



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Willie Rennie MSP
Leader of the Scottish Liberal Democrats

David Stewart MSP
Convener
Public Petitions Committee
Room T3.40
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh, EH99 1SP

15 October 2014

Ref: A4686/2014/SA/CK

Dear David

PE1521: No more page 3 in the Scottish Sun and Scottish Parliament

Thank you for your letter seeking the Scottish Liberal Democrats' views on this issue. I do apologise for the delay in responding to you.

Liberal Democrats strongly sympathise with concerns that have been raised about the sexual objectification of women.

At the Liberal Democrat Autumn Conference in 2011, we passed a motion entitled 'Tackling Violence against Women'. Among its many recommendations was a call on the Government to do more to counter the sexual objectification of women, and particularly the negative impact this might be having on the younger generation.

Our motion proposed that the display of these kinds of images of women in newspapers and magazines should be carefully restricted under the same rules that apply to pre-watershed broadcast media. We feel that it is inappropriate for such magazines to be stocked in areas of shops where children are able to see them or to freely glance through their contents.

Media sexism as a whole is a very important issue, and one we think that all parties need to take more seriously in the future. Lib Dem Ministers, Jo Swinson and Lynne Featherstone, have been leading on the Government's campaign, first launched in November 2010, to challenge damaging representations of women's bodies in the media. This has been important in promoting body confidence, and tackling the negative kind of body image that can be damaging to the physical and mental health of impressionable young women in our society.



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Whilst the Scottish Liberal Democrats do not believe that it should be the role of government to ban publications unless they are in breach of the law, we do feel that a strong stance is needed to send a message that the sexual objectification of women is unacceptable. We do therefore support the petition and believe that the Parliament should not stock The Sun whilst it contains page 3.

Yours sincerely



Willie Rennie MSP (Mid Scotland & Fife)
Leader, Scottish Liberal Democrats