Dear Cllr. Parry

The Social Security Committee is currently undertaking an inquiry into Social Security Support for Housing and would like to invite COSLA to make a written submission.

The Committee would like the views of COSLA on some of the questions asked in the Committee’s call for evidence:

- How does the administration of Universal Credit Housing Costs impact on the ability of tenants to pay their rent and landlords to administer rent payments?
- How do Universal Credit Scottish Choices and Discretionary Housing Payments impact on the way landlords and tenants handle Universal Credit housing costs?
- In all of the above, what improvements could be made to reserved and devolved systems, including the way they interact with each other.

A common theme that has developed during the evidence sessions is whether Scottish choices should be opt in or opt out? Does COSLA have a view on this or has it canvassed members? If not, the Committee would be grateful if you could seek the views of your members.

The Committee would also be grateful if you could provide information about how Scottish local authorities manage Discretionary Housing Payments, the effects of the Local Housing Allowance for private renters, and how Councils commission
temporary accommodation for homeless families and individuals. You are also welcome to submit additional information which you believe is relevant to the inquiry.

The Committee has so far held two evidence sessions and has heard from private and social sector landlords, and organisations who support tenants and those seeking accommodation. The Official Report of each meeting (21 and 28 March) can be found on the Parliament’s website. Further information on the inquiry, including the Committee’s call for views can be found on the website.

I would be grateful for a response by Wednesday 17 April 2019.

Yours sincerely

Bob Doris

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