organisations, educational institutions, and local governments, ensuring a wide range of services are available to support the development of young people.

### Sweden

Sweden also provides a strong example of youth work embedded within social policy. Swedish youth work is primarily funded through national grants distributed to municipalities, which allocate resources to ensure the availability of youth services. Swedish youth work focuses heavily on participation and inclusion, promoting democratic engagement among young people. The Swedish model also highlights the importance of collaboration between youth services, educational institutions, and healthcare providers, ensuring young people receive comprehensive support that addresses both their social and emotional needs.

### Estonia

In Estonia, youth work is governed by the Estonian Youth Work Act, which requires local governments to provide youth services in collaboration with educational institutions and community organisations. Estonia's framework ensures that youth services are not only available but are also adaptable to meet the needs of different communities. Additionally, the Estonian government provides extra financial support to regions with high rates of youth unemployment or social exclusion, ensuring that the most vulnerable young people receive the help they need.

## Ireland

Ireland's National Quality Standards Framework for Youth Work offers another strong model. The Irish framework sets clear benchmarks for quality in youth work, covering areas such as inclusivity, safeguarding, and youth participation. Ireland's approach emphasises continuous improvement and regular evaluation, ensuring that youth work services remain responsive to the changing needs of young people. Irish youth work also receives consistent funding through a mix of government and EU sources, ensuring that services are sustainable and accessible to all young people.

## Lessons for Scotland

By learning from these successful European models, the Youth Work (Scotland) Bill will aim to build a robust system that ensures equity, accessibility, and sustainability for youth services across the country. The Bill will mandate local authorities to develop tailored Youth Work Strategies, similar to Finland and Estonia, while also ensuring that funding is allocated equitably, as seen in Germany and Sweden. The enhancement of national standards for youth work in Scotland will mirror Ireland's framework, ensuring that services maintain high quality and are subject to regular evaluation.

These international comparisons highlight the effectiveness of embedding youth work within national legislation and providing consistent funding. By aligning Scotland's youth work framework with these best practices, the Bill seeks to create a more inclusive and equitable youth work system that empowers young people to reach their full potential.

## **Establishing a Dedicated Youth Work Fund**

The Youth Work Fund, which forms part of this proposal, addresses the critical need for sustainable, consistent funding in the sector. Youth work services in Scotland have long struggled with funding, voluntary youth work organisations have been subject to a reliance on short term grants and local authority youth work services have experienced diminishing budgets impacting on services for young people.

This instability often leads to fluctuations in service quality and availability. The introduction of a dedicated funding source will provide essential stability, ensuring local authorities and voluntary sector youth work providers can deliver continuous, high-quality services to young people across Scotland.

The Youth Work Fund will be structured to allocate resources based on need. The youth work sector will receive funding according to criteria such as socio-economic challenges, youth demographics, and the unique difficulties faced by rural or isolated areas. This model will ensure that regions with higher levels of poverty, social exclusion, or youth unemployment are adequately resourced to meet the needs of their young people. Administered centrally, the fund will operate on a multi-year basis, enabling local authorities and voluntary youth work providers to plan strategically together, prioritise their Youth Work Strategies, and secure ongoing provision.

The proposal for a Bill incorporates best practices from international models, such as Estonia's Youth Work Act, which provides additional national support to areas with heightened levels of youth unemployment or exclusion. By using a similar approach, this proposal for a Bill will ensure Scotland's youth work services are accessible, sustainable, and equitable in the long term, without placing undue administrative burdens on local authorities or central government.

### **Proposed Structure and Allocation Criteria**

The Youth Work Fund will be centrally administered to ensure transparency and fairness in distribution. Local authorities will be required to submit comprehensive Youth Work Strategies that outline the state of youth services in their area, identify service gaps, and propose tailored solutions. Funding will be allocated based on these strategies and key indicators like youth population density, deprivation levels, and rural isolation.

A portion of the fund will also be reserved for innovation, allowing local authorities and third-sector organisations to develop new approaches and pilot projects. This will ensure that Scotland's youth work services remain responsive to the evolving needs of young people while encouraging collaboration and the sharing of best practices across regions.

### **Ongoing Accountability and Review Mechanisms**

To ensure the effectiveness of the Youth Work Fund, the proposal for a Bill mandates a system of ongoing accountability. Local authorities will be required to report annually on their use of funds, focusing on outcomes such as service accessibility, quality, and impact on young people. A national review body will assess these reports to ensure effective and efficient use of resources.

Additionally, the fund's allocation will be subject to regular review, allowing adjustments to be made based on changing needs. For example, if a region faces new challenges like rising youth unemployment or increased social isolation, funding can be reallocated to address these issues. This flexibility ensures that the Youth Work Fund remains adaptable while holding local authorities accountable for delivering tangible benefits to young people.

Through this structure, it is proposed that the Youth Work (Scotland) Bill will provide the financial foundation necessary for a sustainable, innovative youth work sector. The dedicated fund, combined with accountability measures, will ensure that youth work services across Scotland can deliver long-term, impactful support to all young people.

### **Collaboration and Holistic Support**

This proposal for a Youth Work (Scotland) Bill prioritises collaboration between local authorities and voluntary youth work providers, and other key service providers, creating

a unified approach to supporting young people. By forming partnerships across sectors, the proposal for a bill will help address the complex needs young people face, delivering more efficient and cost-effective services.

This collaboration means better integration of mental health support, education, and skills developed with youth work, creating a holistic network of support. For instance, increasing collaboration with youth worker and schools to provide emotional resilience and personal development programmes that complement academic learning. These partnerships will enhance education and reduce social issues like bullying and anxiety, ensuring young people have the additional support they need to thrive.

A collaborative framework like this has been shown to save money by reducing duplication of services and improving early intervention. By working together, local authorities, voluntary youth work organisations, mental health professionals, and community organisations can share resources, reduce pressure on overstretched services, and target support more effectively.

Countries like Denmark demonstrate the benefits of this approach, where youth work is integrated with health and education, providing early intervention in familiar environments, reducing stigma, and preventing more costly interventions later. Involving community organisations further enriches young people's experiences by offering varied opportunities in sports, the arts, and volunteering, fostering civic responsibility and personal growth.

Ultimately, the proposal for a bill uses a collaborative model which would enhance the quality of services, save money by streamlining resources, and create a supportive environment where all young people can access the help they need to succeed, contributing positively to their communities and Scotland's future.

### **National Standards and Continuous Evaluation**

To ensure high standards across all youth work services, the proposed Youth Work (Scotland) Bill will strengthen the existing National Youth Work Outcomes and Skills Framework for youth work and build on the current National Occupational Standards for Youth Work, CLD Competences and HMIE Self Evaluation Framework.

By refining and formalising these frameworks, it is proposed that the Bill will enhance the effectiveness of youth work services and create a more equitable experience for all young people.

Regular evaluation and reporting will be at the heart of this system, helping local authorities and voluntary youth work providers continuously reflect, adapt, and improve their services. The policy that will underpin the bill also emphasises the importance of including young people's feedback in this process, ensuring services evolve to meet their changing needs. These evaluation mechanisms will be supported by training in

data collection and analysis, equipping providers with the skills to use feedback effectively.

Existing evaluation tools and practices within the sector will be further strengthened and standardised to ensure a cohesive, national approach. By building on the current successes of the sector and driving further the current culture of reflective practice. The proposal will ensure that youth work services will continuously develop and maintain high standards that benefit Scotland's young people.

I want young people to have a right to access youth work and that there is sufficient provision of high quality youth work across the country. The Youth Work (Scotland) Bill will satisfy these aims by making the service a legal right.

### **Enhancing Professional Development**

This proposal for a bill recognises the essential role of youth workers in meeting young people's personal, educational and social development. To ensure that practitioners are equipped to meet the diverse needs of young people, the proposed policy that will form the basis of the bill mandates ongoing professional development and training for all paid and volunteer youth workers. This commitment is vital for addressing challenges such as mental health issues, social isolation, and educational disparities.

The proposal will establish a comprehensive professional development framework, including entitlements to training and opportunities for specialisation in areas like mental health support and leadership skills for both paid and volunteer youth workers. This will foster a culture of lifelong learning within the sector, enabling youth workers to continuously enhance their skills.

Additionally, the policy proposal for a bill promotes stronger collaboration between educational institutions and youth work organisations to develop specialised courses and certifications. This partnership will ensure new practitioners and volunteers enter the workforce with relevant skills and knowledge, enhancing the overall quality of youth work services.

By prioritising professional development and building on current national standards, the Bill aims to create a legally binding framework that guarantees all young people in Scotland access to high-quality youth work services. Continuous evaluation, informed by feedback from young people and community stakeholders, will ensure these services remain responsive to evolving needs.

### **Conclusion**

This is a transformative proposal that guarantees every young person in Scotland has the support they need to succeed. By enshrining youth work in law, it will create a more equitable system of services that upholds young people's rights under the UNCRC and ensures local authorities have the tools they need to fulfil these obligations. The Bill will

address social inequalities and offer a proven cost-saving solution, benefiting young people and society in the short, medium, and long term.

## Questions

### About you

(Note: Information entered in this “About You” section may be published with your response (unless it is “not for publication”), except where indicated in **bold**.)

1. Are you responding as:
  - an individual – in which case go to Q2A
  - on behalf of an organisation? – in which case go to Q2B
  
- 2A. 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”.)
  - Politician (MSP/MP/peer/MEP/Councillor)
  - Professional with experience in a relevant subject
  - Academic with expertise in a relevant subject
  - Member of the public

Optional: You may wish to explain briefly what expertise or experience you have that is relevant to the subject-matter of the consultation:

- 2B. Please select the category which best describes your organisation:
  - Public sector body (Scottish/UK Government or agency, local authority, NDPB)
  - Commercial organisation (company, business)
  - Representative organisation (trade union, professional association)
  - Third sector (charitable, campaigning, social enterprise, voluntary, non-profit)
  - Other (e.g. clubs, local groups, groups of individuals, etc.)

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).

3. Please choose one of the following:
  - I am content for this response to be published and attributed to me or my organisation



- I would like this response to be published anonymously
- I would like this response to be considered, but not published (“not for publication”)

If you have requested anonymity or asked for your response not to be published, please give a reason. **(Note: your reason will not be published.)**

4. Please provide your name or the name of your organisation. **(Note: The name will not be published if you have asked for the response to be anonymous or “not for publication”.)**

Name:

Please provide 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. **(Note: We will not publish these contact details.)**

Contact details:

5. **Data protection declaration**

- I confirm that I have read and understood the Privacy Notice Privacy Notice on this consultation on my [website](#) available at the bottom of the page which explains how my personal data will be used.

If you are under 12 and making a submission, we will need to contact you to ask your parent or guardian to confirm to us that they are happy for you to send us your views.

- Please ONLY tick this box if you are UNDER 12 years of age.

Your views on the proposal

Note: All answers to the questions in this section may be published (unless your response is “not for publication”).

Aim and approach

1. Which of the following best expresses your view of the proposed Bill? **Please note that this question is compulsory.**

- Fully supportive
- Partially supportive
- Neutral (neither support nor oppose)
- Partially opposed
- Fully opposed
- Do not wish to express a view

Please explain the reasons for your response.

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

- Yes
- No

Explain:

### Financial implications

3. 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? Would this save money or cost money?

- a significant increase in costs
- some increase in costs
- no overall change in costs
- some reduction in costs
- a significant reduction in costs
- skip to next question

Please explain the reasons for your answer, 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.

## Equalities

4. 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 answer and if there are any ways you think the proposal could avoid negative impacts on particular people.

## Sustainability

5. 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 answer, 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?

## General

6. 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)?

## How to respond to this consultation

You are invited to respond to this consultation by answering the questions in the consultation and by adding any other comments that you consider appropriate.

### *Electronic or hard copy submissions*

Responses should, if possible, be prepared electronically (preferably in MS Word). If you wish to receive this document in word as opposed to converting the PDF please email me at:

Martin.Whitfield.msp@parliament.scot

Please keep formatting of this document to a minimum. Please send the document by e-mail (as an attachment, rather than in the body of the e-mail) to:

Martin.Whitfield.msp@parliament.scot

Responses are prepared in hard copy should either be scanned and sent as an attachment to the above e-mail address or sent by post to:

Martin Whitfield MSP  
Room M1.07  
Scottish Parliament  
Edinburgh EH99 1SP

If submitting a response by e-mail or hard copy, please include written confirmation that you have read and understood the Privacy Notice which is available on my [website](#) at the bottom of the page.

You may also contact my office by telephone on (0131) 348 5827

## Deadline for responses

All responses should be received no later than **21<sup>st</sup> February 2025**. Please let me know in advance of this deadline if you anticipate difficulties meeting it. Responses received after the consultation has closed will not be included in any summary of responses that is prepared.

## How responses are handled

To help inform debate on the matters covered by this consultation and in the interests of openness, please be aware that I would normally expect to publish all responses received (other than “not for publication” responses) on my website available here [Martin Whitfield MSP - MSP for South Scotland Region](#)

Published responses (other than anonymous responses) will include the name of the respondent, but other personal data sent with the response (including signatures, addresses and contact details) will not be published.

Where responses include content considered to be offensive, defamatory or irrelevant, my office may contact you to agree changes to the content, or may edit the content itself and publish a redacted version.

If I lodge a final proposal, I will be obliged to provide copies of responses (other than “not for publication” responses) to the Scottish Parliament’s Information Centre (SPICe). SPICe may make responses available to MSPs or staff on request.

Requests for anonymity or for responses not to be published

If you wish your response to be treated as anonymous or “not for publication”, please indicate this clearly. The Privacy Notice available on my [website](#) at the bottom of the page explains how such responses will be handled.

Other exceptions to publication

Where a large number of submissions is received, particularly if they are in very similar terms, it may not be practical or appropriate to publish them all individually. One option may be to publish the text only once, together with a list of the names of those making that response.

There may also be legal reasons for not publishing some or all of a response – for example, if it contains irrelevant, offensive or defamatory content. If I think your response contains such content, it may be returned to you with an invitation to provide a justification for the content or to edit or remove it. Alternatively, I may publish it with the content edited or removed, or I may disregard the response and destroy it.

Data Protection

As an MSP, I must comply with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and other data protection legislation which places certain obligations on me when I process personal data. As stated above, I will normally publish your response in full, together with your name, unless you request anonymity or ask for it not to be published. I will not publish your signature or personal contact information. The Privacy Notice on my website [add link to website] sets out in more detail what this means.

I may also edit any part of your response which I think could identify a third party, unless that person has provided consent for me to publish it. If you wish me to publish information that could identify a third party, you should obtain that person’s consent in writing and include it with your submission.

If you consider that your response may raise any other issues under the GDPR or other data protection legislation and wish to discuss this further, please contact me before you submit your response. Further information about data protection can be found at: [www.ico.gov.uk](http://www.ico.gov.uk).