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Kenneth Gibson MSP
Convener
Finance and Public Administration Committee
Scottish Parliament
Holyrood
Edinburgh
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23 March 2026

Dear Convener

ISPS HANDA WOMEN'S SCOTTISH OPEN

I write to you regarding a major event for Scotland and Scottish Government funding support for it.

Ordinarily this would have been announced to Parliament via a Government Initiated Question prior to my letter to you, however following a process agreed between the Parliamentary Clerks office and the Scottish Government in the lead-up to the pre-election period, GIQs are only to be utilised until 13 March and thereafter Parliament should be informed in writing via the relevant Committee. I am therefore writing to update you as soon as possible.

Golf is important to Scotland, and we are known internationally as 'the Home of Golf'. Our golf events play a key part in this deserved reputation. The ISPS Handa Women's Scottish Open is one of the most prestigious annual women's golf tournaments outside the five global 'majors'. Its placement ahead of the AIG Women's Open ensures a world-class field and extensive coverage.

The Scottish Government and VisitScotland have a long-standing relationship with the Women's Scottish Open, recognising the event's importance to Scotland.

I am pleased to let you know that the Scottish Government has agreed to continue to provide funding to the ISPS Handa Women's Scottish Open, following the conclusion of the previous agreement at the end of the 2025 tournament. Under the new agreement £1.5 million per year will be provided from 2026 to 2028, with potential for the contract to be extended for a further two years in 2029 and 2030.

Hosting a world-class women's golf tournament in Scotland each year brings a range of positive socio-economic outcomes, including significant international exposure and direct local benefits.

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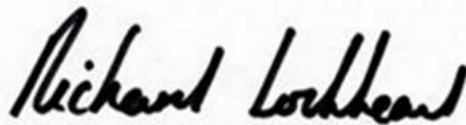
The tournament is also important from a women's sport and gender equality perspective. The new funding agreement sends a clear message about the Scottish Government's and Scotland's progressive values, emphasising equality and enhancing the nation's image as a forward-thinking and inclusive society.

The new agreement also brings an exclusive benefits package for Scotland, covering areas such as international promotion, advertising and support for Scottish Government policies, notably in relation to sustainability and health.

The tournament enjoyed a record attendance in 2025. I have no doubt that it will continue to grow over the course of this new agreement and showcase Scotland as the perfect stage for major events.

I hope that the Committee finds this update helpful and I will be sure to keep it informed of further developments in relation to this event.

Yours sincerely,



RICHARD LOCHHEAD

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