As Universal Credit is being rolled-out across Scotland, the Social Security Committee is asking for views on any or all of the following questions including from those with experience in this area, people with lived experience of the benefits system and experts:

**What impact will Universal Credit have on in-work poverty in Scotland?**

We do not have any data available. However, given the negative impacts we’ve seen locally, for those in Shetland currently in receipt of Universal Credit, who are out of work (increase in use of Food Bank, increase in rent arrears, increase in demand for Scottish Welfare Fund), we would expect these impacts to be felt by people currently accessing the in work benefits which will become part of Universal Credit.

It is also important to consider the impact on households in relation to their ability to have an acceptable standard of living (Minimum Income Standard), as this should be our aspiration.

**What is the experience so far in full-service areas in Scotland for those who are in work, who are moving or have moved on to Universal Credit?** Not applicable yet.

**What is known about those experiencing in-work poverty in Scotland who do not claim or are not eligible for Universal Credit?**

The Shetland Partnership commissioned a piece of research into in-work poverty in Shetland. This was as a result of Shetland’s Commission on Tackling Inequalities recommending research in this area, as it was felt to be a gap in our local evidence base. Living Well in a High Cost Economy (https://www.shetland.gov.uk/equal-shetland/documents/LivingWell_FINAL.pdf) describes the living experience of in work poverty in Shetland. It provides a rich source of information about in work poverty in rural areas. It also uses data from the Minimum Income Standard for Remote Rural Scotland to determine that it necessary for a household in Shetland to have an income of 120% of the UK median (after housing costs) in order to meet minimum income standards (page 2).

**What can or should the Scottish Government do to mitigate any detrimental impact?**

Consider the recommendations (page 36) set out in ‘Living Well in a High Cost Economy’, in particular those relating directly to the Government, and how to help facilitate those identified as the responsibility of the Shetland Partnership.