

Councillor Iain McMillan
Ward 08 (Johnstone South and Elderslie)

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Ref: IMM/NMQ/RE34488
Date: 10th August 2023



Minister Maree Todd
Minister for Social Care, Mental Wellbeing and Sport
Scottish Government
St Andrew's House
Regent Road
Edinburgh
EH1 3DG

Dear Minister,

I have been speaking to One Ren who, manage Renfrewshire's leisure centres, recently about the restricted hours of leisure centres and in particular swimming pools.

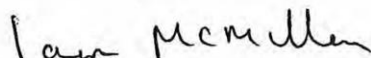
In a recent press article that I was involved in a Scottish Government spokesperson said they were looking into how they could support local swimming pools in terms of keeping them open.

This was in response to my point that the Scottish Government benefited through the Barnett formula when the UK gave money to English councils as they recognised the pressure on keeping pools open, mainly due to increasing energy costs.

Could I ask what plans the Scottish Government have to help keep the countries pools open?

Thanks very much.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Iain McMillan".

Councillor Iain McMillan
Ward 08 (Johnstone South and Elderslie)

Scottish Government Response

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Iain McMillan

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Our Reference: 202300372810

Your Reference: IMM/NMQ/RE34488

19 September 2023

Dear Iain,

Thank you for your recent letter regarding swimming pool facilities.

The Scottish Government places great importance on leisure facilities, particularly swimming pools and believes everyone should have access to these services locally.

We are fully aware that local authorities are facing challenging financial circumstances, particularly in the maintenance and operating of facilities such as swimming pools. As your letter has noted this is largely due to energy costs and other cost of living pressures.

You mentioned the consequentials of £5.816m received from UK Government from their swimming pool fund. These consequentials are added to the Scottish Block as a whole for Ministers to decide how to best allocate resources. In 2023-24 the Scottish Government provided nearly £13.5bn in the Local Government Settlement and increased the resources available to local government by more than £793 million. This was a real terms increase of £376 million or 3%, compared to the 2022-23 Budget figures. As independent corporate bodies it is for local authorities to manage their own budgets and to allocate the total financial resources available to them on the basis of local needs and priorities.

sportscotland, our national agency for sport, is supporting Scottish Swimming to undertake the Scottish Swimming Facilities Project. This detailed piece of work will improve the understanding of the current pool provision and help to predict the landscape in the short, medium and long term to ensure the sustainability of these important facilities.

The Scottish Government will continue to work with local government and other partners across the sector and it is vital that all partners at a local level work together to explore all avenues and approaches.

Yours sincerely,



Maree Todd MSP

Scottish Ministers, special advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See www.lobbying.scot

Tha Ministearanna h-Alba, an luchd-comhairleachaidh sònraichte agus Rùnaire Maireannach fo chumhachan Achd Coiteachaidh (Alba) 2016. Faicibh www.lobbying.scot

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