

SECTION 8

THE STRUCTURE OF SCOTTISH LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Local government in Scotland was re-organised in May 1975. A large number of small authorities with a mixture of functions were replaced by sets of regional, district and island councils with more ordered responsibilities. The three island councils — Shetland, Orkney and the Western Isles — are all-purpose authorities. Mainland Scotland is then divided into nine regions — Borders, Dumfries and Galloway, Lothian, Strathclyde, Tayside, Fife, Central, Grampian, and Highland — and each region sub-divided into districts of which there are 53 in all. The boundaries are drawn to have regard to social, economic and recreational pattern rather than size. Hence half the population of Scotland lives in one region — Strathclyde — compared with only 100,000 in the Borders Region. Glasgow City District has over $\frac{3}{4}$ million population and therefore has more people than any region apart from Strathclyde; in contrast there are a number of districts with around 30,000 people. Each council is composed of councillors elected by geographical area and is served by officers responsible for the particular services and functions. In 1977-78 68% of revenue income came to local authorities via the Treasury's Rate Support Grant. The balance came mainly from local taxation (the rate levy or tax on property) with a small amount from rents and service charges.

Regional Authority Functions

Major planning and related services:

Strategic planning; industrial development; transportation: roads, traffic management and road safety, passenger transport, ferry services, airports; water, sewerage, flood prevention and arterial drainage; countryside and tourism.

Education; Social Work; Police; Fire; Coast protection; Consumer protection; Weights and measures; Food standards and labelling; Disease of animals; Community centres, parks and recreation*; Museums and art galleries*; Registration of births, deaths and marriages; Registration of Electors.

District Authority Functions

Local planning and associated services:

urban development; countryside**.

Building control**; Housing; Community centres, parks and recreation*; Museums and art galleries*; Libraries**.

Environmental health, including:

cleansing; refuse collection and disposal; food hygiene; Shops Act, etc.; clean air; markets and slaughterhouses; burial and cremation.

Regulation and licensing, including:

cinemas and theatres; betting and gaming; taxis; house-to-house collections.

*Exercised concurrently by regional and district authorities.

**Except in Highland, Dumfries and Galloway and Borders regions where the functions concerned are regional.

Islands Authority Functions

The islands authorities exercise all of the above functions subject to joint arrangements in the case of police and fire.

