

*Bruichnain House
Delmore
Inverness
IV3 8RG
08/01/2018*

Ms Shona Robison
Cabinet Secretary for Health, The Scottish Government

Dr Alan McDevitt,
Chair, Scottish General Practitioners Committee

Dr Andrew Buist,
Deputy Chair, Scottish General Practitioners Committee

The Electoral Reform Society

Dear Ms Robison, Dr McDevitt, Dr Buist and ERS Officials,

Re: Addendum to call for annulment of Scottish GP Ballot

Further to my letter of 31st December, a further major cause for concern has emerged which strengthens the case for annulment and re-running of the ballot.

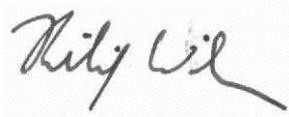
As you know, in early December 2017, GPs throughout Scotland received ballot papers for a poll concerning the proposed new contract agreed between negotiators from the BMA Scottish General Practitioners Committee and Scottish Government. Enclosed with the voting papers was a FAQ document to which I referred in my previous correspondence.

Within the FAQ document was a link to the BMA webpage which in turn contained links to the contract document itself, and in that contract document there is only one explicit link to the Deloitte SWAF document. I now understand from Andrew Cowie that the negotiators had access to additional documents, including the Deloitte review of Earnings and Expenses. I have only just become aware of this document myself. GPs like me (and indeed our own LMC officers in Highland) were not made aware of the Earnings and Expenses document before the poll. Although the full set of three Deloitte reports can be found, if one knows of their existence, on the Scottish Government website (at <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2017/11/1343/downloads>) no information was given anywhere in the documentation available to ordinary GPs that these reports (apart from the SWAF report) existed.

This Earnings and Expenses document is crucial in that it confirms that rural GPs on average have higher expenses and lower incomes than urban GPs. It would have made clear to GP voters that the new contract offer was in effect preferentially providing resource to those who already had more. Had it been made clear that the intention of the new contract was to increase geographical inequalities in primary care provision, far fewer would have voted 'yes'. This raises further concerns about the impartiality of the enclosure with the ballot paper.

I therefore reiterate my request that the poll be annulled with immediate effect because of lack of due process and fair procedures, and re-run in the context of a balanced presentation of the cases for and against the contract. This letter, and this request, have the support of the Rural GP Association of Scotland.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Philip Wilson', enclosed in a light grey rectangular box.

Philip Wilson DPhil FRCPCH FRCGP
Professor of primary care and rural health
Director, Centre for Rural Health
University of Aberdeen

Cc Rural GP Association of Scotland Committee
Dr Anne Mullin, Chair, Scottish Deep End GPs.
Dr Iain Kennedy, Secretary, and Dr Jonathan Ball, Chair, Highland LMC
Richard Foggo, Dr Gregor Smith, Scottish Government