

From: <redacted> On Behalf Of ParlyClerk Scotland
Sent: 18 August 2022 12:05
To: <redacted> Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands <CabSecRAI@gov.scot<redacted>
Subject: RE: URGENT: Islands Bond - GIQ

Perfect, I'll get it lodged now.

From: <redacted> On Behalf Of Minister for Parliamentary Business
Sent: 18 August 2022 12:02
To: <redacted> Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands <CabSecRAI@gov.scot>; <redacted>
Subject: RE: URGENT: Islands Bond - GIQ

Thanks <redacted> Mr Adam is also content for his part.

<redacted> Private Secretary to Minister for Parliamentary Business
T: <redacted> E: MinisterPB@gov.scot
The Scottish Government | St Andrew's House, Regent Road, EDINBURGH EH1 3DG

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From: <redacted> On Behalf Of ParlyClerk Scotland
Sent: 18 August 2022 08:54
To: <redacted> Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands <CabSecRAI@gov.scot<redacted>
Cc: <redacted> **Subject:** RE: URGENT: Islands Bond - GIQ

<redacted>
Please see below – is Mr Adam content with this ?

Thanks
<redacted>

From: <redacted>
Sent: 17 August 2022 18:24
To: Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands <CabSecRAI@gov.scot>; <redacted>
Cc: <redacted> >
Subject: RE: URGENT: Islands Bond - GIQ

I'm still waiting for Alasdair Allan to confirm. Will also need reactive lines regarding the £5 million. Comms can advise on timing with other events but I would be keen to get it out early morning.

From: <redacted> On Behalf Of Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands
Sent: 17 August 2022 17:45
To: <redacted>
Cc: <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

Private Secretary

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

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>

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

<redacted>

St Andrews House



<redacted>

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From: <redacted>

Sent: 28 July 2022 12:27

To: <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> | @IslandsTeamSG

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>
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>
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>
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> >
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> | Deputy Private Secretary
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>



From: <redacted>
Sent: 19 August 2022 09:57
To: Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands <CabSecRAI@gov.scot>
Cc: <redacted>
Subject: RE: For clearance: Islands Bond - Draft News Release

Hi <redacted>

Thanks for sharing the feedback. Please see attached the revised draft with the amends included (in red).

Thanks,
<redacted> | Communications: News (Net Zero & Energy/Rural Affairs & Islands)
Scottish Government, St Andrew's House
e: <redacted>

From: <redacted> On Behalf Of Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands
Sent: 19 August 2022 08:30
To: <redacted> **Subject:** RE: For clearance: Islands Bond - Draft News Release
Importance: High

<redacted>

Minor edits by Cab sec to the quote, copied below, however she feels the main body also needs to mention the change in approach. The opening paragraphs just say we're dropping the bond - not that we're developing other means to tackle depopulation and keeping people on our islands, based on islanders feedback.

"I would like to thank everyone who responded as part of the consultation process, and especially our island communities for their constructive feedback and suggestions. It is directly because of the feedback from islanders that we are changing our approach.

"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 our island communities.

"We will continue to address the issue of depopulation on our islands with our National Islands Plan commitment to develop an Action Plan to address this issue, with a draft publication in 2023.

"The learnings and suggestions gathered through the Islands Bond consultation will be used to shape a range of Practical Policy Tests to inform this Action Plan.

"Additionally, we are investing £8.3 million this year to deliver the National Islands Plan and critical infrastructure projects based on local priorities.

"Consultation with communities who are directly impacted by the introduction of new policies or strategies is a crucial part of policy development. Taking the decision

demonstrates our continued commitment to listen to island communities and ensure policy is delivered in collaboration with them, rather than to them.”

<redacted>

Private Secretary

Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands

<redacted>

St Andrews House

☎ <redacted>

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From: <redacted>

Sent: 19 August 2022 08:05

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

Cc: <redacted>

Subject: RE: For clearance: Islands Bond - Draft News Release

Hi <redacted>

Thanks for sharing the steer provided by Cab Sec.

Please see below the reworked quote with the amends suggested by Ms Gougeon; also attached is the latest draft of the release.

Rural Affairs and Islands Secretary Mairi Gougeon said:

“We have taken a decision to withdraw the proposal based on the feedback from the consultation.

“I would like to thank everyone who responded as part of the consultation process, and especially our island communities for their constructive feedback and suggestions.

“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 our island communities.

“We will continue to address the issue of depopulation on our islands with our National Islands Plan commitment to develop an Action Plan to address this issue, with a draft publication in 2023.

“The learnings and suggestions gathered through the Islands Bond consultation will be used to shape a range of Practical Policy Tests to inform this Action Plan.

“Additionally, we are investing £8.3 million this year to deliver the National Islands Plan and critical infrastructure projects based on local priorities.

“Consultation with communities who are directly impacted by the introduction of new policies or strategies is a crucial part of policy development. Taking the decision to withdraw this proposal demonstrates our continued commitment to listen to island communities and ensure policy is delivered in collaboration with them, rather than to them.”

Grateful for Cab Sec’s views/ consent.

Thanks,

<redacted> | Communications: News (Net Zero & Energy/Rural Affairs & Islands)
Scottish Government, St Andrew's House
e: <redacted>

From: <redacted> **On Behalf Of** Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands
Sent: 18 August 2022 21:13
To: <redacted>
Subject: RE: For clearance: Islands Bond - Draft News Release

<redacted>

Ms Gougeon wants the part about the policy tests in the main part of the release or the comment, rather than the background section, and referenced in a way that shows that we are developing these because we listened to the feedback from island communities.

Thanks

<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 17:36
To: Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands <CabSecRAI@gov.scot>
Cc: <redacted> **Subject:** For clearance: Islands Bond - Draft News Release

PO Colleagues,

I would be grateful for Ms Gougeon's views/ consent on the proposed NR – please see attached – supporting the withdrawal of the Islands Bond proposal. The release has been agreed by Comms, Policy and SpAds.

The release will be issued once the GIQ, followed by the consultation report and SG's response, are published at 10 am tomorrow.

Many thanks,

<redacted> | Communications: News (Net Zero & Energy/Rural Affairs & Islands)

Scottish Government, St Andrew's House

e: <redacted>

From: <redacted>

Sent: 19 August 2022 14:02

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

Cc: <redacted>

Subject: For clearance: Media query - Islands Bond | <redacted>

PO Colleagues,

<redacted> from <redacted> has approached us asking about the cost of the consultation process – please see query below.

Grateful for Cab Sec's views on the following background, agreed by SpAds, comms and policy.

Background:

The vast majority of the Islands Bond consultation process was run in-house via a virtual exercise with some on-island events, held in community spaces, which were crucial to ensuring a wide range of voices were heard through this engagement. An external contractor was commissioned to lead the consultation analysis. The costs for the external consultation analysis totalled £18,240.

Thanks,

<redacted> | Communications: News (Net Zero & Energy/Rural Affairs & Islands)

Scottish Government, St Andrew's House

e: <redacted>

From: <redacted>

Sent: 19 August 2022 10:34

To: <redacted>

Subject: Re: Islands Bond

Hi <redacted> - How much did the consultation process cost?

thanks

<redacted>

CABINET SECRETARY FOR RURAL AFFAIRS AND ISLANDS
Briefing for Visit to Orkney – Tuesday 1 September 2022

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CABINET SECRETARY FOR RURAL AFFAIRS AND ISLANDS
Briefing for Visit to Orkney – Tuesday 1 September 2022

Programme

<redacted>

What	• <redacted>.
Where	<redacted>
When	<redacted>
Key Message(s)	<redacted>
Who	<redacted>
Why	<redacted>
Supporting official	<redacted>
Briefing contents	<redacted>
Media Handling	<redacted>
Social Media	<redacted>
Dress code	<redacted>
Greeting Party and specific meeting point on arrival (if event is at a non SE Building)	<redacted>

<redacted>

CABINET SECRETARY FOR RURAL AFFAIRS AND ISLANDS
Briefing for Visit to Orkney – Tuesday 1 September 2022

ANNEX A

Eviedale Bakehouse & Bistro

<redacted>

ANNEX B

Islands Green Recovery Programme (2020-2021)

<redacted>

CABINET SECRETARY FOR RURAL AFFAIRS AND ISLANDS
Briefing for Orkney Fisheries Network – 01 September 1015 - 1145

What	<redacted>
Where	<redacted>
When	<redacted>
Who	<redacted>
Key Message	<redacted>
Why	<redacted>
Supporting Official	<redacted>
Briefing Contents	<redacted>
Media handling	<redacted>
Dress Code	<redacted>

CABINET SECRETARY FOR RURAL AFFAIRS AND ISLANDS
Briefing for Visit to Orkney – Tuesday 1 September 2022

Greeting Party	<redacted>
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Annex A
<redacted>

Annex B
<redacted>

Annex C
<redacted>

Annex D
<redacted>

Annex E

What	<redacted>
Where	<redacted>
When	<redacted>
Who	<redacted>
Why	<redacted>
Supporting official	<redacted>
Briefing contents	<redacted>
Media Handling	<redacted>
Social Media	<redacted>
Greeting Party and specific meeting point on arrival (if	<redacted>

<i>event is at a non SE Building)</i>	
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ANNEX A

SUMMARY PAGE

<redacted>

ISLANDS BOND

Top Lines

Withdrawing a policy is not a decision that any Government takes lightly, nor without good reason.

- Over the past 10 months, we have been engaging very closely with communities and stakeholders to investigate what sort of impact the Bond policy may have - both positive and negative.
- This has allowed us to gather input on how we can best help to address depopulation at an island level.

We have listened carefully to islanders, and are changing our approach to the issues of depopulation in response to what they have told us.

- The feedback we have received has been very clear. Whilst a renewed focus from the Scottish Government on the population challenges being faced across our islands is to be welcomed, a more strategic focus on the drivers of depopulation would be far more beneficial.
- Furthermore, resources that would have supported the Islands Bond this year will better deliver change through supporting this more strategic approach.

We have been in listening mode, and on the basis of what we've heard from partners and communities, we are withdrawing the Islands Bond so that we can focus on the delivery of more localised solutions.

- We remain fully committed to addressing our population challenges, and will deliver this through a collaborative plan aimed at responding to the key drivers of depopulation.
- This cross-sectoral approach responds directly to feedback received from islanders through our engagement on the Bond.

The challenging fiscal environment means we need a realistic public spending framework for the years ahead.

- These are very challenging times, with the cost of living crises, the impact of the pandemic and the fallout from Brexit being felt acutely across all of Scotland. This means we have had to make some difficult funding decisions.
- The Capital Spending Review sets the broad parameters for Scottish Budgets to 2025-26 as best can be done at this time.
- 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

CABINET SECRETARY FOR RURAL AFFAIRS AND ISLANDS

Briefing for Visit to Orkney – Tuesday 1 September 2022

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.

- The investment that was planned for the Islands Bond for this financial year will now support our Practical Policy Tests, which in turn will inform our future funding requirements so that we can tackle the depopulation challenges across our islands.

Background

In our [A Fairer, Greener Scotland Programme for Government 2021/22](#), we announced a commitment to develop an Islands Bond fund, providing up to £50,000 each for up to 100 households by 2026, by providing financial support for island residents to remain in their community, or to encourage people to move there.

[Islands bond: consultation](#) 19 stakeholder engagement sessions and 12 on-island in-person events took place last year.

[Islands Bond Consultation Analysis Report](#)

[Scottish Government response to Islands Bond Consultation Analysis](#)

The learnings and suggestions gathered through the Islands Bond consultation will be utilised in shaping a range of Practical Policy Tests to inform the 'Addressing Depopulation Action Plan'. This work will be driven forward over the next 12 months, in close collaboration with island communities, by delivering interventions that respond to unique island needs.

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.

<redacted>

CABINET SECRETARY FOR RURAL AFFAIRS AND ISLANDS
Briefing for Visit to Orkney – Tuesday 1 September 2022

ANNEX B

EVENT PROGRAMME

<redacted>

What	<redacted>
Where	<redacted>
When	<redacted>
Key Message(s)	<redacted>
Who	<redacted>
Why	<redacted>
Supporting official	<redacted>
Briefing contents	<redacted>
Media Handling	<redacted>
Social Media	<redacted>
Dress code	<redacted>
Greeting Party and specific meeting point on arrival (if event is at a non SE Building)	<redacted>

CABINET SECRETARY FOR RURAL AFFAIRS AND ISLANDS
Briefing for Visit to Orkney – Tuesday 1 September 2022

ANNEX C

<redacted>

What	<redacted>
Where	<redacted>
When	<redacted>
Key Message(s)	<redacted>
Who	<redacted>
Why	<redacted>
Supporting official	<redacted>
Briefing contents	<redacted>
Media Handling	<redacted>
Social Media	<redacted>
Dress code	<redacted>
Greeting Party and specific meeting point on arrival	<redacted>
Specific entrance for Ministerial car/parking arrangements	<redacted>

<redacted>

From: <redacted>

Sent: 07 September 2022 13:32

To: Gougeon M (Mairi), MSP <Mairi.Gougeon.msp@parliament.scot>

Subject: Interview request for German tv

Dear Mrs. Gougeon,

hope you are fine. I am writing from Cologne Germany.

We are producing the tv-show : „LIFE – Menschen, Momente und Geschichten“(running Saturdays 7.05 pm / RTL Germany, <https://www.facebook.com/RTLLife>)

We are very interested in this story

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-highlands-islands-58070578>

We would like to cover that story and would love to do an interview with you. Is it possible maybe next Wednesday afternoon?

Have a nice day and all the best

<redacted>