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Police Scotland Evidence Submission, Scottish Parliament Local Government, Housing and Planning Committee meeting – February 2023.

1. The Police Scotland Violence Prevention and Licensing Coordination Unit is part of PPCW (Partnerships, Preventions and Community Wellbeing) Division. In this capacity the Unit has been in regular dialogue with representatives of the Scottish Government throughout the various stages of the implementation of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 (Licensing of Short-term Lets) Order 2022. Additionally the Unit attend monthly SOLAR meetings dedicated to Short Term Lets, also attended by Scottish Government.
2. Police Scotland are statutory consultees and as such are expected to undertake Fit and Proper Person checks for all nominals identified by Local Authorities involved in the day to day management of the property, as outlined in the Scottish Government Guidance. The predicted influx of applications will have a significant demand on Police Scotland resources in respect of processing applications received, required system checks and input of data on to Innkeeper, the Police Scotland Licensing Database.
3. Local Authorities are permitted 12 months to respond to applications and a request was previously submitted for this to be extended to include Police Scotland to allow responses to be made beyond the current 28 day required timescale. However this was rejected on the basis of Schedule 1 - Section 3 (1)(e) which provides an extension to the timescale if required in specific circumstances.
4. The demands placed on Police Scotland have increased since involvement in the consultation into the implementation of a Short Term Let (STL) licensing regime, including the impact of the MacLeod Remedy affecting police officers' pensions. This combined with no additional funding being made available to Police Scotland to support the application checks required by Local Authorities prior to determining the suitability of an application to receive an STL licence, has presented a number of resourcing challenges.
5. As a result, Police Scotland have been exploring various opportunities to streamline the process and reduce the expected demand. At present the creation of an ICT solution is being explored to assist local policing divisions in processing applications received from Local Authorities. A proposed 6 month delay for existing operators would allow Police Scotland more time to develop and implement such a solution.
6. At this early stage all stake holders are working through the implementation of the legislation. Due to various interpretations of the requirements of the legislation and differing processes being implemented across the 32 Local Authorities, a number of additional challenges have already been presented in respect of quality control of applications and the number of nominals requiring to be checked. This adds to demands placed on Police Scotland resources and the time required to process requests. A delay in the commencement of

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the requirement for existing hosts to submit applications would provide all stakeholders with more time to refine processes.

7. In conclusion, Police Scotland are supportive of the proposed 6 month delay for existing Short Term Let operators and appreciate the opportunity to provide a written submission.

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