

Citizen Participation and Public Petitions Committee
Wednesday 21 January 2026
2nd Meeting, 2026 (Session 6)

PE2206: Review the weighting for single-track roads in the road maintenance funding formula

Introduction

Petitioner Jack McConnel

Petition summary Calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to:

- review the single-lane road weighting in the road maintenance funding formula, and either consider increasing it, or adapt the formula to reflect static or similar overheads for any road width
- conduct an assessment of single-lane road overhead costs for rural local authorities, and their impact on funding formulas across all road-related allocations.

Webpage <https://petitions.parliament.scot/petitions/PE2206>

1. This is a new petition that was lodged on 5 November 2025.
2. A full summary of this petition and its aims can be found at **Annexe A**.
3. A SPICe briefing has been prepared to inform the Committee's consideration of the petition and can be found at **Annexe B**.
4. Every petition collects signatures while it remains under consideration. At the time of writing, 6 signatures have been received on this petition.
5. The Committee seeks views from the Scottish Government on all new petitions before they are formally considered.
6. The Committee has received a submission from the Scottish Government, which is set out in **Annexe C** of this paper.

Action

7. The Committee is invited to consider what action it wishes to take.

Clerks to the Committee
January 2026

Annexe A: Summary of petition

PE2206: Review the weighting for single-track roads in the road maintenance funding formula

Petitioner

Jack McConnel

Date Lodged

5 November 2025

Petition summary

Calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to:

- review the single-lane road weighting in the road maintenance funding formula, and either consider increasing it, or adapt the formula to reflect static or similar overheads for any road width
- conduct an assessment of single-lane road overhead costs for rural local authorities, and their impact on funding formulas across all road-related allocations.

Background information

Single-track roads are counted as half as costly as two-lane roads despite similar/identical overhead costs like ditches/drains/bridges/signage. This means local councils with more single-track road miles lose a disproportionate amount of road maintenance funding.

As shown on page 40 of the [**Scottish Local Government Finance 'Green Book' 2025-26**](#), the road maintenance funding formula takes the total road miles in a council area and multiplies them by the number of lanes. Based on this formula, a standard road with one lane in each direction would receive double the weighting of a single-track road.

Given this, and because road maintenance funding is provided as a single pot to use over all road types in a local authority area, the issue also impacts people in towns and villages, as well as people on single-track roads in those local authorities.

Annexe B: SPICe briefing on PE2206

Brief overview of issues raised by the petition

The Scottish Government provides a block grant to local government consisting of the General Revenue Grant, Non-Domestic Rates income and several Specific Revenue Grants. Details of these allocations, plus their capital equivalents, are set out in the annual Scottish Government budget documents and associated Local Government Finance Circulars.

The total revenue funding available is distributed between Scotland's councils using a "needs-based" formula that is agreed annually following negotiation between the Scottish Government and CoSLA.

As part of this needs-based approach, a formula is used to calculate each council's general road maintenance funding allocation. This formula accounts for road usage (weighted by vehicle type) and the total lane length of the road network managed by each council (weighted by road type: principal, non-principal, or 'peat' – i.e. roads built on top of peat). A weighting also applies to sections of lane dedicated to on-street parking.

The petition is concerned with the fact that single track roads, found almost exclusively in remote rural areas and islands, are considered to be a single lane under this funding formula.

It is important to note that the amounts allocated to councils through this funding mechanism are not spending targets. Councils make spending decisions based on local needs and priorities.

Details of [road maintenance allocations to individual councils for financial year 2025-26](#) can be found on page 40 of the current Scottish Local Government Finance 'Green Book'.

Alan Rehfisch

Senior Researcher

17 December 2025

The purpose of this briefing is to provide a brief overview of issues raised by the petition. SPICe research specialists are not able to discuss the content of petition briefings with petitioners or other members of the public. However, if you have any comments on any petition briefing you can email us at spice@parliament.scot

Every effort is made to ensure that the information contained in petition briefings is correct at the time of publication. Readers should be aware however that these briefings are not necessarily updated or otherwise amended to reflect subsequent changes.

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Annexe C: Written submission

Scottish Government written submission, 15 December 2025

PE2206/A: Review the weighting for single-track roads in the road maintenance funding formula

Does the Scottish Government consider the specific ask[s] of the petition to be practical or achievable? If not, please explain why.

The needs-based formula used to distribute the quantum of funding available for local government is subject to constant review and is agreed each year with COSLA on behalf of all 32 local authorities.

The Scottish Government is always open to suggestions to improve the funding formula. However, any proposals for change must properly come through COSLA in the first instance.

What, if any, action the Scottish Government is currently taking to address the issues raised by this petition, and is any further action being considered that will achieve the ask[s] of this petition?

The Scottish Government is not currently taking any action to address the specific issue raised by this petition, however the needs based distribution formula is discussed and agreed with COSLA each year. As noted above, the Scottish Government is always open to suggestions to improve the funding formula, however any proposals must come through COSLA.