

Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Food and the Environment
Richard Lochhead MSP

F/T: 0300 244 4000
E: scottish.ministers@gov.scot



Rob Gibson MSP
Convener
Rural Affairs, Climate Change and Environment Committee
Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP



17 November 2015

Dear Rob

AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS MEDIATION etc.

I am writing to provide the Committee with a further update.

The Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform met Mr Stoddart on 11 November in Parliament to update him on the steps that the Government were taking to support him through the process – the discussion was helpful and Mr Stoddart recognised the efforts being made to support him.

On Thursday, my officials then met the mediators, Core Solutions, and representatives of tenants and landlords and discussed the arrangements for the mediation process. Whilst some progress was made, it is clear that further discussion is needed.

In the meantime, Scottish Government officials are continuing to discuss with the STFA, NFUS and SLE whether there are any practical measures we can take to assist Mr Stoddart before his tenancy is due to come to an end on 28 November. I have spoken and written to the trustees of the Colstoun Trust to ask if they would consider extending his lease to give us a little more time to consider alternative arrangements for Mr Stoddart. While they have replied that they are unable to do so they have indicated that they would be prepared to resume discussions over waygo compensation. The Scottish Government has offered to fund an independent valuer if the parties consider that this might help the process.

I will continue to keep the Committee updated on progress.

Yours sincerely,

RICHARD LOCHHEAD

St Andrew's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh EH1 3DG
www.gov.scot

