



Social Security Scotland
Tèarainteachd Shòisealta Alba

Kenneth Gibson MSP
Convener
Finance and Public Administration Committee

Sent via e-mail

Social Security Scotland
Agnes Husband House
17 South Union Street
DUNDEE
DD1 4BF

7 October 2022

Dear Mr Gibson

Thank you for your letter about the Scottish Fiscal Commission's Statement of Data Needs and I apologise for the slight delay in responding.

I appreciate the importance our data plays in the Scottish Fiscal Commission's forecasts and we are working closely with the Scottish Fiscal Commission to ensure they have the data they require for their future forecasts.

We are currently developing a new Data Strategy, in collaboration with key stakeholders, which will take into account the Scottish Fiscal Commission's requirements.

In addition to the close collaboration with the Scottish Fiscal Commission, we have held discussions with a range of stakeholders including academics, SPICe, Improvement Service and local authorities to get feedback on our statistical products. I am very happy to accept the recommendation to establish a user group to gather formal feedback on our statistical products and look forward to working with the Scottish Fiscal Commission on this. As you recognise in your letter, Social Security Scotland is a relatively new organisation. While we continue to work to improve the content of our statistical publications, this will need to be balanced with a continuing programme of benefits delivery. For example, we will need to be clear on the practicality, availability and value of backdating data. This and other requests from the Scottish Fiscal Commission can be considered as part of the work that I have set out above.

You raised a specific point about issues experienced by the Scottish Fiscal Commission in accessing data about people who are receiving payments under special rules for terminal illness. It is worth noting that the Commission published its Statement of Data Needs very shortly after the national launch of Adult Disability Payment, when there was only a small amount of data on this available, limited to the pilot areas. Our most recent statistical

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publications on Child Disability Payment and Adult Disability Payment¹, do contain information on how many authorised applications had been subject to special rules for terminal illness. We have not yet published more detail on this group due to the small numbers involved, but intend to expand our reporting on this as we continue to develop our publication content.

I hope that this letter will provide the Committee with reassurance about our plans to address the Scottish Fiscal Commission's requirements. I am copying this letter to the Social Justice and Social Security Committee.

Yours sincerely

David Wallace

Chief Executive
Social Security Scotland

Copy to Social Justice and Social Security Committee

¹ [Social Security Scotland - Adult Disability Payment statistics to end of 31 July 2022](#)
[Social Security Scotland - Child Disability Payment: high level statistics to 30 June 2022](#)

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