



LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

AGENDA

3rd Meeting, 2018 (Session 5)

Wednesday 24 January 2018

The Committee will meet at 9.30 am in the James Clerk Maxwell Room (CR4).

1. **Subordinate legislation:** The Committee will take evidence on the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 (Supplementary and Consequential Provisions) Order 2018 [draft] from—

Roseanna Cunningham, Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform, Robin MacLean, Policy Officer, Food, Drink and Trade Division, and Judith Brown, Solicitor, Scottish Government.

2. **Subordinate legislation:** Roseanna Cunningham (Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform) to move—

S5M-09989—That the Local Government and Communities Committee recommends that the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 (Supplementary and Consequential Provisions) Order 2018 [draft] be approved.

3. **Subordinate legislation:** The Committee will consider the following negative instrument—

The Allotments (Compensation) (Scotland) Regulations 2017 (SSI 2017/457).

4. **Public petitions: PE1539:** The Committee will consider the following petition—

PE1539 by Anne Booth, on Housing Associations to come under the Freedom of Information Act (Scotland) 2002.

5. **Housing (Amendment) (Scotland) Bill (in private):** The Committee will consider a draft Stage 1 report.

6. **Homelessness (in private):** The Committee will consider a draft report.

7. **Work programme (in private):** The Committee will consider its work programme.

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The papers for this meeting are as follows—

Agenda item 1

Note by the Clerk

LGC/S5/18/3/1

Agenda item 3

Note by the Clerk

LGC/S5/18/3/2

Agenda item 4

Note by the Clerk

LGC/S5/18/3/3

Agenda item 5

PRIVATE PAPER

LGC/S5/18/3/4 (P)

Agenda item 6

PRIVATE PAPER

LGC/S5/18/3/5 (P)

Agenda item 7

PRIVATE PAPER

LGC/S5/18/3/6 (P)

Local Government and Communities Committee

3rd Meeting, 2018 (Session 5), Wednesday 24 January 2018

Subordinate Legislation

Overview of instruments

1. The following instrument, subject to affirmative procedure, is being considered at today's meeting:
 - The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 (Supplementary and Consequential Provisions) Order 2018 (SSI 2018/draft)

The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 (Supplementary and Consequential Provisions) Order 2018 (SSI 2018/draft)

Background

2. This Order makes provision that is supplementary to and in consequence of Part 9 (allotments) of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015. The policy note for the instrument is attached at **Annexe A**.
3. An electronic copy of the instrument is available at:
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/sdsi/2018/9780111037843>.
4. The Committee needs to report by 23 February 2018.

Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee consideration

5. The Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee (DPLRC) considered this instrument at its meeting on 17 January 2018 and determined that it did not need to draw the attention of the Parliament to the instrument on any grounds within its remit.

Procedure

6. Under Rule 10.6.1 (a), the instrument is subject to affirmative resolution before it can be made. It is for the Local Government and Communities Committee to recommend to the Parliament whether these draft instruments should be approved.
7. The Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform has, by motion S5M-09989 (set out in the agenda) proposed that the Committee should recommend the approval of this statutory instrument. The Cabinet Secretary will attend in order to speak to and move the motion. Ahead of the formal debate (as part of an earlier agenda item), there will be an opportunity for members to ask questions of the Cabinet Secretary and her officials on the background to and purpose of this instrument.

8. At the end of the debate, the Committee must decide whether or not to agree the motion, and then report to Parliament accordingly. Such a report need only be a short statement of the Committee's recommendations.

POLICY NOTE**THE COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT 2015
(SUPPLEMENTARY AND CONSEQUENTIAL PROVISIONS) ORDER 2018**

The above instrument is made by Scottish Ministers in exercise of the powers conferred by section 143 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 (“the Act”) and all other powers enabling them to do so. It is subject to the affirmative procedure.

Policy ObjectiveArticle 2: Modification of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015

Section 115(1) of the Act requires each local authority to make regulations about the allotment sites in its area. Section 115(2) provides that these must be made before the expiry of two years beginning with the date this section comes into force. The policy intention is that the first regulations made by each authority should cover all allotment sites within that authority’s area, for consistency across the authority. Article 2(2) of the Order therefore amends section 115(2) in order to clarify that the first set of regulations for each authority must make provision for all allotment sites in that authority’s area.

Article 2(3) modifies section 116 of the Act, which sets out the procedure to be followed by local authorities in making regulations under section 115(1). Section 116(6) provided that such regulations come into force on the day after they are executed, or such later date as is specified in the regulations. The policy intention is that for certainty and consistency, each authority’s first set of regulations is to be in force within two years of commencement of section 115. Accordingly, article 2(3) makes the modifications to section 116 necessary to clarify this.

Article 3: The Land Settlement (Facilities) Act 1919

Article 3 of the Order repeals certain provisions of the Land Settlement (Facilities) Act 1919 relating to allotments. This is because these provisions are now out of date and no longer required as a consequence of Part 9 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015.

Consultation

No public consultation was carried out in relation to the matters covered by this Order. However, on 1 November 2017, the Scottish Government wrote to local authorities explaining the intention to bring forward a modification to Part 9 of the Act as part of the implementing legislation.

Impact Assessment

No impact assessment has been prepared for this Order as no impact upon business, charities or voluntary bodies is foreseen. However, an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) was carried out at for the Bill which covered Part 9 and can be found here: <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/People/engage/eiapt4>

Financial Effects

The Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform confirms that no Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment is necessary as this Order has no financial effects on the Scottish Government, Local Government or on business. However, please see Financial Memorandum that was carried out for the wider Bill and which covers Part 9: <http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/CurrentCommittees/83231.aspx>

Scottish Government
Directorate for Economic Development
Food, Drink and Trade Division
21 December 2017

Local Government and Communities Committee

3rd Meeting, 2018 (Session 5), Wednesday 24 January 2018

Subordinate Legislation

Overview of instrument

1. The following instrument, subject to negative procedure, is being considered at agenda item 3 at today's meeting:
 - The Allotments (Compensation) (Scotland) Regulations 2017 (SSI 2017/457).

Procedure

2. Negative instruments are instruments that are "subject to annulment" by resolution of the Parliament for a period of 40 days after they are laid. All negative instruments are considered by the Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee (on various technical grounds) and by the relevant lead committee (on policy grounds). Under Rule 10.4, any member (whether or not a member of the lead committee) may, within the 40-day period, lodge a motion for consideration by the lead committee recommending annulment of the instrument. If the motion is agreed to, the Parliamentary Bureau must then lodge a motion to annul the instrument for consideration by the Parliament.
3. If that is also agreed to, Scottish Ministers must revoke the instrument. Each negative instrument appears on a committee agenda at the first opportunity after the Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee has reported on it. This means that, if questions are asked or concerns raised, consideration of the instrument can usually be continued to a later meeting to allow correspondence to be entered into or a Minister or officials invited to give evidence. In other cases, the Committee may be content simply to note the instrument and agree to make no recommendation on it.

Background

The Allotments (Compensation) (Scotland) Regulations 2017

4. These Regulations are made under sections 133(4) and (5), 134(4) and (5) and 135(3) and (4) of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015. These provisions of the Act place duties upon Scottish Ministers to make, by regulations, further provision for or in connection with compensation relating to allotments. The policy note for this instrument is attached at **Annexe A**.
5. An electronic copy of the instrument is available at:
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2017/457/introduction/made>.
6. No motion to annul this instrument has been lodged.

Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee Consideration

7. The Delegated Powers and Law Reform (DPLR) Committee considered this instrument at its meeting on 17 January 2018 and determined it did not need to draw the attention of the Parliament on any grounds within its remit.

Committee Consideration

8. The Committee is **not required** to report on negative instruments, but should it wish to do so, the deadline for reporting on the instrument is **23 February 2018**
9. **The Committee is invited to consider the above instrument and whether it wishes to report on any issues to the Parliament in relation to it.**

POLICY NOTE**THE ALLOTMENTS (COMPENSATION) (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2017****SSI 2017/457**

The above instrument was made in exercise of the powers conferred by sections 133(4) and (5), 134(4) and (5) and 135(3) and (4) of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 and all other powers enabling them to do so.

Policy Objectives

Part 9 of The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 (“the Act”) brought forward provisions about allotments, as defined in section 107 of the Act. Sections 133, 134 and 135 make provision about compensation payable when the lease of an allotment ends in certain circumstances. Those sections require secondary legislation to be made, by way of regulations, for further provision in connection with compensation. This instrument makes those regulations, to come into force on 1st April in line with the other provisions of Part 9.

1. Compensation for disturbance: Section 133(5) of the Act requires that regulations must in particular provide for the procedure to be followed in determining whether a local authority is liable to pay compensation to the tenant for disturbance as a result of termination of the lease in certain circumstances and in assessing any amount of compensation to be paid above the minimum requirement, if the lease does not make provision about the procedure for assessing the amount.
2. Compensation for deterioration of allotment: Section 134(5) of the Act requires that regulations must in particular provide for the procedure to be followed in determining whether a tenant is liable to pay compensation to the landlord for deterioration of the allotment. This happens when it is determined that the deterioration of the allotment occurred during the tenant’s lease and was caused by the fault or negligence of the tenant. Regulations must also in particular make provision about the procedure to be followed in assessing the amount of compensation due where the lease does not make that provision.
3. Compensation for loss of crops Section 135(4) provides that regulations must in particular make provision about the procedure to be followed in determining whether a local authority is liable to pay compensation to the tenant where the allotment is resumed and the tenant loses crops. Regulations must also in particular make provision about the procedure to be followed in assessing the amount of compensation due where the lease does not make that provision.

The policy objective of the instrument is therefore to set out the further provision that is required in relation to compensation for disturbance, deterioration and loss of crops where these apply under the Act at the end of the lease of an allotment.

PART 1: General

Part 1 of the instrument provides that it comes into force on 1st April 2018 and defines a number of terms used on the instrument.

PART 2: Compensation for disturbance

Regulation 2 of the instrument sets out how an applicant seeking compensation for disturbance must submit a notice of claim to the local authority. This includes what must be stated in and provided with the claim and sets the timeframe for submission.

Regulation 3 provides that when an authority receives a notice of claim, it must decide whether it has sufficient information and evidence to determine the claim, and the time frame for this. It also allows local authorities to seek further information and evidence from the applicant if required and sets a timeframe for this to be provided.

Regulation 4 provides that the authority must make a decision on its liability for the claim for compensation for disturbance and the amount of compensation due. The matters the authority must take into account in making this decision and the steps it must take are set out. The authority must give reasons for its decision and include that the applicant has the right to appeal its decision in cases where it does not accept the whole of the claim. Regulation 4 also establishes the timeframe for paying compensation to the applicant for disturbance.

PART 3: Compensation for deterioration of allotment

Regulation 5 of the instrument sets out that where a the tenant may be liable for deterioration of an allotment, the local authority must inspect the allotment and, if the allotment appears to have deteriorated due to the tenant's fault or negligence, give the tenant a deterioration notice. Regulation 5 sets out the timescales for this process.

Regulation 6 sets out the information and evidence the deterioration notice must contain.

Regulation 7 allows the tenant the opportunity to make representation to the authority about any of the matters in the deterioration notice.

Regulation 8 sets out that the authority must, after the period for making representations, decide whether or not the allotment has deteriorated during the tenant's lease due to the fault and negligence of the tenant. If so, it must determine the amount of compensation due, based on the cost of rectifying the deterioration and evidence of this in the deterioration notice, or based on the procedure set out in the lease if the lease makes that provision. The authority's decision must take into consideration any representations from the tenant. Notice of the decision must be given, including notice of the tenant's right of appeal. Timeframes are set for the steps to be taken under regulation 8.

Regulation 9 sets a minimum timeframe the tenant has for paying compensation for deterioration to the local authority. It also enables an extension to the minimum timeframe, should this be agreed by both parties.

It is expected that local authorities will inspect allotment sites for deterioration over the course of the lease, and the tenant would have had opportunities to rectify this before the end of the lease.

Part 3 outlines the procedure for determining compensation for deterioration of an allotment at the end of the tenant's lease and where this has not been rectified prior to the end of the lease.

PART 4: Compensation for loss of crops

Regulation 10 of the instrument sets out the steps an applicant must take when submitting a notice of claim to the local authority for compensation for loss of crops. This includes setting the timeframe, what must be included in the notice and accompanying evidence.

Regulation 11 sets out that when a local authority receives a notice of claim for compensation for loss of crops, it must decide whether it has enough information and evidence to enable it to determine the claim. Regulation 11 also allows local authorities to seek further information or evidence related to the claim and enables an extra period of time in which to obtain this.

Regulation 12 outlines the timeframe and steps a local authority must take in order to make a decision on whether it accepts liability for the claim and the amount of compensation due. The matters the authority must take into account in making this decision are set out. . Under this regulation, the local authority must give notice of its decision with reasons for its decision and include that the applicant has the right to appeal its decision. The timeframe for paying compensation is also set out.

Consultation

In accordance with sections 133(6), 134(6) and 135(5) of that Act the Scottish Ministers have consulted with local authorities and other persons appearing to the Scottish Ministers to have an interest.

The Scottish Government "Consultation on Allotments Compensation: Secondary Legislation under the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015" ran from 20 August 2015 to 16 October 2015: <https://consult.gov.scot/food-and-drink/allotments/>

Three stakeholder engagement events were also organised for Glasgow, Edinburgh and Inverness.

Building on the responses from 2015, the Scottish Government Food, Drink & Trade Division conducted a supplementary consultation that ran for 5 weeks (from 18 August 2017 to 22 September 2017) and focussed specifically on the procedures to be followed in determining liability and assessing the amount of compensation, and noting that procedures for determining the amount of compensation due only apply in cases where the lease does not make provision for this.

The results of this further consultation have been used to inform the development of the procedures for determining liability and assessing the amount of compensation for disturbance, deterioration and loss of crops set out in this instrument.

Emerging themes from the consultation process included the need for sufficient time for local authorities to investigate claims for compensation, the recognition that there could be legitimate circumstances where deterioration of an allotment may have arisen due to circumstances beyond the tenant's control and compensation for loss of crops should be determined as being the cost of replacing like for like, and/ or the cost of relocating these to new sites. These have been taken into consideration when developing these regulations.

Impact Assessment

No impact assessment has been prepared for this Order as no impact upon business, charities or voluntary bodies is foreseen. However, an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) was carried out at for the Bill which covered Part 9 and can be found here: <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/People/engage/eiapt4>

Financial Effects

The Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform confirms that no Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment is necessary as this Order has no financial effects on the Scottish Government, Local Government or on business. However, please see Financial Memorandum that was carried out for the Bill and which covers Part 9: <http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/CurrentCommittees/83231.aspx>

Scottish Government
Directorate for Economic Development
Food, Drink and Trade Division
19 December 2017

Local Government and Communities Committee

3rd Meeting 2018 (Session 5), Wednesday 24 January 2018

Public Petition: PE1539

Introduction

1. The Committee will consider petition PE1539, which was referred to it by the Session 4 Infrastructure and Capital Investment Committee.

[PE1539](#), lodged on 17 October 2014:

Calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to make an Order under Section 5 of the Freedom of Information Act (Scotland) 2002 to make all housing associations subject to the provisions of that Act. This will ensure that housing associations are more open, transparent and accountable to all their stakeholders, i.e. tenants and factored homeowners.

Petitioner: Anne Booth

2. The list of the Scottish Public Authorities covered by the [Freedom of Information \(Scotland\) Act 2002](#) (FOISA) can be extended by means of an order made under Section 5 of the Act. This petition seeks to make such an order to extend FOISA to all Housing Associations (which are referred to in this paper as Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) to reflect terminology taken forward by the Scottish Government in its current consultation).

Background

Session 4 Public Petitions consideration

3. This petition was first introduced and considered by the Public Petitions Committee on [9 December 2014](#). During its consideration, it wrote to the Scottish Government, the Scottish Information Commissioner, a number of RSLs, tenants' organisations and other interested parties.

4. Tenant representatives and FOI proponents were generally in favour of the proposals. RSL representatives were generally supportive of RSLs being open and transparent to their tenants and customers. However, many argued that RSLs already have duties to be open and transparent under the Scottish Social Housing Charter (SSHC) and expressed concerns regarding further legislative, administrative and financial burdens being placed on them.

5. The Scottish Information Commissioner was supportive of the petition, referring to a [special report published in January](#) recommending that Scottish Ministers bring forward a Section 5 order to extend the coverage of FOISA to include RSLs.

6. In its [letter of 16 April 2015](#), the Scottish Government reiterated that it intended to consult on extending the coverage of FOISA later that year. It indicated, however, that it did not consider factoring to be services of a public nature and therefore doubted whether the factoring activities of RSLs would come under FOISA, even if the RSLs became subject to the Act. [The petitioner wrote to the Public Petitions](#)

[Committee on 24 April 2015](#), challenging the Scottish Government's view that factoring services are not of a public nature.

7. On 13 May 2015, the Public Petitions Committee referred the Petition to the Session 4 Infrastructure and Capital Investment Committee, under Standing Order Rules 15.6, 15.7 and 15.8, as it was responsible for the scrutiny of policy matters in relation to housing.

Scottish Government consultation on extension of FOISA

8. On 12 June 2015, the [Scottish Government launched a further consultation on the extension of FOISA to further bodies](#) under a Section 5 order.

9. Whilst it did not formally consult on extending FOISA to RSLs, the Scottish Government encouraged RSLs, tenants and representative bodies to respond to the consultation on whether RSLs should be included in future consultations on extension of FOISA.

10. At that time, the Scottish Government cited the regulatory burdens placed on social landlords under the Scottish Housing Charter (SHC) as one reason for not extending FOISA cover to RSLs at this stage. It also stated that given the Charter has yet to complete 5 years of operation, it would "suggest a full assessment of the effectiveness of the Charter" is "undertaken before any potential imposition of freedom of information legislation is formally proposed."

Previous ICI Committee Scrutiny

11. Following consideration of the petition, the [ICI Committee wrote to the Scottish Government](#) on 17 July 2015 urging it to engage with the petitioner's views in respect of extension of FOISA to RSLs. The Committee also requested that the Scottish Government update it on how it intends to take forward the petitioner's views to its review of the SHC and how it will assess whether RSLs should be included in the next FOISA section 5 consultation.

12. The Scottish Government [wrote to the Committee with a copy of its biennial section 5 order-making powers report on 2 November 2015](#). In its letter, the Scottish Government confirmed that approximately half the responses to its consultation on which types of bodies should be considered for future inclusion in section 5 orders made reference to RSLs. In recognition of the strong interest, the Scottish Government agreed to formally consult the sector on extending FOISA to RSLs in the future. It stated "that review of the SSHC provides the opportune time to formally consult the sector with a view to extending the Act in tandem with complementary changes to the Charter."

13. The ICI Committee considered the petition at its [meeting on 18 November 2015](#). At that meeting, the Committee agreed that as the Scottish Government has now agreed to formally consult on extending FOISA to include RSLs and to review the SSHC, [it would seek the petitioner's views](#) on whether it would be happy for the Committee to close the petition on that basis. The petitioner replied expressing a [preference for the Committee to keep the petition open](#).

14. Given that and the upcoming consultation from the Scottish Government would begin following the start of Session 5, the petition was added to the Session 4 ICI

Committee's legacy paper for its successor committee (the Local Government and Communities Committee) to consider the petition further.

Local Government and Communities Committee consideration

15. Following its business planning discussions, the Local Government and Communities Committee wrote to the Scottish Government on 1 September 2016 asking it to provide a timeline for its consultation. The Scottish Government confirmed that it anticipated consulting with the housing sector in late autumn 2016 for 12 weeks. It confirmed that timescales after that will be dependent on the number of responses to the consultation and the range of substantive issues raised.

16. On 1 December 2016, [the Scottish Government subsequently wrote to the Committee](#) announcing that it would carry out its consultation between 1 December and 23 February 2017 and that a summary of responses and what action the Scottish Government will take would be published early in 2017.

17. The Committee agreed at a further discussion of its work programme on 7 December 2016 to defer consideration of the petition to following close of the Scottish Government's consultation.

18. The Committee considered the revised SSHC, which was subject to minimal changes and taken forward as a separate item, at its meeting on 1 February 2017. Following positive comments from witnesses and the Minister for Local Government and Housing on its operation, the Committee agreed to recommend to Parliament that the revised SSHC be approved by Parliament.

19. The Scottish Government [closed its consultation on extending FOI to RSLs on 23 February 2017](#) and published 71 responses on 23 March 2017. Many bodies representing tenants, proponents of FOI and the Information Commissioner were generally in favour of RSLs coming under FOI, given that they provide services of public nature and receive public funding. Many RSLs and their representative organisations were against the proposals. Some reasons given by RSLs for not increasing FOI were the costs and resource associated with further regulatory burden, concerns it could impact smaller RSLs and a concern that any additional costs could have an impact on rent levels. Some also commented that should the proposals be agreed to, the timescale for implementing the proposals should be extended from April 2018 to April 2019.

20. The Committee last considered the petition at [its meeting](#) on 29 March 2017. The Committee agreed to continue the petition and on 4 April 2017 [subsequently wrote](#) to the Scottish Government requesting an update on the indicative timeline for when the Government will respond to the consultation. The Committee also asked the Government for a timeline for the bringing forward of a Section 5 Order should proposals for extending FOI to RSLs.

21. The Minister for Parliamentary Business [responded](#) to the Committee's letter on 19 April 2017 to confirm that an interim report containing a summary of the key responses to the consultation will be published in spring 2017 with a formal response to the consultation to follow in autumn 2017. The interim report was published on 29 June 2017 at the following link: <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2017/06/5076>

22. In evidence to the Committee on the Housing (Amendment)(Scotland) Bill the Minister for Local Government and Housing confirmed that the Scottish Government would be extending FOI to include RSLs and that it is expected that this would take effect from April 2019.

23. On 5 December 2017, the Minister for Parliamentary Business [wrote](#) to the Committee to inform the Committee that the Government will be [consulting](#) on a draft Section 5 that would extend FOI to RSLs. This consultation runs until 7 March 2018.

24. In that consultation the Scottish Government explain that:

The Scottish Government supported designation of RSLs as public authorities for the purposes of Freedom of Information legislation.

Having considered all issues in respect of the consultation, the Scottish Government is of the view that RSLs should be designated as public authorities for the purposes of the Act insofar as they undertake functions for which they are already subject to regulation by the Scottish Housing Regulator (as referenced at section 3 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2010). The intention is to align information access rights to the regulatory powers of the body responsible for overseeing RSLs.

The order therefore proposes to designate RSLs insofar as they undertake functions as defined by the term 'housing activities' at section 165 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2010 and in respect of which are already subject to regulation by the Scottish Housing Regulator.

25. The consultation also notes that:

We also note that a number of local authorities - who are subject to the Act - provide factoring services. In addition, the Scottish Social Housing Charter sets out the standards and outcomes that owners should receive from the property management services they receive from social landlords. In common with the other standards and outcomes set by the Charter, the Scottish Housing Regulator monitors, assesses and reports on how social landlords perform against these standards and outcomes.

Given the integral nature of factoring to 'housing services' potentially provided by RSLs we consider that information relating to factoring would fall within scope of the terms of the proposed order.

26. The final Section 5 order would be laid in the Scottish Parliament by the Scottish Government under the affirmative procedure and it is expected that, once laid, scrutiny of it would fall within the remit of the Local Government and Communities Committee.

27. The Committee is invited to consider and agree what action it wishes to take on the petition.