

Second Reading Briefing

Sporting Events Bill

June 2026



Introduction

The Law Society of Scotland is the professional body for over 13,000 Scottish solicitors.

We are a regulator that sets and enforces standards for the solicitor profession which helps people in need and supports business in Scotland, the UK and overseas. We support solicitors and drive change to ensure Scotland has a strong, successful and diverse legal profession. We represent our members and wider society when speaking out on human rights and the rule of law. We also seek to influence changes to legislation and the operation of our justice system as part of our work towards a fairer and more just society.

The Sporting Events Bill¹ was introduced in the House of Lords on 14 May 2026. The purpose of the Bill is to establish a common legislative framework that enable the UK and devolved governments to deliver major sporting events. It also provides the UK Government, the Scottish Government and the Northern Ireland Executive with powers to fund sporting events held wholly or partly in England, Scotland and Northern Ireland respectively.

We welcome the opportunity to provide comments ahead of the Second Reading in the House of Lords, scheduled for Wednesday 3 June 2026. We have the following comments to put forward for consideration.

General Comments

In principle, we consider it sensible to legislate for a common set of legislative provisions which can then be applied to relevant sporting events via secondary legislation. This will remove the need for future event-specific primary legislation, avoiding a piecemeal approach to legislation and freeing up valuable parliamentary time and resources in both the UK and Scottish Parliaments. We highlighted this point in our engagement with the UEFA European Championship (Scotland) Bill in 2019.²

Legislating for a common set of legislative provisions will also promote a consistent and principles-based approach to the legislative underpinning of such events and should improve clarity and certainty in the legislative framework.

Whilst we note that the Bill as introduced applies only to sporting events (although this includes the opening and closing ceremony of such events (clause 24(2))). We consider that there may be other large-scale entertainment events, for example concerts by popular global recording artists or intra-country singing contests, which may create similar issues in relation to ticket touting, advertising, trading, unauthorised association and transport. That is why we welcome the

¹ <https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/4127>

² <https://www.lawscot.org.uk/media/4qjjfqzz/2019-11-04-uefa-football-championship-scotland-bill-stage-1-briefing.pdf>

announcement in the King's Speech that the Government intend to bring forward a draft Ticket Tout Ban Bill which will deal with non-sporting ticketed events.

For the purposes of this briefing, we have focused on the application of the Bill to Scotland.

Comments on Parts of the Bill

Part 1- Sporting Events Framework

Clauses 1 to 4 set up the sporting events framework and introduce the five subject matters that the Bill provides for. These subject matters are: ticket touting, advertising, trading, unauthorised association and transport.

These structural framework provisions will be considered devolved insofar as the subject matters that the framework covers are devolved. Clause 4(1) provides that, before making regulations under clause 2(1) in relation to a sporting event, the Secretary of State must obtain the consent of a devolved authority so far as the regulations contain provision which would be within devolved competence in relation to the authority.

Clauses 5 to 13 and Schedules 1 to 3 deal with ticket touting of sporting event tickets, advertising in and around sporting events, and trading in and around sporting events. The provisions are intended to regulate sporting events, a devolved matter in relation to Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Legislative consent motions will be sought for these provisions.

In our previous engagement with event-specific legislation in the Scottish Parliament,³ we highlighted that it is important that provisions to address ticket touting are commensurate, transparent and appropriate, and that they seek to balance the economic national interest in hosting relevant sporting events while meeting the requirements of sporting event owners with the individual interests affected. These include licensed street traders.

We also highlighted the need to ensure that legislation does not restrict legitimate charitable activities, such as charitable auctions of tickets, or legitimate resales. We note that clause 10 allows regulations to specify exceptions to the advertising offences for advertising wholly or partly carried out for the purpose of promoting charities or services provided by charities.

Regarding the ticket touting offence, we note that subsection 1(2) of Schedule 1 defines the concept of "tout" for the purposes of the offence. The subsection sets out three disjunctive circumstances in which a person carries out an unauthorised ticketing activity:

- in a public place;

³ <https://www.lawscot.org.uk/media/4qjffqzz/2019-11-04-uefa-football-championship-scotland-bill-stage-1-briefing.pdf>

- in the course of a business; or
- with a view to any person making a profit.

We understand that a person may commit the ticket touting offence where they advertise that an event ticket is available for purchase (subsection 1(3)(d)) in a public place, which may include communicating with the public via an internet service (subsection 1(10)(b)), without necessarily having any intention of making a profit.

This could include scenarios in which a person who is unable to attend an event offers their ticket for resale at face value after advertising it online. We are unclear whether such circumstances are intended to fall within the scope of the offence.

Consideration should also be given to how the provisions of the legislation may interact with the existing legislative landscape. There are a number of other common law and legislative provisions that apply to allow for prosecution for various offences including counterfeiting of intellectual property rights under the Trade Marks Act 1994 and the Trade Descriptions Act 1968.

Where the legislative framework provided for in the Bill is applied to specific events via secondary legislation, it will be essential that there is suitable publicity of the restrictions and the consequences that could arise if a person is caught ticket touting or committing any other offences under it. Effective publicity will ensure the transparency and effectiveness of these measures.

Clauses 14 to 16 on unauthorised association with a sporting event relate to and deal with the protection of intellectual property rights connected to a sporting event. These provisions are not considered devolved. Legislative consent will not be sought.

Clause 17 and Schedule 5 deal with transport planning and traffic management in England only, although the provisions have some application outside of England as in two aspects they allow functions to be conferred on UK persons. As these provisions do not apply to roads/areas in Wales and Scotland, legislative consent is not sought from Senedd Cymru or the Scottish Parliament.

Clause 18 and Schedule 6 on enforcement relates to devolved matters as it concerns the enforcement of the ticket touting, advertising and trading provisions, and legislative consent will be sought in respect of those provisions.

Clauses 19-24 relate to supplementary and general matters in respect of Part 1 of the Bill.

[Part 2- Financial Assistance for Sporting Events \(clause 25\)](#)

Part 2 on funding of sporting events applies to England, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Legislative consent will be sought from the Scottish Parliament and the Northern Ireland Assembly.



Part 3- Final Provisions (clauses 26-30)

Part 3 contains provisions which are ancillary to the substantive provisions of the Bill. Legislative consent will be sought to the extent that the substantive provisions engage the process.



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