



**Date:** 27<sup>th</sup> April 2012

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION**

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY June 2012**

**Scrap Metal Dealers Motion**

**Motion**

The issue of metal theft is a national problem which affects every part of our society, from stolen remembrance plaques to copper wiring from our infrastructure. This insidious practice requires urgent action to regulate and control the disposal of stolen metals.

Central Beds has broad, cross-party support for a local licencing regime which will be effective and simple to implement. We seek the support of conference for a local solution in line with government's stated ambition to allow local authorities to do what is in the best interests of their residents.

**Proposed by:** Cllr Richard Stay, Central Bedfordshire Council  
**Seconded by:** Cllr Martin Tett, Buckinghamshire County Council

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**Supporting information**

Given the significant impact metal theft has on residents in Central Bedfordshire and across the country, the recent moves by the Home Office to strengthen the regulation of scrap metal dealers are a welcome initial move in combating this crime. However increasing the penalties for breaches of the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 1964 and requiring dealers to change to cashless payments will not on their own be enough to reduce incidents of metal theft. The 1964 Act is in need of a radical overall and needs to be replaced so that councils can ensure that standards at all scrap metal dealers are improved, making it more difficult for thieves to dispose of stolen metal.

Central Bedfordshire notes the Home Office's stated intention to replace the 1964 Act, and also the absence of a government bill in the Queen's Speech to achieve this. Central

Bedfordshire therefore calls on the Local Government Association to seek support from Members of Parliament for a private members bill in the 2012-13 session of parliament that replaces the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 1964 with legislation that amongst its provisions:

- Requires anyone seeking to operate a scrap metal business metal to obtain a licence from their local authority, allows for objections to the application, and for the application to be refused where the applicant is unsuitable.
- Makes it a criminal offence to operate a scrap metal business without a licence, and gives the police and councils the power to close down sites operating without a licence.
- Allows councils to impose conditions on the licence to operate a scrap metal business in order to prevent and reduce crime.
- Allows for licences to be reviewed, and if necessary suspended, revoked or rescinded.
- Places a requirement on all scrap metal dealers, including itinerant traders to use cashless transactions.
- Gives councils the ability to set their own fees to cover the cost of administering licensing applications, and enforcing the new licensing regime.

**Cllr Richard Stay,  
Executive Member for External Affairs,  
Central Bedfordshire Council**

**Central Bedfordshire Council**

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