

PE2056/H: Introduce legislation allowing Scottish Ministers to intervene on the hire of public land

Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government written submission, 10 March 2025

Thank you for your letter of the 6 February 2025 regarding the petition on introducing legislation allowing Scottish Ministers to intervene on the hire of public land.

The Scottish Government's position on this proposal remains unchanged from the response issued by the previous Minister for Local Government Empowerment and Planning on the 1 February 2024.

Local and national government have committed to respecting each other's democratic mandates as part of the Verity House Agreement and it is the view of the Scottish Government that locally elected representatives are best placed to prioritise the needs of the local community.

As long as they act lawfully, it is up to each democratically elected council how it manages its day-to-day business and decision-making processes, Scottish Ministers would not intervene in decisions relating to the hiring of public land owned by local authorities. Ultimately, it is for locally elected representatives to make local decisions on how best to serve their communities. Should individuals or businesses wish to raise concerns about a decision taken by a local authority, each council has a formal complaints procedure. Should the matter remain unresolved, it may also be possible to refer any concerns to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman.

I hope this response is helpful.

Yours sincerely,

SHONA ROBISON