

Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee**Inquiry into Land Register of Scotland: progress of local authorities in registering their land****Written submission from Aberdeen City Council**

My Council is aware of the requirement to register its property on the Land Register of Scotland by 2019. I would note that the requirement was in fact a request by the Scottish Government to Registers of Scotland ("RoS"), and not passed by any legislative enactment. My Council is not actively taking steps to voluntarily register its property. There are several reasons for this, namely:

Cost – without any specific funding from the Scottish Government having been made available, there is no available funds/budget within my Council that is able to be directed towards this project. In addition, Registers of Scotland are charging registrations dues based on property value (albeit with a 20% reduction). The cost of registration undoubtedly will be huge bearing in mind the size and value of our property portfolio.

Resources – in order to register Aberdeen City Council's land, which is made up of over 25,000 separate titles, a significant increase in resources will be required. It is estimated that it would take around 2 working days to complete a voluntary registration (some titles will be straightforward, but larger titles are likely to be complicated and take much longer than 2 working days). If 5 solicitors were employed to exclusively undertake this task, it would take up to 27 years to complete the registrations. It should also be noted that as each registration application would require a plan, architectural technicians would also have to be resourced to deal with the number of titles requiring plans. I do acknowledge that with 'Keeper Induced Registration' being available for straightforward titles within research areas, that the number of voluntary registrations may be able to be reduced, but not by a significant extent.

Based on the above and the likelihood that centralised funding is not going to be made available for this project, my Council is not able to support this proposal. We have no resources available to implement registration by 2019, or indeed at any stage.

I note from your letter that you have been in communication with RoS. The Society of Local Authority Lawyers and Administrators in Scotland (SOLAR) have been in regular contact with RoS. In addition there was also a meeting held in Aberdeen between representatives of RoS's Voluntary Registration Team, Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, Moray and Angus Councils on 8 December 2016. Similar concerns to the above were raised, and RoS undertook to consider these and feed this back to the Scottish Government. Can you kindly confirm that your Committee has been made aware of these concerns.

Angela Scott
Chief Executive