Monday, 16 February 2015


C/- Dr Kevin Pelan
Committee for Social Development
Room 144
Parliament Buildings
Belfast  BT4 3XX


Dear Kevin

**RE: REGENERATION BILL**

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission.

CIH is broadly supportive of the aim in the draft Bill to decentralise government functions and empower local councils to make decisions about what happens in their communities. However, we feel that the Bill could go further to achieve this aim.

As it stands, it seems that a substantial amount of power remains with central government and there is a lack of clarity around responsibility for strategy. In the context of local councils adapting rapidly to the ambitious transfer of responsibilities to them, we can see why central government is afforded this power.

Therefore, CIH recommends that the Department functions as proposed be maintained for a transition period of two to three years only, whereupon the regeneration function is entrenched and central government input is reduced.

As per our response to the strategic planning policy statement (SPPS) consultation, we strongly support the 'plan-led system'. Both the Department and local councils must have regard to the councils' new local development plans (LDPs) in the preparation of their 'development schemes', else risk the LDPs being bypassed which runs counter to the principles of reform.  As such CIH recommends the following:

**Part 2 Clause 5 Subclause 4 "In preparing a development scheme a council must have regard to—"**

Add "(c) local development plans within the meaning of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011"

**Part 2 Clause 13 "For Article 85 of the Planning Order substitute—"**

Add "85. (2) (c) have regard to community plans within the meaning of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011"

Add "85. (2) (d) have regard to local development plans within the meaning of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011"


Yours sincerely



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