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Convener of the Local Government and
Communities Committee
Room T3.60
Scottish Parliament
EDINBURGH
EH99 1SP

16 November 2017

Dear Convener

The Scottish Government welcomes the Committee's recommendations into the Disabled Persons' Parking Places (Scotland) Act 2009.

As I explained during my appearance at Committee, I recognise that disabled persons' parking places play a crucial role in enabling disabled people to carry out day-to-day activities that non-disabled people can take for granted, and it is vital that these parking places are enforced by local authority parking attendants or Police Scotland.

As part of our work on the Miscellaneous Transport Bill we are currently exploring alternative enforcement options with our stakeholders, which may provide greater flexibility and reduce the financial and resource burdens on local authorities. This could involve the sharing of services with neighbouring authorities with DPE powers, thereby providing an approach which is both demand and evidence led and allows local authorities without Decriminalised Parking Enforcement (DPE) powers to manage parking, including disabled persons' parking places more effectively.

In addition, we are continuing to work with the UK Government and private parking industry to ensure that consistent enforcement of private car parks is achievable through the development of a single Code of Practice. I have also asked my officials to explore with stakeholders how we can deliver a more efficient process to section 8 of the act which requires local authorities to engage with the landowners of private car parks.

As part of our wider work to improve parking in Scotland we are also working with stakeholders, including local authorities, to examine how we can streamline the Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO) process. On 9 October my officials set up a new Parking Managers Working Group, which will explore how we take forward a number of these recommendations including issues around signage of disabled persons parking places. I will update the committee in March 2018 on the findings of our reviews.

Finally, as the Committee had highlighted in its report, it is essential that we change behaviours and public perception to parking and enforcement. I am therefore minded to explore the development of a public awareness campaign to highlight the effect that the misuse of these bays can have on individuals.

As we are considering responsible parking legislation, including improvements to private parking and potential changes to the 2009 Act as part of the Miscellaneous Transport Bill, it would seem an appropriate time to develop such a campaign.

I hope the Local Government and Communities Committee finds this helpful.

Best wishes

HUMZA YOUSAF

Committee Report on Disabled Persons Parking Places Act 2009

Committee Recommended Actions	Options
Creation of guidelines on enforcement to improve current practices	<p>We are currently looking into options available to allow local authorities without DPE powers with a more flexible enforcement alternative to reduce the financial and resource burdens on them</p> <p>This could include sharing the services of neighbouring authorities that have DPE powers. Whilst some authorities already share services in this manner through a service level agreement, we are considering if they could use the services of an authority on a demand and evidence led enforcement</p> <p>We are also continuing to work with the private parking industry to ensure that consistent enforcement on private car parks is achievable through the development of a single Code of Practice, which defines how parking practices should operate in Scotland.</p>
Welcome the Minister's commitment to look at the opportunities for local authorities to adopt DPE and create opportunities of collaborative working, shared services and technologies may afford the most appropriate means of doing so. Seek confirmation from the Minister of the timetable for undertaking this work and request an update on the outcome of his deliberation	
Scottish Government to work with local authorities and private car parking operators on specific guidance to enable a more consistent approach to enforcement.	
Consider opportunities to improve the TRO process whilst ensuring that public consultation remains a part of the process.	As part of the responsible parking element of the Transport Bill we are considering how we can streamline the TRO process with our stakeholders.
<p>Given the wide range of approaches adopted by local authorities, however, we agree that there should be a review of how the requirements of Section 8 are being met to identify best practice.</p> <p>We therefore recommend that the Scottish Government stakeholder working group undertakes a review to encourage the sharing of best practice between local authorities in relation to engaging with private sector car park owners in relation to displaced persons' parking place.</p>	We are exploring both with our stakeholders working groups on how we can deliver a more efficient process for engaging with private sector bodies.

<p>Scottish Government to consider the development of a national awareness campaign addressing the impact of misuse.</p>	<p>There would be benefit in developing a national awareness campaign in relation to parking in Scotland. It is important that we change behaviours and public perception to parking and enforcement.</p> <p>As we bring forward the responsible parking legislation as part of the Transport Bill, the improvements to private Parking and the potential changes to the DPPPA, it seems the correct time to develop a campaign.</p>
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