



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

## Local Government, Housing and Planning Committee

Cabinet Secretary for  
Finance and Local  
Government,  
The Scottish Government

**28 January 2025**

Dear Shona,

The Committee has agreed to undertake a short, focussed inquiry on potential changes to the current council tax system. This is expected to involve taking evidence from relevant stakeholders after February recess and will consider the following key themes—

- Progress made by the Joint Working Group on Sources of Local Government Funding and Council Tax Reform since its first meeting in 2022;
- Barriers to change in this area;
- Ways in which barriers to change can be addressed;
- Arguments for and against a revaluation of domestic properties being undertaken in Scotland;
- What Scotland can learn from other countries – for example Wales – in terms of their approaches to revaluation and reform;
- Likely costs of any revaluation exercise in Scotland and how they should be funded;
- Assuming that council tax remains one of the main local taxes in Scotland, what other reforms to the tax could be explored?

The key aims of the inquiry would be to—

- Understand the various arguments for and against local tax reform;
- Explore why change has not happened despite broad agreement that the current system could be improved;

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Contact: Local Government, Housing and Planning Committee, The Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh, EH99 1SP. Email: [localgov.committee@parliament.scot](mailto:localgov.committee@parliament.scot). We welcome calls through Relay UK and in BSL through Contact Scotland BSL.

- Discuss how barriers to change could be addressed or mitigated; and
- Help inform debate and policy proposals .

As part of this work, the Committee agreed to invite a progress update from the Joint Working Group on Sources of Local Government Funding and Council Tax Reform. It would be helpful if this could include progress updates in respect of each of the specific actions noted under [the Group's Remit](#), along with timescales for each of them to be completed.

I would be grateful if this summary could also include details of progress made towards the Scottish Government's commitment to oversee the development of effective deliberative engagement on sources of local government funding, including council tax. It was understood this would culminate in a Citizens' Assembly to be completed during the current parliamentary session, as set out in the then Minister for Public Finance, Planning and Community Wealth's response to written question [S6W-14454](#) in February 2023. I would be grateful if this update could be received by Tuesday 18 February.

The Committee also agreed to invite you to give oral evidence as part of its inquiry and our clerks will liaise with your private office to confirm timings in due course.

I have written in similar terms to the President of COSLA as co-chair of the Joint Working Group.

The Committee has also agreed to consider potential alternative forms of local taxation to council tax at a later date.

Ariane Burgess  
Convener, Local Government, Housing and Planning Committee

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