

Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice
Shirley-Anne Somerville MSP

F/T: 0300 244 4000
E: scottish.ministers@gov.scot



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
gov.scot

Collette Stevenson MSP
Convener,
Social Justice & Social Security Committee
Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP
sjss.committee@parliament.scot

13 June 2023

Dear Convener,

This afternoon I laid the 2022-23 annual progress report on tackling child poverty before the Scottish Parliament. As the report sets out, in the first year of our second Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan for the period 2022-26, we have delivered on actions that have provided immediate and meaningful support to children and parents in the most challenging economic conditions in living memory and laid a strong foundation for delivery over the rest of this Parliament.

The report shows that 40 of the 101 actions in the delivery plan have already been completed or delivery is ongoing. It also presents estimates of investment targeted toward low income households in 2022-23, which increased to £3 billion, of which £1.25 billion directly benefitted children. Alongside the report we published updated modelling which estimates that 90,000 fewer children will live in relative and absolute poverty this year as a result of Scottish Government policies, with poverty levels 9% points lower than they would have been in the absence of these measures.

The report can be found here www.gov.scot/isbn/9781805259466.

The action we have taken over 2022-23 is helping to tackle poverty and protect people from harm – one of the three critical missions for this Government. This action includes increasing incomes through social security - delivering our Scottish Child Payment to 303,000 children and delivering over £92 million through our Bridging Payments. We also invested £84 million in Discretionary Housing Payments to support people with housing costs and mitigate the UK Government's bedroom tax. Of this, £2.6 million was made available to mitigate the UK Government's Benefit Cap as fully as is possible within the scope of devolved powers.

Whilst progress has been made in a number of areas, the impact of the cost of living crisis, rising inflation and ongoing negative impacts of Brexit have meant that we were not able to deliver the levels of investments in key actions anticipated when the Plan was published. The imperative of prioritising resources to provide direct relief from the cost of living crisis,

Scottish Ministers, special advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See www.lobbying.scot

St Andrew's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh EH1 3DG
www.gov.scot

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE™
We invest in people Silver



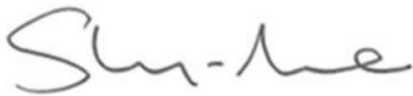
such as doubling the Fuel Insecurity Fund to £20 million and introducing emergency legislation to protect tenants, meant we had to make difficult budget choices.

This included the difficult decision to reallocate funds from our employability services to enable us to respond to the cost of living crisis. As set out in the report, we are focused on driving forward action at the pace and scale required in the year ahead, and as part of this we will make up to £108 million available for the delivery of employability support.

Over the coming year, we will continue to provide support to those who need it most whilst driving forward the transformational change needed to meet our statutory child poverty targets.

I look forward to continuing to work with the Committee as we strive to tackle child poverty together.

Yours sincerely,



SHIRLEY-ANNE SOMERVILLE

Scottish Ministers, special advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See www.lobbying.scot

St Andrew's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh EH1 3DG
www.gov.scot

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE™
We invest in people Silver

