

PQ [S6W-00142](#) [in public domain – 21 May]

[redacted]

## Background

[redacted]

1. The SNP made a manifesto commitment to double SCP to £20 **by the end of this Parliament**. Officials are currently analysing options and advice will be submitted shortly. You will know that in the run up to the election key stakeholders, such as the Joseph Rowntree Foundation and Poverty Alliance campaigned for SCP to be at least doubled to £20, and this was supported by all parties, except the Conservatives, in their manifestos. These stakeholders are already calling for SCP to be doubled in value this year, and if not by the end of 2022, to meet 2023 interim child poverty targets. It is correct that there will be a cut-off point for the introduction of an increase to have a positive impact that can be borne out in the evaluation of 2023 child poverty targets. This will be taken into consideration in the options appraisal.

**Converted from email of 15/7/2021**

Sender [redacted]@gov.scot

To: Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Local Government and Housing

CC: Cabinet Secretary for Finance; Minister for Social Security and Local Government; Minister for Public Finance, Planning & Community Wealth; DG Communities; Social Security Program Briefing and Events; Stephen Kerr; Ian Davidson; Audrey MacDougall; Jeanette Campbell; Alison Byrne; [redacted]@gov.scot; Leanne Carson; David Wallace; Janet Richardson; Miriam Craven; Lisa Baron-Broadhurst; Douglas McLaren; [redacted]@gov.scot [redacted]@gov.scot [redacted]@gov.scot [redacted]@gov.scot [redacted]@gov.scot [redacted]@gov.scot

PS/Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing and Local Government Cc  
PS/Cabinet secretary for Finance and Economy

[redacted]

Please could you ensure Ms Robison receives this email alongside this morning's submission?

Many thanks,

[redacted]

[redacted] | Scottish Child Payment [redacted] | Scottish Government [redacted]

From: [redacted]  
Social Security Policy Division  
15 July 2021

Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing and Local Government

**OPTIONS ANALYSIS: DOUBLING SCOTTISH CHILD PAYMENT TO £20 PER WEEK**

**Purpose**

1. This minute sets out options on the timing for doubling Scottish Child Payment to £20 per child per week over the course of this Parliament as committed to within the SNP 2021 manifesto. [redacted]

**Priority**

[redacted]

## Background

2. Scottish Child Payment (SCP) is currently being delivered by Social Security Scotland to eligible families with children under the age of 6; applications opened in November 2020 and the first payments began in February 2021. We have publicly committed to extending eligibility to under-16s by the end of 2022. This is dependent on the UK Government providing the data we need for 6-16 year olds. In the meantime, we will be paying a “bridging payment” via local authorities worth £10 per week for eligible families with 6-16 year olds during the period up to the roll out of SCP to older children.

[redacted]

5. As you know, the current value of SCP is £10 a week per child, paid every four weeks in arrears to families, with no cap on the number of eligible children a family can claim for. The SNP manifesto set out a commitment to double SCP to “£20 per week over the course of the Parliament.” At the Tackling Poverty debate on 8 June, you committed to introducing it “at the earliest possible opportunity”. We have a legal duty to consider the uprating of SCP annually in line with inflation.

## Options analysis

[redacted]

10. Further commentary on the key issues follows, with detailed analysis in **Annex A**.

## Finance

[redacted]

## Stakeholder views

15. Stakeholders are already calling for us to double SCP in this financial year as they view it as the only viable route to meet our interim child poverty targets given changes to housing and employment have longer lead in times, and working age benefits are reserved to the UK Government. This lobbying will intensify as the Universal Credit £20 uplift is removed in September by the UK Government.

[redacted]

## Recommendations

16. **You are asked to:**

- **Note the [redacted] options described above and detailed in Annex A for doubling SCP in this Parliamentary term and the estimated impact [redacted] as well as stakeholder views**
- [redacted]
- **Note the estimated cost implications and that this will need to be factored into spending review and budgetary discussions [redacted]**

17. □ We are happy to discuss if it would be helpful.

[redacted]  
 Scottish Child Payment  
 Social Security Directorate  
 [redacted]

Copy List:	For Action	For Comments	For Information		
			Portfolio Interest	Constit Interest	General Awareness
Minister for Social Security and Local Government Minister for Public Finance, Planning and Community Wealth Cabinet Secretary for Finance and the Economy					

DG Communities

Social Security Programme: Briefing and Events Stephen Kerr, Social Security Ian Davidson, Social Security Policy [redacted] [redacted] [redacted] [redacted] [redacted] Audrey MacDougall, CAD [redacted] [redacted] Jeanette Campbell, Special Adviser Alison Byrne, Social Security Programme [redacted] Leanne Carson, Social Security Programme David Wallace, Social Security Scotland Janet Richardson, Social Security Scotland Miriam Craven, Social Security Scotland Lisa Baron-Broadhurst, Social Security
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Programme

Andy McClintock, Social Security Scotland

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

Douglas McLaren, Budget and Public

Spending

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

**OFFICIAL - SENSITIVE**

## **ANNEX A**

### **OPTIONS ANALYSIS: INCREASING SCOTTISH CHILD PAYMENT**

#### **Key options**

[redacted]

#### **Impact on interim child poverty targets**

[redacted]

#### **Financial implications**

The benefit expenditure estimates provided below are based on Scottish Fiscal Commission (SFC) forecasts published in January 2021<sup>1, 2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> [Scotland's Economic and Fiscal Forecasts | Scottish Fiscal Commission](#)

<sup>2</sup> The SFC forecast does not include 2026-27 so we assume the caseload is the same as 2025-26 and inflation remains at 2%.

### **Additional Benefit expenditure (assuming no impact on take-up)**

[redacted]

Amounts assume direct employees and increase if contractors are required; rates increased annually.

Benefits expenditure is funded in line with SFC forecasts. Any policy change would be costed by the Commission in a future publication and the budget would be set accordingly. The scale of this expenditure would require funding to be made available at a corporate level in line with the normal process for funding benefits expenditure.

In addition, the SFC will not include the costs of the £20 rate in their August forecast since a decision and announcement on the £20 increase will not be in place in time for the August publication.

### **Behavioural responses**

The estimated costs and child poverty impacts presented and discussed in this submission do not take into account potential changes in clients' behaviour.

#### Take-up

The increased rate of SCP could incentivise more families that are eligible to make an application for the benefit. However it is very difficult to quantify the extend of this behavioural response as it will depend on factors such as the family circumstances, the economic conditions as well as reception of the promotional activity around the benefit. Our assumptions on take-up will be better informed in the coming months.

### **OFFICIAL - SENSITIVE**

[redacted] when we start estimating take-up of SCP. We note that an increase in takeup would increase caseload but also the additional cost of each option.

[redacted]

### **Implications for Programme and Social Security Scotland**

[redacted]

**OFFICIAL - SENSITIVE** [29 July]

**OPTIONS ANALYSIS: DOUBLING SCOTTISH CHILD PAYMENT TO £20 PER WEEK – MEETING WITH OFFICIALS** [redacted]

The purpose of this paper is to summarise the options analysis sent to you

[redacted]

Officials are happy to discuss variations to any of the approaches, [redacted]

[redacted]

PQ [S6O-00096](#) [in public domain – 25 August]

[redacted]

## Response

[redacted]

## BACKGROUND NOTE FOR S6O-00096

1. [redacted]

2. Mr Balfour currently has a motion on this issue in his name - Motion ref. S6M00908: Calls for a Doubling of the Scottish Child Payment in the 2021 Programme for Government:

“That the Parliament understands that a coalition of 120 anti-poverty organisations, children’s charities, community groups, think tanks, trade unions, faith leaders and academics have written to the First Minister urging her to “do the right thing”, by using the forthcoming Programme for Government to commit to doubling the Scottish Child Payment in the 2021-22 budget; shares the view expressed by the coalition that doubling the payment now would “signal that ending child poverty will be a defining priority for this Scottish Government and Scottish Parliament”; understands that all five of the main political parties committed to the move ahead of the 2021 Holyrood elections; considers that the Scottish Government has failed to set a timescale for the doubling of the payment, stating only that it will take place by the end of the current parliamentary session in 2026, and urges the Scottish Government to act on this clear and urgent call from a wide cross-section of Scottish society.”

3. The motion currently has support from Conservative and Labour MSPs.

## Possible Supplementary Questions

[redacted]

Contact Name: [redacted]

Ext: [redacted]

## SCOTTISH CHILD PAYMENT [30 August]

[redacted]

**ISSUE: 20 August:** The Scottish Government and Scottish Green Party published their draft cooperation agreement, including a Draft Shared Policy Programme. This committed SG to, 'significantly increase the level of the Scottish Child Payment, following the planned rollout to 6 to 15 year olds, in order to maximise the impact on child poverty, with the full £20 payment being achieved within the lifetime of the Parliament. [redacted]

**ISSUE: 16 August:** A broad coalition of over 120 stakeholders including community groups, academics, trade unions and faith groups wrote publically to the First Minister urging her to use the upcoming Programme for Government to commit to doubling the Scottish Child Payment in this year's budget.

[redacted]

From: [redacted]

Social Security Directorate  
10<sup>th</sup> September 2021

First Minister

## **SCOTTISH CHILD PAYMENT – ADVICE ON INCREASING THE RATE**

### **Purpose**

1. This note provides answers to your questions in relation to [redacted] increasing Scottish Child Payment (SCP) from April 2022.

### **List of Questions**

You asked for advice on [redacted]

[redacted]

2. You asked the following in relation to different possible options for increasing SCP:

[redacted]

### **Finance**

[redacted]

### **Increasing SCP - issues for consideration**

[redacted]

3. We have publicly committed to extending eligibility to under-16s by the end of 2022 and are working to that date but this is dependent on the UK Government providing the data we need for 6-16 year olds, [redacted]

[redacted]

### **Increasing SCP – Options for Consideration**

[redacted]

## Conclusion

4. Please note the attached advice, officials would be happy to answer further questions.

[redacted]

Social Security Directorate: Scottish Child Payment Policy Team

10 September 2021

Copy List:	For Action	For Comments	For Information		
			Portfolio Interest	Constit Interest	General Awareness
Cabinet Secretary For Social Housing & Local Government			X		
Deputy First Minister And Cabinet Secretary For Covid Recovery					X
Cabinet Secretary For Finance And Economy			X		
Minister for Social Security and Local Government					

Permanent Secretary  
DG Communities

Stephen Kerr  
David Wallace  
Director Of Budget And Public Spending  
Director Of Tax  
Director For Housing And Social Justice  
Chief Financial Officer  
[redacted]  
[redacted]  
[redacted]  
[redacted]  
[redacted]  
[redacted]  
[redacted]  
Leanne Carson  
[redacted]  
Lisa Baron-Broadhurst  
[redacted]  
[redacted]

[redacted]  
[redacted]  
Ian Davidson  
[redacted]  
[redacted]  
[redacted]  
[redacted]  
[redacted]  
[redacted]  
[redacted]  
[redacted]  
Audrey MacDougall  
[redacted]  
Social Security Scotland Communications  
[redacted]  
[redacted]  
[redacted]  
[redacted]  
Jeanette Campbell  
Elizabeth Lloyd

[redacted]

## **ANNEX B**

### **SCOTTISH CHILD PAYMENT – ADVICE ON INCREASING THE RATE**

[redacted]

## **ANNEX C**

### **SCOTTISH CHILD PAYMENT – ADVICE ON INCREASING THE RATE**

#### **UPDATED ANALYSIS ON INCREASING SCOTTISH CHILD PAYMENT**

##### **1. Summary of Options**

[redacted]

**CAD: SSAFE**

9 September 2021