

**From:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>

**Sent:** 14 September 2021 17:24

**RE:** Scottish Welfare Fund - Submission to Ministers on the Review and Tender- 14 September 2021

**To:** Minister for Social Security and Local Government <MinisterSSLG@gov.scot>; Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing & Local Government CabSecSJHLG@gov.scot; DG Communities <DGCommunities@gov.scot>; Kerr S (Stephen) (Social Security Director) <Stephen.Kerr@gov.scot>; Davidson I (Ian) (Social Security) <Ian.Davidson2@gov.scot>

**Cc:** MacDougall A (Audrey) <Audrey.MacDougall@gov.scot>; [redacted]

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<[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; Campbell J (Jeanette) (Special Adviser) (Jeanette.Campbell@gov.scot); [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>;

[redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>

**Subject:** Scottish Welfare Fund - Submission to Ministers on the Review and Tender- 14 September 2021

P/O Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing and Local Government

P/O Minister for Social Security and Local Government

Please find attached a submission on the Scottish Welfare Fund Review [redacted]

I would be very happy to answer any questions or provide further information if required.

Kind regards,

[redacted]

[redacted]

Scottish Welfare Fund Policy Manager | Welfare Fund and Winter Benefits Policy Unit  
| Social Security Directorate | Scottish Government | Area 1B South, Victoria Quay |  
Edinburgh EH6 6QQ |

Tel. [redacted]

***Keep up to date with the development of our new social security powers:***

**W:** <https://beta.gov.scot/policies/social-security/>

**T:** @SocSecScot & @ScotGovFairer

From: **[redacted]**  
Welfare Fund and Winter Benefits Policy Unit  
Social Security Policy Division

30th July 2021

Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing and Local Government  
Minister for Social Security and Local Government

## **SCOTTISH WELFARE FUND – OPTIONS FOR UNDERTAKING A REVIEW**

### **Purpose**

1. To provide background information and advice on the review of the Scottish Welfare Fund, in particular seeking decisions on the scope, timing and governance of the review.

The submission is supported by Annex A providing wider background information on the Fund and Annex B covering stakeholder commentary.

### **Priority**

2. **Routine. [redacted]**

### **Background on the Fund**

3. The Scottish Welfare Fund was established in 2013 following the abolition of the UK-wide Discretionary Social Fund. It provides £35.5 million annually for discretionary grants for people facing a financial crisis or needing support to live independently and is administered by local authorities. It is underpinned by both primary and secondary legislation and applications are assessed with reference to statutory guidance. Further background information relating to the Fund and its budget can be found at Annex A.

### **Background to the Review**

4. There has been growing commentary on the Fund in recent years, particularly in light of the increases in funding and casework over the course of the pandemic. This includes a briefing paper produced in August 2020 by the Poverty and Inequality Commission's working group on responses to Covid-19, and a recommendation from the Social Renewal Advisory Board (SRAB)<sup>1</sup> that "the Scottish Government, working with local authorities, should review the existing provision of discretionary and crisis funds in Scotland, including the Scottish Welfare Fund and Discretionary Housing Payments systems."

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/not-now-social-renewal-advisory-board-report-january-2021/>

5. In response to the SRAB the Government committed to initiate a full review of the Scottish Welfare Fund in the first year of the new Parliament. That review would include examining levels of funding, promotion, take-up and accessibility as well as the current guidelines and the administration of the Fund. This commitment was carried into your election manifesto in the form of a review of the purpose and operation of the Scottish Welfare Fund to ensure it works as well as possible in all parts of the country. The Scottish Green Party and Scottish Labour made similar commitments in their manifestos.

6. **[redacted]** A full review provides the opportunity to properly understand the impact of the fund on those who receive support from it as well as those who administer it, and to determine future objectives and how best to realise these in practice.

## Discussion

**[redacted]**

**[redacted]**

Social Security Policy Division  
25<sup>th</sup> June 2021

### Copy List:

DG Communities  
Stephen Kerr, Director Social Security  
Ian Davidson, Deputy Director Social Security  
Audrey MacDougall, Deputy Director Community Analysis Division  
**[redacted]**, Unit Head Welfare Fund and Winter Benefits  
**[redacted]**, Welfare Fund  
**[redacted]**, Unit Head, Reserved Benefits  
**[redacted]**, Community Analysis Division, SSAFE  
**[redacted]**, Community Analysis Division, SSAFE  
**[redacted]**, Community Analysis Division, SSAFE  
**[redacted]**, Community Analysis Division, SSAFE  
**[redacted]**, Community Analysis Division, SSAFE  
**[redacted]**, Unit Head, Tackling Child Poverty Unit  
**[redacted]**, Team Leader, Tackling Child Poverty Unit  
**[redacted]**, Head of Social Justice Delivery Unit  
**[redacted]**, Policy Lead, Tackling Food Insecurity  
Jeanette Campbell, Special Adviser  
**[redacted]**, Comms  
**[redacted]**, Comms

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

## ANNEX A

The Scottish Welfare Fund provides discretionary awards, administered by local authorities. Decisions are informed by statutory guidance from Scottish Ministers, developed in partnership with COSLA, local authorities and other stakeholders. There are two types of awards: Crisis Grants to help people on a low income who are facing a disaster or emergency; and Community Care Grants to help people to establish or maintain a home and avoid institutional care.

In 2020/21 the original (pre-Covid) programme budget for the Scottish Welfare Fund was £35.5 million. The budget is distributed among local authorities based on the Income Domain of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) i.e. based on the numbers of people residing in the authority area who receive low income benefits. Local authorities can add to their allocation from their own funds or can carry forward any underspends. Local authorities have the discretion to provide support in different ways and are encouraged, through the statutory guidance, to provide a holistic service to applicants, ensuring links to wider support when appropriate.

**Covid Response:** An additional £45 million for the Scottish Welfare Fund was committed in March 2020 to meet anticipated additional demand for urgent financial support arising as a consequence of COVID-19. This more than doubled the original £35.5 million budget for the Fund for 2020-21. £22 million was distributed immediately to local authorities and £3 million was subsequently allocated to Discretionary Housing Payments with the remaining £20 million used as a flexible fund to enable local authorities to tackle financial insecurity.

[redacted]

## STAKEHOLDER COMMENTARY

## ANNEX B

### Third Sector Organisations

[redacted]

### Local Government and Statutory Services

Scottish Government officials work closely with officials from COSLA, local authorities, SPSO and the Scottish Prison Service as well third sector stakeholders such as Citizen's Advice Scotland. [redacted]

SPSO has a statutory role in providing second tier review of decisions made by local authorities and feedback on these cases provides a good source of evidence to help inform and improve consistency of decision making for local authorities. SPSO will be an important stakeholder in any review and have expressed willingness to be involved in any evidence gathering for this purpose.

[redacted]

## ANNEX B

### Opposition Parties

[redacted]

From: **[redacted]**  
Welfare Fund and Winter Benefits Policy Unit  
Social Security Policy Division

14<sup>th</sup> September 2021

Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing and Local Government  
Minister for Social Security and Local Government

## **SCOTTISH WELFARE FUND- UPDATE ON INVITATION TO TENDER FOR REVIEW**

### **Purpose**

1. To seek Ministerial agreement to the appointment of stakeholder representatives to a Review Advisory Group and the proposed scope of the work to be discussed with them **[redacted]** of September.

### **Priority**

2. **Routine**

### **Background and Update**

3. My submission of 30<sup>th</sup> July outlined the suggested scope, scale and parameters of a review of the Scottish Welfare Fund. **[redacted]**

### **Review Advisory Group**

4. **[redacted]** we intend to invite a range of stakeholder representatives to join a Review Advisory Group. The role of the Group will include:

**[redacted]**

5. To enable a range of stakeholders to be represented and to help ensure that members will have enough relevant interest in and experience of the Scottish Welfare Fund to be meaningfully engaged, we recommend that representatives from the following list of stakeholders be invited onto the group:

**[redacted]**

6. **[redacted]**

7. **[redacted]**

### **Draft scope for sharing with Advisory Group members**

8. **[redacted]**

9. [redacted]

10. [redacted]

### **Timescale and Budget**

11. [redacted]

### **Recommendation**

12. [redacted]

**[redacted]**

Social Security Policy Division

14<sup>th</sup> September 2021

#### Copy List:

DG Communities

Stephen Kerr, Director Social Security

Ian Davidson, Deputy Director Social Security

Audrey MacDougall, Deputy Director Community Analysis Division

**[redacted]**, Unit Head Welfare Fund and Winter Benefits

**[redacted]**, Welfare Fund

**[redacted]**, Unit Head, Reserved Benefits

**[redacted]**, Community Analysis Division, SSAFE

**[redacted]**, Community Analysis Division, SSAFE

**[redacted]**, Community Analysis Division, SSAFE

**[redacted]**, Community Analysis Division, SSAFE

**[redacted]**, Community Analysis Division, SSAFE

**[redacted]**, Unit Head, Tackling Child Poverty Unit

**[redacted]**, Team Leader, Tackling Child Poverty Unit

**[redacted]**, Head of Social Justice Delivery Unit

**[redacted]**, Policy Lead, Tackling Food Insecurity

Jeanette Campbell, Special Adviser

**[redacted]**, Comms

**[redacted]**, Comms

## **ANNEX A**

### **REVIEW OF THE SCOTTISH WELFARE FUND: KEY OBJECTIVES AND DESIGN**

[redacted]

**Social Security Analysis, Forecasting and Evaluation**

**September 2021**

**From:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>

**Sent:** 03 March 2022 13:56

**RE:** Ministerial Submission- Update on Scottish Welfare Fund Review - Routine

**To:** Minister for Social Security and Local Government <MinisterSSLG@gov.scot>; Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing & Local Government <CabSecSJHLG@gov.scot>

**Cc:** DG Communities <DGCommunities@gov.scot>; Kerr S (Stephen) (Social Security Director) <Stephen.Kerr@gov.scot>; Davidson I (Ian) (Social Security)

<Ian.Davidson2@gov.scot>; Wilson M (Mick) <Mick.Wilson@gov.scot>; [redacted]

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<[redacted]@gov.scot>; <[redacted]@gov.scot>; <[redacted]@gov.scot>;

<[redacted]@gov.scot>; <[redacted]@gov.scot>; <[redacted]@gov.scot>;

<[redacted]@gov.scot>; <[redacted]@gov.scot>; Campbell J (Jeanette) (Special Adviser) (Jeanette.Campbell@gov.scot); <[redacted]@gov.scot>

**Subject:** Ministerial Submission- Update on Scottish Welfare Fund Review - Routine

P/O Minister for Social Security and Local Government

P/O Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing and Local Government

Please find attached a brief submission outlining progress on the work being undertaken for the Scottish Welfare Fund Review. This is routine and no decision is required.

I would be grateful if the Minister and the Cabinet Secretary could note this submission and I would be happy to provide further information if required.

Best Wishes,  
[redacted]

[redacted]

Scottish Welfare Fund Policy Manager | Welfare Fund and Winter Benefits Policy Unit  
| Social Security Directorate | Scottish Government | Area 1B South, Victoria Quay |  
Edinburgh EH6 6QQ |

Tel. [redacted]

***Keep up to date with the development of our new social security powers:***

**W:** <https://beta.gov.scot/policies/social-security/>

**T:** @SocSecScot & @ScotGovFairer

From: **[redacted]**  
Social Security Policy Division  
3 March 2022

Minister for Social Security and Local Government  
Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing and Local Government

## **REVIEW OF THE SCOTTISH WELFARE FUND- PROGRESS UPDATE**

### **Purpose**

1 To provide you with an update on the progress of the Scottish Welfare Fund Review work.

### **Priority**

2 **Routine** – no decision required.

### **Background**

3 **[redacted]**

### **Appointment of Independent Research Contractor**

4 **[redacted]**

### **Review Advisory Group**

The first Scottish Welfare Fund Review Advisory Group meeting took place on the 9<sup>th</sup> February 2022 and representatives from the following stakeholder organisations were in attendance:

- Citizen's Advice Scotland
- Scottish Prison Service
- Scottish Public Services Ombudsman
- Child Poverty Action Group
- The Trussell Trust/ Independent Food Aid Network (joint place)
- CoSLA
- Local authority SWF practitioners (from Glasgow City, Dumfries and Galloway and Perth and Kinross Councils)

5 **[redacted]**

6 **[redacted]**

7 **[redacted]**

8 **[redacted]**

9 **[redacted]**



## Timeline

10 [redacted]

11 [redacted]

12 [redacted]

13 [redacted]

## Scottish Welfare Fund Budget Allocation

14 [redacted]

## Recommendation

15 [redacted]

[redacted]

Scottish Welfare Fund and Winter Benefits Unit  
Social Security policy Division

3 March 2022

### Copy List:

DG Communities  
Stephen Kerr, Director Social Security  
Ian Davidson, Deputy Director Social Security  
Mick Wilson, Deputy Director Community Analysis Division  
[redacted], Unit Head Welfare Fund and Winter Benefits  
[redacted], Welfare Fund and Winter Benefits  
[redacted], Unit Head, Social Security Futures  
[redacted], Community Analysis Division, SSAFE  
[redacted], Community Analysis Division, SSAFE  
[redacted], Community Analysis Division, SSAFE  
[redacted], Community Analysis Division, SSAFE  
[redacted], Community Analysis Division, SSAFE  
[redacted], Unit Head, Tackling Child Poverty Unit  
[redacted], Team Leader, Tackling Child Poverty Unit  
[redacted], Head of Social Justice Delivery Unit  
[redacted], Unit Head, Financial Wellbeing Unit  
[redacted], Policy Lead, Tackling Food Insecurity  
Jeanette Campbell, Special Adviser  
[redacted], Comms

**Annex A**

**[redacted]**

**From:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>

**Sent:** 25 March 2022 11:52

**RE:** Ministerial Submission- Update on Scottish Welfare Fund Review - Routine

**To:** Minister for Social Security and Local Government <MinisterSSLG@gov.scot>; Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing & Local Government <CabSecSJHLG@gov.scot>

**Cc:** DG Communities <DGCommunities@gov.scot>; Kerr S (Stephen) (Social Security Director) <Stephen.Kerr@gov.scot>; Davidson I (Ian) (Social Security)

<Ian.Davidson2@gov.scot>; Wilson M (Mick) <Mick.Wilson@gov.scot>; [redacted]

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<[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; Campbell J (Jeanette) (Special Adviser) <Jeanette.Campbell@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>;

[redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>;

**Subject:** RE: Ministerial Submission- Update on Scottish Welfare Fund Review - Routine

Dear [redacted],

Thank you for your e-mail.

The second meeting of the Review Advisory Group took place as planned last week (17<sup>th</sup> March) [redacted]

[redacted]

The work is progressing on schedule.

I hope that is helpful and I would be happy to provide any further information, papers or a verbal update if required.

Kind Regards,  
[redacted]

[redacted]

Scottish Welfare Fund Policy Manager | Welfare Fund and Winter Benefits Policy Unit | Social Security Directorate | Scottish Government | Area 1B South, Victoria Quay | Edinburgh EH6 6QQ |

Tel. [redacted]

***Keep up to date with the development of our new social security powers:***

**W:** <https://beta.gov.scot/policies/social-security/>

**T:** @SocSecScot & @ScotGovFairer

**From:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot> **On Behalf Of** Minister for Social Security and Local Government

**Sent:** 23 March 2022 17:39

**To:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; Minister for Social Security and Local Government <MinisterSSLG@gov.scot>; Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing & Local Government <CabSecSJHLG@gov.scot>

**Cc:** DG Communities <DGCommunities@gov.scot>; Kerr S (Stephen) (Social Security Director) <Stephen.Kerr@gov.scot>; Davidson I (Ian) (Social Security)

<Ian.Davidson2@gov.scot>; Wilson M (Mick) <Mick.Wilson@gov.scot>; [redacted]

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<[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; Campbell J (Jeanette) (Special Adviser) <Jeanette.Campbell@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>;

[redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; <[redacted]@gov.scot>

**Subject:** RE: Ministerial Submission- Update on Scottish Welfare Fund Review - Routine

Hi [redacted]

Thank you for this. Ms Robison and Mr Macpherson have noted with thanks.

The Minister has asked how did the meeting this month go, mentioned in para 9?

[redacted]

[redacted] (she/her)

Private Secretary to Ben Macpherson MSP, Minister for Social Security and Local Government

Email: MinisterSSLG@gov.scot

Please see Mr Macpherson's preferences which may be of assistance to you.

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**From:** [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>

**Sent:** 03 March 2022 13:56

**To:** Minister for Social Security and Local Government <MinisterSSLG@gov.scot>; Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing & Local Government <CabSecSJHLG@gov.scot>

**Cc:** DG Communities <DGCommunities@gov.scot>; Kerr S (Stephen) (Social Security Director) <Stephen.Kerr@gov.scot>; Davidson I (Ian) (Social Security)

<Ian.Davidson2@gov.scot>; Wilson M (Mick) <Mick.Wilson@gov.scot>; [redacted]

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<[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>;

Campbell J (Jeanette) (Special Adviser) <Jeanette.Campbell@gov.scot>; [redacted]

<[redacted]@gov.scot>

**Subject:** Ministerial Submission- Update on Scottish Welfare Fund Review - Routine

P/O Minister for Social Security and Local Government

P/O Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing and Local Government

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Scottish Welfare Fund Policy Manager | Welfare Fund and Winter Benefits Policy Unit  
| Social Security Directorate | Scottish Government | Area 1B South, Victoria Quay |  
Edinburgh EH6 6QQ |

**Tel.** [redacted]

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