



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

**Social Justice and Social Security Committee**

Eric McQueen  
Chief Executive  
Scottish Courts and Tribunals  
Service

Social Justice and Social Security  
Committee  
The Scottish Parliament  
Edinburgh  
EH99 1SP

Via email only

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06 February 2023

Dear Eric McQueen,

The Social Justice and Social Security Committee is undertaking some work around applications for utility warrants in Scotland to try to establish how the process works and what protections there might be for customers who are struggling to pay their bills.

The Committee is aware Ofgem has recently ordered all suppliers to suspend the practice of forcibly installing prepayment meters.

The Committee has had sight of guidance provided to Justices of the Peace in the Tayside, Central and Fife Sheriffdom. Advice Talks provided the guidance as an attachment to their [letter](#). Similarly, we have provided a copy of the guidance with our letter. We would be grateful if you could confirm whether this, or similar, guidance is used in the other sheriffdoms.

In relation to that guidance, the Committee would be very keen to see the letter referred to as the “human rights” letter in the guidance. It would also be useful to know if the same letter is used in all sheriffdoms.

It would also be helpful to have any information you collect on the number of warrants to enter someone’s home to disconnect/install a prepayment meter

that are applied for in the courts in Scotland and how many applications are opposed.

Any other information you can supply in relation to the processes surrounding a utility warrant application would be appreciated.

The Committee would be grateful for a response by 27 February. This would allow the Committee to consider your views along with information supplied by other bodies involved in the process, such as the energy companies.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'N. Don', written in a cursive style.

**Natalie Don MSP**  
**Convener**  
**Social Justice and Social Security Committee**