

Rural Affairs and Islands Committee

26th Meeting, 2023 (Session 6), Wednesday, 25 October

Welfare of Dogs (Scotland) Bill

Introduction

1. This paper supports the Committee's second evidence-taking session as part of its scrutiny of the Welfare of Dogs (Scotland) Bill.
2. The [Welfare of Dogs \(Scotland\) Bill](#) was introduced on 20 June 2023 and the RAI Committee has been designated lead committee for Stage 1 scrutiny of the Bill. The Stage 1 deadline has yet to be agreed by Parliament.

The Bill

3. The policy memorandum states the aim of the Bill is to improve the health and wellbeing of dogs throughout their lives, by establishing a more responsible and informed approach to acquiring and owning a dog; and by making provision for regulating the sale or transfer of puppies from unlicensed litters.
4. The Bill consists of 14 sections arranged in three parts. Part 1 would require the Scottish Ministers to make a code of practice to set out good practice in the buying, selling and giving away of puppies and dogs of any age. The code would also require a certificate to be signed after a dog has been sold/transferred to confirm the code of practice has been followed. Part 2 would give the Scottish Ministers the power to make regulations to set up a register of unlicensed litters. Part 3 consists of general provisions.
5. [More information on the Bill is provided in the SPICe bill briefing.](#)

Written evidence

6. The Committee issued a six-week call for views over summer recess from 30 June until 11 August. The call for views included a questionnaire for the general public and a more detailed survey for stakeholder organisations. The Committee received 95 responses to the questionnaire and 23 responses to the survey.
7. [A complete list of the survey responses is available on the Committee's website.](#) In addition, [a summary of the survey responses has been produced by SPICe and is available on the Committee's website.](#)

8. [A summary of the responses to the questionnaire has been produced by PACT and is available on the Committee's website.](#)

Oral evidence

9. The agreed timetable for oral evidence is—

20 September	Roundtable evidence session with stakeholder organisations
25 October	Evidence session Minster and Scottish Government officials
15 November	Evidence session with the Member responsible for the Bill (Christine Grahame MSP) and officials from the NGBU

**Rural Affairs and Islands Committee clerks
October 2023**