Thank you for responding to the Local Government and Regeneration Committee's Call for Evidence on the Air Weapons and Licensing (Scotland) Bill. All submissions will be examined and considered as part of the Committee's scrutiny of the Bill.

Please be aware that questions marked with an asterisk (*) require an answer before you can submit the form.

Follow the Local Government and Regeneration Committee's Twitter feed - all Committee tweets on this Bill will have the hashtag #aw&lbill.

*1. Please supply your name and contact details:

Name: Callum Chesshire
Organisation: 
Address 1: 
Address 2: 
City/Town: 
Postcode: 
Country: 
Email address (if no email leave blank): 
Phone Number: 

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY
SUBMISSION ID NUMBER 64
2. Please confirm that you have read and understood the Scottish Parliaments “Policy on the treatment of written evidence by subject and mandatory committees”:

☑ Yes

3. Please confirm whether you are content for your name to be published with your submission:

☑ Yes

☐ No

4. Which of the three categories below best describes your interest in the Bill (please tick only one)?

☑ Personal

☐ Professional

☐ Commercial

5. Do you wish your email to be added to the Committee’s distribution list for updates on progress of the Bill:

☑ Yes

☐ No
6. Invitations to give oral evidence to the Committee on the Bill will be based on the submissions received. If you wish your submission to be included amongst those considered for possible invitation to give oral evidence, please indicate here.

☐ Yes

☐ No

7. You may answer questions on the entire Bill, or on any part of the Bill. Please indicate which parts of the Bill you are responding to? (You may select as many options that apply).

☐ All of the Bill

☐ Equalities, climate change and other Scottish Government objectives

☐ Air Weapons

☐ General licensing issues

☐ Alcohol licensing

☐ Civic licensing – taxi/private hire car licensing

☐ Civic licensing – scrap metal dealers

☐ Civic licensing – theatre licensing

☐ Civic licensing – sexual entertainment venues
1. Air Weapons Licensing

You may respond to all the questions or only those you have a specific interest in. (Text boxes have no word limit, they will increase in size accordingly).

13. In what ways will the creation of an air weapons licensing system in Scotland contribute to preserving public order and safety, reducing crime and advancing public health policy?

I do not believe that this legislation will help to improve public order and safety, reduce crime or advance public health.

The current Firearms legislation is sufficient, in my opinion, to control the use of firearms and to punish those who misuse them.

The current Firearms system is stretched and under resourced since Police Scotland formed – in my experience, the Aberdeen Firearms Licensing office is experiencing lengthy delays in processing applications and visiting.

I do agree that there are people who should not be allowed to own or use air weapons however this Bill will not have the desired effect of restricting them. People who do not use air weapons legally now, will continue to use them illegally in the future. There is an extremely large pool of unregistered air weapons to which undesirable people can access to now. If this legislation was introduced, unregistered air weapons will continue to be easily accessible in England and taken across the border into Scotland.

Weapons that are used in crimes are often unregistered or stolen.

The number of crimes committed involving air weapons is relatively small in comparison to this legislative reaction. More people are harmed by dangerous dogs than air weapons. More protected wildlife is killed by uncontrolled roaming cats than are killed by air weapons. It is, in my opinion, a disproportionate response to a small number of isolated incidents involving air weapons.

The banning of back garden plinking will not improve public safety.

14. Is there sufficient provision, or sufficient capacity to provide, suitable numbers of air weapons clubs across all areas of Scotland for use by registered air weapons owners/users?
I am unsure as I am not a member of a shooting club. I have safely used air rifles in a controlled environment from a young age in the back garden of my family home.

15. How will the air weapons licensing system affect those using air weapons for personal/recreational use?

I believe this legislation will restrict those who use air weapons, the vast majority of which do so legally and safely.
I currently shoot air weapons (as well as my shotguns and firearms) on privately owned land and do so in a safe manner. I would find it very restrictive if I had to join a shooting club to continue practising my sport.

The main reason I shoot air weapons is for enjoyment, which is not a suitable ‘good reason’ under the proposed legislation. Air weapons are enjoyable to shoot and cheap to run which is why so many people choose to learn to shoot with them. Whilst I do also use air weapons for pest control and thus have a ‘good reason’ I think that this legislation would stop people from owning and shooting air weapons in their garden for enjoyment. Air weapons can be fired safely in urban environments such as a back garden if simple and reasonable precautions are made to stop the pellet traveling beyond the target.

I think it would discourage new people from entering the sport and learning the safe handling and shooting techniques before moving onto other firearms.

16. How will the air weapons licensing system affect those aged 14 to 17 who use air weapons?

Young people will be restricted from learning the key skills for handling and firing firearms safely.

Illegally held air weapons - If young people are exposed to illegally held firearms they may think that it is cool and similarly to recreational drugs they may slip into a culture where more powerful illegal weapons are held and used irresponsibly.

17. How will the air weapons licensing system affect those using air weapons for commercial/professional reasons (for example: for pest
control; as part of the tourist/hunting season; as part of fairs, paintballing centre, entertainment sector etc.)?

No affect, those who currently use air weapons for pest control are likely to use FAC air weapons and be FAC/SG certificate holders.

18. How will the air weapons licensing system affect those using air weapons for competitive sporting purposes?

I think that this will restrict people bringing air weapons from the rest of the UK into Scotland for competitions.

19. Is it equitable for those applying for an air weapons certificate to pay a fee which cannot be refundable irrespective of whether a certificate is granted or not?

No, based on my opinion that I think that the current firearms licensing system is fair.

20. Will the air weapons licensing system have a positive or negative impact on other areas of the public sector in Scotland (eg. The work of local government, public agencies etc.)?

I do not think that the police can cope with an increase in firearms applications, this is based on my dealings with the Aberdeen branch of Scotland Police.

I think that the current firearms legislation adequately controls the use of air weapons and that those who misuse them can be adequately punished for doing so.
21. What, if any, might the unintended consequences of introducing an air weapons licensing system in Scotland be?

An increase in black market dealing of firearms in Scotland.

Complications for people bringing air weapons across the Scotland/England border.

Increase in high power air weapon ownership.

Reduction in the number of people learning how to handle and shoot firearms safely from a young age.

Increased interest from young people in the misuse of air weapons as it may become cool to own an unregistered air weapon.

Reduction in competitions taking place in Scotland.

22. Do you have any other comments to make on air weapons licensing aspects of the Bill?

I do not think that this will increase public safety, or reduce the number of air weapon related crimes. I think that the current Firearms legislative system is fit for purpose.

I think this bill is a disproportionate response to a relatively minor issue that can be addressed and punished under the current legal framework. I think the

I do not think that Police Scotland have the capacity to deal with an Air Weapons licensing system and that any private company brought in to manage the licensing system will not provide value for money.

If sub-12ft/lb air weapons are to be licensed as plus-12ft/lb air weapons are licensed through the Firearms Certificate, then I think we will see an increase in the number of more powerful air weapons being owned because if you have to apply for it, you may as well apply for the more powerful version.

This is my understanding of Democracy – We (the people of Scotland) have voted for the Scottish Parliament to act on our behalf. When the Scottish Parliament asked us (the people of Scotland) our opinion on the Bill, we responded with an overwhelmingly majority against it. The people of Scotland do
not want this and I do not want this. The people of Scotland have asked you not to do this and I am asking you not to introduce this Bill. It is therefore your democratic duty to listen to the people of Scotland and scrap this Bill.