

From: <redacted>
Sent: 02 August 2022 12:40
To: Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands <CabSecRAI@gov.scot>
Cc: <redacted>
Subject: RE: Islands Bond PQs

Hi <redacted>,

Confirming that I have picked this up and will liaise with <redacted> on the adjustments that were agreed in my absence.

The PQs will be on the tracker by 4pm.

Kind regards,
<redacted> | Islands Team | D:ARE | Scottish Government
Tel: <redacted>



From: <redacted> On Behalf Of Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands
Sent: 02 August 2022 12:29
To: <redacted>
Cc: <redacted>
Subject: RE: Islands Bond PQs

Good Morning <redacted>,

Grateful if we could have the answers added into Tracker and send to us today by 4pm please.

Before add to tracker please see previous emails below as there are a few adjustments that were requested by <redacted> and Ms Gougeon.

Many Thanks,

<redacted> | Assistant Private Secretary
Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands

<redacted> | St. Andrew's House | Regent Road | Edinburgh | EH1 3DG

From: <redacted>
Sent: 28 July 2022 14:20
To: Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands <CabSecRAI@gov.scot>
Cc: <redacted>
Subject: RE: Islands Bond PQs

Hi <redacted>,

Thanks for your understanding and patience.

Best,
<redacted>

<redacted> | Directorate for Agriculture and Rural Economy (D:ARE) | Rural Economy and Communities Division.

Mobile: <redacted> | @IslandsTeamSG

Help save paper - do you need to print this e-mail?

From: <redacted> On Behalf Of Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands
Sent: 28 July 2022 14:14
To: <redacted>
Cc: <redacted>
Subject: RE: Islands Bond PQs

Hi <redacted>,

No problem, it can wait, as Ms Gougeon and <redacted> have cleared them, just make sure the adjustment requested are done and send to us on Tuesday 2 August.

Many Thanks,

<redacted> | Assistant Private Secretary
Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands

<redacted> | St. Andrew's House | Regent Road | Edinburgh | EH1 3DG

From: <redacted>
Sent: 28 July 2022 14:02
To: Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands <CabSecRAI@gov.scot>
Cc: <redacted>
Subject: RE: Islands Bond PQs

Hi <redacted>,

With thanks to <redacted> and the Cabinet Secretary for their feedback, we're happy to make the necessary edits and get them on the tracker.

However, they are currently sitting with <redacted> who is on leave until Tuesday. As the PQ deadline is the 05 August, are we ok for these to be edited and uploaded on the 02 August with the necessary edits as they have already been reviewed?

Thanks,

<redacted> Directorate for Agriculture and Rural Economy (D:ARE) | Rural Economy and Communities Division.

Mobile: <redacted>

Help save paper - do you need to print this e-mail?

From: <redacted>

Sent: 28 July 2022 10:53

To: Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands <CabSecRAI@gov.scot>; <redacted>

Cc: <redacted>

Subject: RE: Islands Bond PQs

Yes –delete the last line.

From: <redacted> On Behalf Of Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands

Sent: 28 July 2022 09:52

To: <redacted>

Cc: <redacted>

Subject: RE: Islands Bond PQs

Good Morning,

Grateful if all the PQs above mentioned in the attachment could be added in the Tracker and send the link to us, please include the information <redacted> requested for PQ [S6W-09918](#) further below and Ms Gougeon asked to delete last line for answer [S6W-09919](#) as showing below in red.

[S6W-09919](#) Donald Cameron: To ask the Scottish Government whether it will confirm which islands it plans to include in the eligibility criteria for its proposed Islands Bond. (Parliament Deadline: 19/08/2022)

Mairi Gougeon:

The specifics of the Islands Bond are still being carefully considered in light of the strong feedback we have received from island residents, and within the new context of the current energy crisis and rising living costs which are being experienced by many islanders.

In response to this, details setting out the direction of travel for the policy will be announced later this summer. - **Delete this line**

Many Thanks,

<redacted> | Assistant Private Secretary

Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands

<redacted> | St. Andrew's House | Regent Road | Edinburgh | EH1 3DG

From: <redacted>

Sent: 26 July 2022 20:36

To: <redacted> Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands <CabSecRAI@gov.scot>

Cc: <redacted>

Subject: RE: Islands Bond PQs

As the PQ ask about 'budgetary pressures' – could we add in a line about UK capital cut to our budget. We normally use this to Finance lines.

S6W-09918 Donald Cameron: To ask the Scottish Government whether, in light of any budgetary pressures, it plans to maintain its proposed Islands Bond at the same financial level and ensure that the number of bonds available remains the same.

Mairi Gougeon:

The Capital Spending Review sets the broad parameters for Scottish Budgets to 2026-27 as best can be done at this time and outlines high-level spending plans to deliver Programme for Government and Bute House commitments. Whilst the CSR sets out high-level multi-year spending parameters, it does not provide the Scottish Government with the authority to spend public funds. Annual budgets will continue to be set through the annual parliamentary budget Bill process and the annual budget will be based on the latest fiscal information.

From: <redacted>

Sent: 26 July 2022 17:17

To: Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands <CabSecRAI@gov.scot>

Cc: <redacted>

Subject: Islands Bond PQs

Cabinet Secretary/PO

Please find attached draft responses to the 4 Written PQs recently submitted by Donald Cameron, for your consideration.

The PQ deadline for this is 05/08/2022.

Thanks,

<redacted> | Islands Team | D:ARE | Scottish Government

Tel: <redacted>



From: <redacted> On Behalf Of First Minister
Sent: 16 August 2022 17:43
To: Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands <CabSecRAI@gov.scot>; First Minister <firstminister@gov.scot>
Cc: <redacted>
Subject: RE: Islands Bond

Hi <redacted>,

FM has noted. However, she has asked we make it clear this change of approach is in response to island views, and that we remain committed to addressing issues but want to find ways that will be supported by islanders.

Many thanks,

<redacted> Deputy Private Secretary to the First Minister
Office of the First Minister

5th Floor | St Andrews House | Regent Road | Edinburgh | EH1 3DG | 0131 244 [REDACTED] | [REDACTED]



Office of the First Minister of Scotland
FirstMinister.gov.scot
Prìomh Mhinistear na h-Alba

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From: <redacted> On Behalf Of Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands
Sent: 29 July 2022 10:52
To: First Minister <firstminister@gov.scot>
Cc: Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands <CabSecRAI@gov.scot><redacted>
Subject: Islands Bond

PS/First Minister

Please find attached update from Ms Gougeon on Islands Bonds.

Kind regards

<redacted>
Private Secretary
Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands
<redacted>

St Andrews House
<redacted>

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From: <redacted>
Sent: 18 August 2022 11:59
To: Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands <CabSecRAI@gov.scot>; <redacted>
Cc: <redacted>
Subject: RE: URGENT: Islands Bond - GIQ

Hi,

We are intending to publish the analysis and SG response at 10am tomorrow. I would suggest that the GIQ is answered at the same time.

I have added the links to the two publications into the GIQ text below (although the links are not currently live, they will work once the docs have been published tomorrow morning):

Q: To ask the Scottish Government when they will publish the analysis of the Islands Bond Consultation?

A: The analysis of the Islands Bond online consultation and the Scottish Government response was published on the Scot.gov website today, 19 August. These documents can be accessed via the following links:

Analysis: <https://www.gov.scot/isbn/9781804353141>

SG Response: <https://www.gov.scot/isbn/9781804358214>

The approach outlined in the documents is in direct response to the views provided by our island communities. We remain fully committed to addressing the issue of depopulation on our islands and doing so in a way that is supported by islanders.

On the RAINE Committee letter, following <redacted> suggestions, we have added some lines in regarding overall island investment and have highlighted the new lines in yellow on the attached document.

Thanks,

<redacted> Islands Team | D:ARE | Scottish Government

Tel: <redacted>



From: <redacted> **On Behalf Of** Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands

Sent: 17 August 2022 17:45

To: <redacted>

Subject: RE: URGENT: Islands Bond - GIQ

<redacted>

Minor edits to the GIQ and letter, annotated below and attached. She agrees Dr Allan for lodging. Finally what time should the GIQ be answered on Friday?

Q: To ask the Scottish Government when they will publish the analysis of the Islands Bond Consultation?

A: The analysis of the Islands Bond online consultation and the Scottish Government response was published on the Scot.gov website today, 19 August. These documents can be accessed via this link: *(to be provided)*.

The approach outlined in the documents is in direct response to the views provided by our island communities. We remain fully committed to addressing the issue of depopulation on our islands and doing so in a way that is supported by islanders.

Kind regards

<redacted>

Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands

<redacted>

St Andrews House



<redacted>

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From: <redacted>

Sent: 17 August 2022 13:56

To: <redacted>

Subject: RE: URGENT: Islands Bond - GIQ

Hi,

We do not yet have an MSP identified but would agree that Alasdair Allan would be appropriate.

Grateful for SpAds input.

Thanks,

<redacted> Islands Team | D:ARE | Scottish Government

Tel: <redacted>



From: <redacted> On Behalf Of Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands

Sent: 17 August 2022 12:30

To: <redacted>

Subject: RE: URGENT: Islands Bond - GIQ

Copying <redacted>.

Is there a suggested MSP to lodge the question? Presumably an islands one, Alasdair Allan?

<redacted>

Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands

<redacted>

St Andrews House

<redacted>

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From: <redacted>

Sent: 17 August 2022 12:25

To: Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands <CabSecRAI@gov.scot>; <redacted>

Cc: <redacted>

Subject: RE: URGENT: Islands Bond - Note to First Minister

Good afternoon,

Please see below draft GIQ for your consideration along with a draft letter to the RAINE Committee, in relation to the Islands Bond.

Q: To ask the Scottish Government when they will publish the analysis of the Islands Bond Consultation?

A: The analysis of the Islands Bond online consultation and the Scottish Government response was published on the Scot.gov website today, 19 August. These documents can be accessed via this link: (to be provided). The change of approach outlined in the documents is in direct response to the views provided by our island communities. We remain fully committed to addressing the issue of depopulation on our islands, but in a way that is supported by islanders.

Kind regards,

<redacted> Islands Team | D:ARE | Scottish Government

Tel: <redacted>



From: <redacted> On Behalf Of Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands

Sent: 16 August 2022 18:31

To: <redacted>

Subject: URGENT: Islands Bond - Note to First Minister

Importance: High

<redacted>

You will have seen the response from FM this afternoon, attached, in response to the note from Ms Gougeon.

Friday was suggested for announcement by GIQ and letter to the RAINE Committee. Is this still the case? If so we'll need a draft GIQ and answer asap for consideration.

Kind regards

<redacted>

Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands

St Andrews House

 <redacted>

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From: <redacted>

Sent: 28 July 2022 12:27

To: <redacted> Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands <CabSecRAI@gov.scot>; <redacted>

Cc: <redacted>

Subject: RE: Islands Bond - Note to First Minister

Good afternoon,

I have reviewed and updated the note to FM on the Islands Bond taking into account the feedback received from both the Cabinet Secretary and <redacted>, and have attached a revised note for your consideration – specifically, I have removed both annexes and updated the external messaging section.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch if I can be of any further assistance on this.

Kind regards,

<redacted> | Directorate for Agriculture and Rural Economy (D:ARE) | Rural Economy and Communities Division.

Mobile: <redacted>

Help save paper - do you need to print this e-mail?

From: <redacted>
Sent: 28 July 2022 07:41
To: <redacted> Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands <CabSecRAI@gov.scot>; <redacted>
Cc: <redacted>
Subject: RE: Islands Bond - Note to First Minister

Hi <redacted>,

It will be updated and with you this afternoon.

Best,
<redacted>

From: <redacted>
Sent: 27 July 2022 19:17
To: Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands <CabSecRAI@gov.scot>; <redacted>
Cc: <redacted>
Subject: RE: Islands Bond - Note to First Minister

Just checking this note is being updated?
Thanks

From: <redacted>
Sent: 26 July 2022 20:41
To: Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands <CabSecRAI@gov.scot><redacted>
Cc: <redacted>
Subject: RE: Islands Bond - Note to First Minister

Sorry – I've just come back on the note.

<redacted>

From: <redacted> **On Behalf Of** Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands
Sent: 26 July 2022 16:56
To: <redacted>
Subject: RE: Islands Bond - Note to First Minister

<redacted>

Ms Gougeon is grateful for the quick turnaround and offers further comment;

Content to keep the engagement annex in, but don't know about the qs, and would welcome views from <redacted>? She'd be content for them to be taken out, though the reference to that in the note would need to be removed too. Paragraph 12 should be amended to reflect discussion earlier about GIQ and letter to committee. And were we sticking to the week of the 15th?

Kind regards

<redacted>

Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands

<redacted>

St Andrews House

☎ <redacted>

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From: <redacted>

Sent: 26 July 2022 16:36

To: Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands <CabSecRAI@gov.scot>

Cc: <redacted> >

Subject: RE: Islands Bond - Note to First Minister

Good afternoon,

Thanks to the Cabinet Secretary for her feedback and time this morning.

I have reviewed and updated the note to FM on the Islands Bond taking into account these conversations and have attached a revised note for your consideration.

I have tried to make it more succinct, in addition to adding in a section about the Practical Policy Test example but due to the complexity of the issue, I acknowledge that it might not be as short as hoped. If Cabinet Secretary would like me to remove the annexes if she thinks they are unnecessary following our discussion this morning, please just let me know and I can send an updated note.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch if I can be of any further assistance on this. I am due to be on Annual Leave from tomorrow until next Monday but <redacted> will be able to assist during this time.

Kind regards,

<redacted> | Islands Team | D:ARE | Scottish Government

Tel: <redacted>



From: <redacted> On Behalf Of Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands

Sent: 26 July 2022 08:15

To: <redacted>

Cc: <redacted>

Subject: RE: Islands Bond - Note to First Minister

Hi <redacted>,

Ahead of the meeting this morning, Ms Gougeon wanted to give initial feedback.

She is happy to take advice from <redacted>, but she doesn't think we need the annexes and thinks the note should be succinct and to the point.

The note should also outline the general opposition to the policy from pretty much all political parties, including SNP MSP's representing islands. Cab Sec asks if we can give the percentages of who was for/against in the consultation, but outline that those in favour tended not to live here.

Ms Gougeon would also emphasise that it wasn't just the feedback from MSP's that was strong - officials faced strong opposition in their engagement events.

Cab Sec has commented that the politics of this also needs to be outlined. We will be criticised because this will be seen as a U-turn on a manifesto commitment. However, the steps we're taking next will mitigate this because we are actually listening and taking action on the feedback we have received.

Many thanks,

<redacted>

Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands

: <redacted>

Room <redacted> | St. Andrew's House | Regent Road | Edinburgh | EH1 3DG

From: <redacted>

Sent: 25 July 2022 14:50

To: Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands <CabSecRAI@gov.scot>

Cc: <redacted>

Subject: Islands Bond - Note to First Minister

Cabinet Secretary/PO

Please find attached a draft note to FM outlining the decision that has been taken on how to proceed with the Islands Bond.

If I can be of any further assistance, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Kind regards,

<redacted>

Islands Team | D:ARE | Scottish Government

Tel: <redacted>



Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands
Mairi Gougeon MSP



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

Finlay Carson MSP
Convener of Rural Affairs, Islands and Natural
Environment Committee

rural.committee@Parliament.Scot

19 August 2022

Dear Finlay,

Islands Bond Update

I am writing with an update on our proposed Islands Bond policy, in advance of the publication of the consultation analysis and our official response on 19 August 2022.

To seek views on the Islands Bond proposal, an online public consultation was undertaken alongside 19 stakeholder engagement sessions and a further 12 on-island in-person events. An engagement session was also held with the [National Islands Plan Delivery Group](#) whose membership consists of representatives from all six island Local Authorities and other key islands stakeholders including Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Ferries Community Board, Development Trust Association Scotland, and Scottish Futures Trust.

Consultation respondents were fairly evenly split between those in favour and those opposed to the Bond, although it should be noted that those in favour of it were largely non-islanders. Island respondents raised several concerns, and many were not convinced that the proposed approach would achieve the objective of reversing population decline. However, islanders did welcome the greater focus on the importance of addressing population decline, as well as the commitment to work with communities to develop local solutions.

The delivery of the Islands Bond has been very carefully considered following this feedback, and within the context of our wider focus on addressing depopulation.

At the meeting of the Convention of the Highlands and Islands (CoHI) in March 2022, I announced that the Scottish Government would be progressing with our National Islands Plan commitment to develop an Action Plan to address the challenge of depopulation, with a view to a draft publication in winter 2023.

This commitment will deliver against the [National Islands Plan](#) which has a specific focus on addressing population decline and ensuring a healthy, balanced population profile in our rural and island communities.

Therefore, based on the feedback of islanders, instead of delivering the Islands Bond, we intend to support the delivery of Practical Policy Tests to inform the Action Plan to Address Depopulation. We intend to utilise the information, learning and suggestions gathered through the Islands Bond consultation and engagement to shape these 'tests'.

My officials will now drive this work forward over the next 12 months by delivering interventions that respond to unique island needs. In this way, we will produce an Action Plan that will be shaped in close collaboration with island communities.

Fuller details of the Practical Policy Tests that will form part of the Action Plan will be available in due course.

The Islands Bond was never intended to be a silver bullet to address our island population challenges. Rather, it was just one element of our wider work across all Scottish Government to support island communities. The 2022 Islands Bond consultation, along with our continued engagement with islands through our delivery of the National Islands Plan, has provided invaluable feedback, helping us to better understand the challenges and opportunities in greater detail. We will continue to work with local authorities, our island communities and other island stakeholders to address these.

The Scottish Government remain fully committed to supporting our islands. Significant investment has already been made in key island-based projects, such as our £1.3 million contribution towards the rebuild of the Fair Isle Bird Observatory, and the £550K transformational Kerrera Road project.

Furthermore, we are investing £8.3 million this year to support delivery of the National Islands Plan and critical infrastructure projects based on local priorities. This is of course alongside further Scottish Government investment for transport, housing, digital connectivity and other key areas that support the sustainability of our islands.

Scottish Government support for islands, and progress made towards delivery of the National Islands Plan, is recorded in our annual report, presented to parliament each year. The first of these was the [National Islands Plan: annual report 2020](#), published 23 March 2021. The most recent report was the [National Islands Plan: annual report 2021](#), published 23 March 2022.



MAIRI GOUGEON