



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Social Justice and Social Security Committee

Gillian Martin MSP
Convener
Health, Social Care and Sport
Committee

Social Justice and Social Security Committee
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
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Via email only

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Dear Gillian

Health, Social Care and Sport Committee Inquiry into the Health and Wellbeing of Children and Young People

Thank you for your letter of 3 November advising the Committee of your inquiry into the key issues impacting the health and wellbeing of children and young people.

You sought an update on any related work the Social Justice and Social Security Committee is planning to undertake in this area to allow the clerks to factor this information into your inquiry planning.

In the first instance the Committee would like to draw the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee's attention to recent work it has conducted relevant to child poverty.

The Committee's central theme for its pre-budget 2022-23 scrutiny is the Scottish Government's progress in meeting the interim child poverty targets for 2023. A wide range of evidence was gathered on [16 September](#) and [7 October 2021](#) that could be useful for your Committee's purposes. The Committee's letter of [29 October 2021](#) sets out our conclusions and areas where the Committee has either asked the Scottish Government for more information, proposed taking a different approach, or asked for specific actions to be prioritised. The Committee will, like other committees, be continuing its 2022-23 budget scrutiny following publication of the budget.

Your letter references the Scottish Government's current Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan. You may wish to note that the Scottish Government wrote to the

Social Justice and Social Security Committee on [19 October](#) seeking our views on the second Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan 2022-26. We responded on [22 November 2021](#) drawing out relevant points from the Committee's pre-budget work and highlighting other work the Committee has undertaken around homelessness.

Other specific points we raised with the Scottish Government were, who had been consulted, how the effectiveness of policies included in the new delivery plan will be monitored, how the new delivery plan will incorporate the Social Renewal Advisory Board's recommendations, and what the funding comparison is between the first and second child poverty delivery plans.

On poverty and debt more generally, the Committee held an informal evidence gathering session on 18 November where it heard from people with lived experience. A note from this session will be available shortly on the Committee's webpage.

As well as this work, the Committee has considered some relevant pieces of subordinate legislation, which you may wish to take account of in your planning. These are:

The Welfare Foods (Best Start Foods) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2021 ([2 September 2021](#))

- Best Start Foods is money to spend on healthy foods, for pregnant women and families with very young children. These regulations increased the amount provided. The Committee wrote asking for clarification whether the scheme would be extended to those with no recourse to public funds, mirroring developments in the UK equivalent scheme.

The Winter Heating Assistance for Children and Young People (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2021 ([28 October 2021](#))

- Provides annual payment to families with severely disabled children recognising their additional requirement for heating. These Regulations remove the requirement to pay the benefit by a certain date and extend eligibility to include young people in receipt of Personal Independence Payment.

Regarding future Committee work in relation to the health and wellbeing of children and young people, we are still in the process of finalising our work programme for early 2022. The Committee is holding a series of one-off sessions to establish its priorities. As such, the Committee is not able to provide information on relevant planned work at this stage, however, we do note your inquiry and have asked the clerks to keep in touch should there be some subject cross-over.

Yours sincerely



Neil Gray MSP
Convener of the Social Justice and Social Security Committee