

Rt Hon Mr John Swinney MSP
First Minister
Scottish Government
St Andrew's House
Regent Road
Edinburgh
EH1 3DG

Date 29 September 2025

Dear First Minister,

Scottish Government's Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions Against the State of Israel

I note that the Scottish Government recently supported a call for boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) against Israel, including an agreement to "immediately impose a package of boycotts, divestment and sanctions targeted at the state of Israel and at companies complicit in its military operations and its occupation of Palestine."

Given that the City of Edinburgh Council receives funding from the Scottish Government, there is concern about how any decision might affect any funds from the Scottish Government through the block grant, on how this money should be spent.

I note that previous attempts by the Council to adopt a local BDS policy against the Israeli Government have been deemed not competent due to section 17 of the Local Government Act 1988 which prevents local authorities and some other public bodies from taking non-commercial matters, including the location of any country or territory of the business activities or interests of contractors, into account in procurement or contract termination decisions.

I would draw attention to the Council's consistent support for action to end the genocide in Palestine, as far as our powers allow, as well as the Council's support for local authority devolution of potential supply and divestment decisions.

Further to this I seek clarity on if the Scottish Government position of BDS against Israel now places conditionalities on local authority spending to observe this position and request that you outline what additional legislative changes the Scottish Government will support and pursue to allow local authorities to legally adopt BDS

Councillor Jane Meagher

Leader of the City of Edinburgh Council

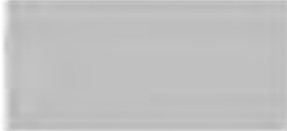
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policies should they choose to. I would also appreciate guidance on how this affects Local Government Pension Investments.

I look forward to your reply.

Yours sincerely



Councillor Jane Meagher
Leader of the City of Edinburgh Council

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