



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

## Rural Affairs, Islands and Natural Environment Committee

Mhairi Gougeon MSP  
Cabinet Secretary for  
Rural Affairs and Islands

c/o Clerk to the Committee  
The Scottish Parliament  
Edinburgh  
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17 May 2022

***By email only***

Dear Cabinet Secretary,

### **Islands (Scotland) Act 2018 - Annual Report**

During the Committee's consideration of the Islands (Scotland) Act 2018 annual report on 4 May 2022, you and our officials committed to writing to the Committee with additional information regarding the following:

#### Connectivity

- The reasons for excluding the northern isles from the island's connectivity plan.<sup>1</sup>
- What the Scottish Government is doing to provide island communities with the ferry services they need?<sup>2</sup>
- The balance of support that has come from the UK and Scottish Governments towards achieving broadband connectivity across Scotland.<sup>3</sup>
- What additional support the Scottish Government plans to provide to local authorities to deliver publicly-run bus services?<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> RAINEC, Official Report, 4 May 2022, Col. 4

<sup>2</sup> RAINEC, Official Report, 4 May 2022, Col. 4

<sup>3</sup> RAINEC, Official Report, 4 May 2022, Col. 21

<sup>4</sup> RAINEC, Official Report, 4 May 2022, Col. 27

### Crofting

- The funding the Scottish Government has provided to crofters through the croft house grant scheme.<sup>5</sup>

### Workforce dispersal

- Relevant trade union involvement in the development of the Scottish Government workforce dispersal working group.<sup>6</sup>

### Island impact assessments

- How many island impact assessments have been carried out in relation to changes in health provision on the islands in the past year?<sup>7</sup>
- More generally, confirmation that island impact assessments are being carried out as required by the 2018 Act.<sup>8</sup>

### Housing

- What recent assessment has the Scottish Government made of private rent levels on the islands and how these levels compare with the national average?<sup>9</sup>
- What work has there been done to explore whether a rent freeze could be implemented on the islands?<sup>10</sup>
- The Committee also notes the commitment made by Scottish Government officials to report back on how the issue of affordable housing will be reflected in the next iteration of the islands survey.

### Energy

- What work the Scottish Government is doing to support island communities develop renewable energy schemes like those used on the island of Eigg.

The Committee would appreciate a response by the end of June 2022.

Yours sincerely



**Finlay Carson MSP, Convener, Rural Affairs, Island and Natural Environment Committee**

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<sup>5</sup> RAINEC, Official Report, 4 May 2022, Col. 7

<sup>6</sup> RAINEC, Official Report, 4 May 2022, Col. 22

<sup>7</sup> RAINEC, Official Report, 4 May 2022, Col. 26

<sup>8</sup> RAINEC, Official Report, 4 May 2022, Col. 26

<sup>9</sup> RAINEC, Official Report, 4 May 2022, Col. 27/28

<sup>10</sup> RAINEC, Official Report, 4 May 2022, Col. 28