

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

I have been asked to respond to your committee on behalf of our Chief Executive.

Regarding the points raised in your letter, I can confirm that the Shetland Islands Council are aware of the requirement to register all property interests on the land register by 2019 and measures are in place to take this forward in line with the target dates. However, given the size and complexity of this task, the Council is far from confident that this is achievable.

The task is much more significant for Shetland Islands Council as ours was the last area to be added to the Land Register and so we are beginning from a much lower percentage of already recorded titles and much of the land held is rural and without marked boundaries.

As with other Local Authorities, the diverse nature of the historical portfolio of property makes some of the analytical work prior to registration quite complex and lengthy. Interpreting many very old descriptive titles into the current mapping system is a very specialist task and requires significant staff time. This interpretation crosses different teams within the Council including expert Legal input along with surveyors and mapping systems specialists. Over the last 12 months our officers have been working closely with ROS to try to improve the delivery requirements.

As you will be aware there has been no additional funding to Local Authorities to undertake this work, indeed budgets continue to be cut, and resources are already stretched delivering necessary services. It would be helpful if there was Government support for rolling out this labour intensive and expensive project whether that be by way of waiving or reducing registration fees or specific grant support to take on additional staff for the project.

Kenn Allan, Team Leader – Asset & Properties