

**PH1**

Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice  
Rùnaire a' Chaibineit airson Ceartas Sòisealta  
Shirley-Anne Somerville MSP/BPA

T : 0300 244 4000

E : [scottish.ministers@gov.scot](mailto:scottish.ministers@gov.scot)

Patrick Harvie MSP

[Patrick.Harvie.msp@parliament.scot](mailto:Patrick.Harvie.msp@parliament.scot)

Our Reference: 202400406512

Your Reference: Correspondence from Patrick Harvie MSP

31 July 2024

Dear Patrick Harvie MSP,

Thank you for your letter dated 25 March 2024 regarding the incorporation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) into Scots law via the Scottish Government's proposed Human Rights Bill.

I want firstly to apologise for the delay in responding to you. I appreciate the importance your constituents attach to the incorporation of the CRPD into Scots law. In relation to CRPD, we have continued to engage directly with disabled people and disabled people's organisations, including Glasgow Disability Alliance. My officials have held roundtables with disabled people's organisations and a broader range of civic society organisations, academics and duty bearers to discuss the Bill's proposed approach to incorporation. To support these meetings, officials shared a right-by-right analysis of the complexities and competency challenges incorporation of CRPD with a compliance duty would entail.

Development of proposals has focussed on how we could deliver the strongest possible protections whilst producing clear, accessible and workable law which can operate effectively within the limits of devolved competence. As you would expect, the legislative priorities of the Scottish Government for the year ahead will be announced in the First Minister's upcoming Programme for Government.

Going forward, we will continue to work closely with Disabled People's Organisations to develop and implement a plan that is informed by the lived experience of disabled people and will deliver actions to help with the significant challenges they are currently facing. Finding solutions to address these challenges remains a key priority for this government.

Yours sincerely  
SHIRLEY-ANNE SOMERVILLE

**PH2**

**From:** [Redacted s.38(1)(b)]

**Sent:** Monday, September 16, 2024 2:04 PM

**To:** Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice 2024

<[CabSecforSJ@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecforSJ@gov.scot)>

**Cc:** Harvie P (Patrick), MSP <[Patrick.Harvie.msp@parliament.scot](mailto:Patrick.Harvie.msp@parliament.scot)>

**Subject:** Correspondence from Patrick Harvie MSP

Good afternoon,

I am writing to you on behalf of Patrick Harvie MSP.

Please find attached correspondence relating to Social Security Scotland.

Patrick would be grateful if you would look into this matter further and advise as soon as possible .

Best wishes,

[Redacted s.38(1)(b)]

Patrick Harvie MSP - Glasgow Region

Glasgow Collective, 15 East Campbell St, Glasgow, G1 5DT

e: [Redacted s.38(1)(b)]

*Green MSP staff have a 4 day working week – I work part-time usually every Mon & Thur*

09/09/2024

Dear Cabinet Secretary,

I write in my capacity as regional MSP for Glasgow to raise concerns regarding operational issues and the eligibility criteria with issuing the Scottish Child Payment and Best Start Grant.

Constituents have got in touch to share their perception of impracticalities and burdensome procedure of both of these support funds and have expressed their concern on the lack of support available to freelancers and those on maternity leave.

In regards to Universal Credit (UC) and Scottish Child Payment (SCP) it is clear from Social Security Scotland (SSS) that those in receipt of SCP need to notify SSS of 'a change in circumstances'. One constituent has explained that as a self-employed freelancer their income fluctuates from month to month, meaning they receive UC some months and in other months they don't. As a freelancer my constituent's job circumstances haven't changed and they have outlined that the paperwork from SSS isn't clear that they must notify them every month they receive a zero award from UC even though their UC account remains open and live.

Can SSS add more context and instruction on their website and paperwork, particularly for self-employed parents, on how this fund interacts with UC and what changes to circumstances practically means for freelancers? Do UC and SSS share information relating to individual awards and can this responsibility be taken on by those organisations rather than the onus being on the individual receiving the support?

Another constituent has been in touch regarding the lack of support available to her whilst on maternity leave. Due to her partner's income being over the threshold for claiming UC, the family are also not entitled to the Best Start Grant (SSG) or the SCP. Is the Scottish Government confident in the reliability of UC being used as a passport for the eligibility of these funds and has the Scottish Government taken action on the high levels of in-work poverty within families in Scotland?

I would be grateful if you would look into this matter to ensure the right support is available at the right time for these women and families, and advise me of your response as soon as possible .

Yours sincerely Patrick Harvie MSP

### PH3

Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice  
Rùnaire a' Chaibineit airson Ceartas Sòisealta  
Shirley-Anne Somerville MSP/BPA  
T : 0300 244 4000  
E : [scottish.ministers@gov.scot](mailto:scottish.ministers@gov.scot)

Patrick Harvie MSP  
[patrick.harvie.msp@parliament.scot](mailto:patrick.harvie.msp@parliament.scot)

Our Reference: 202400432502  
Your Reference: Correspondence from Patrick Harvie MSP

21 October 2024

Dear Patrick Harvie MSP,

Thank you for your email of 16 September 2024. Your constituents I am sorry to hear about the difficulties that your constituents have experienced with the Five Family Payments, and I would be happy to have Social Security Scotland officials look into their individual cases in more detail. If they would like me to do so, please forward their details to my office.

Your constituents may be interested to know that the Scottish Government funds the Money Talk Team service which can help people find out if they are entitled to receive other benefits or grants, including when they are working or on maternity leave. They can call the service on 0800 028 1456 or find out more from the Parent Club Scotland website.

Social Security Scotland is keen to gather feedback from clients and stakeholders to help improve its services. Should your constituents wish to lodge a complaint or make a suggestion, they can do so by calling 0800 182 2222, using webchat or sending feedback through the Social Security Scotland website.

## Guidance for Scottish Child Payment

During the application process for Scottish Child Payment, clients are advised that they must be in receipt of a qualifying benefit, which includes Universal Credit. They are also informed that they must tell Social Security Scotland if there is any change to their circumstances – this is emphasised throughout Social Security Scotland communications.

On an ongoing basis, Social Security Scotland gathers feedback from clients who have claimed one or more of the Five Family Payments. In the most recent survey results, published in August 2024, 90% of all respondents agreed that the application process was clear, while 82% of respondents agreed that the information on the Social Security Scotland website made it clear whether or not they were eligible.

Social Security Scotland aims to provide clear, helpful, and public information to ensure that its benefits are accessible, and continuously reviews external guidance based on client feedback and analytics. I have passed your feedback about guidance for Universal Credit and Scottish Child Payment to officials, and they will begin investigation of the available options later this month. Please let me know if you would like to be updated on their findings.

### Information sharing

Social Security Scotland and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) do have a data sharing agreement which provides information on reserved UK Government Benefits, such as Universal Credit. This allows the DWP to report changes in clients' personal or benefit details to Social Security Scotland.

Social Security Scotland does not ask clients to provide evidence that they are in receipt of a qualifying benefit when they apply as it checks with DWP and HM Revenue and Customs that clients are on a qualifying benefit or tax credit.

However, clients in receipt of Scottish Child Payment still need to inform Social Security Scotland about changes of circumstance, including when they stop receiving a qualifying benefit. Changes can be reported via their helpline or online form, as explained on [mygov.scot](https://mygov.scot).

## The use of qualifying benefits in eligibility criteria

Targeting support to those in receipt of certain benefits and tax credits, including Universal Credit, is an effective and efficient alternative to means testing. These benefits and tax credits are also used to check other criteria, such as identity and residency. This reduces the evidence requirements on applicants, making it easier to apply.

Furthermore, parents under the age of 18 do not need to be in receipt of a qualifying benefit in order to claim Best Start Grant. This is also the case for parents aged 18 or 19 who are dependent on someone who is receiving benefits for them.

## Action on in-work poverty within families

The Scottish Government aims to support the wellbeing of all families, helping them through important life stages. A commitment to Fair Work practices and supporting flexible working forms part of the Scottish Government's Best Start, Bright Futures: Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan.

In 2024–25, we are committing a record £6.1 billion for benefits expenditure, almost £1.1 billion more than the UK Government gives to the Scottish Government for social security, demonstrating our commitment to tackling poverty. The Scottish Fiscal Commission forecasts this will rise to £8 billion in 2028-29 which includes additional investment of £1.5 billion. In 2024-25 we will support over 1.4 million people - more than 1 in 4 people in Scotland.

I hope this is helpful to you and your constituents. As mentioned, please let me know if Social Security Scotland can assist with your constituents' individual cases.

Yours sincerely  
SHIRLEY-ANNE SOMERVILLE

**PH4**

**From:** Harvie P (Patrick), MSP <[Patrick.Harvie.msp@parliament.scot](mailto:Patrick.Harvie.msp@parliament.scot)>

**Sent:** Wednesday, July 17, 2024 3:45 PM

**To:** Cabinet Secretary for Transport <[CabSecfortransport@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecfortransport@gov.scot)>

**Subject:** Zone Card Forum

Dear Cabinet Secretary,

You will be aware of the concerns raised recently regarding the significant increases in the cost of the Zone Card operated by SPT, an issue which was raised during First Minister's Questions shortly before summer recess. The First Minister noted that neither the Scottish Government nor Transport Scotland were directly part of the discussions on price increases.

However SPT and Scotrail, both public sector organisations, are part of those discussions as members of the Zone Card Forum. The Forum's meetings are not a matter of public record, and both SPT and Scotrail cite commercial reasons for not releasing details of the discussions. This aspect of the situation leaves a clear lack of accountability regarding decisions which impact on members of the public who depend on public transport. I would ask you to join me in calling on the Zone Card Forum to act with greater transparency and to make a record of its meetings available for scrutiny. Even if private sector members of the Forum are unwilling to agree to this, I would ask you to request that SPT and Scotrail, as public sector bodies, make their own contribution to these discussions public.

It has also been reported that one of the factors which is "priced in" to the Zone Card increases is a return to peak rail fares, which is a matter within the control of the Scottish Government. As you know my colleagues and I strongly support the ending of peak fares and have advocated for this innovative policy. We have made the case that its permanence is critical to achieving the benefit of modal shift, since people are unlikely to make changes to their travel patterns on the basis of fares which they expect to revert to being unaffordable. I would therefore ask you whether the Scottish Government has been asked by the Zone Card Forum or its members for a steer on the future of this policy, and what response was given, if any. I also urge you, once again, to confirm the permanent end to peak rail fares as soon as possible, to enable the Zone Card Forum to remove this from any consideration of Zone Card prices.



I know that you understand the need for Scotland to develop a public transport system which is genuinely affordable, and that we have a long way to go to achieve this. Ending peak rail fares, along with free bus travel for an increasing number of people in Scotland, have both been important steps forward. I hope you will agree that changes to Zone Card pricing should not be allowed to take us back in the wrong direction, undermining people's confidence in public transport.

Kind regards,

Patrick Harvie MSP

-----  
**Patrick Harvie MSP for the Glasgow Region (he/him)**

[patrick.harvie.msp@parliament.scot](mailto:patrick.harvie.msp@parliament.scot) <http://twitter.com/patrickharvie>

0131 348 6360 | MG.18,  
The Scottish Parliament,  
Edinburgh, EH99 1SP  
Glasgow Collective,  
15 East Campbell Street,  
Glasgow G1 5DT

**PH5**

Cabinet Secretary for Transport  
Rùnaire a' Chaibineit airson Còmhdhail  
Fiona Hyslop MSP/BPA

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

Patrick Harvie  
[Patrick.Harvie.msp@parliament.scot](mailto:Patrick.Harvie.msp@parliament.scot)

Our Reference: 202400422970  
Your Reference: Zone Card Forum

31 July 2024

Dear Patrick,

RE: SPT Zone Card Forum and Peak Fares

Thank you for your e-mail dated 17th July 2024 raising concerns about the SPT Zone Card Forum and ScotRail Peak Fares. I appreciate and agree that transparency of any decisions made by public bodies is paramount although we do have to be mindful of any commercial sensitivities which would need to be protected. ScotRail, in public ownership, is subject to FOISA and therefore obligated to respond to any request for information submitted to it. As the Scottish Government has no remit in the governance of SPT, it would not be appropriate for me to interfere in its disclosing of any information. I also appreciate your view with respect to the recent ZoneCard price increase.

I have written to the Chair of SPT, Councillor Dornan, to advise that whilst I welcome the simplification of the zonal system and the provision of a smart platform to make it easier for people to take an integrated journey, I have received representations on the scale of the cost increases. SPT has confirmed to me that the ZoneCard is a voluntary multi-modal ticket that is overseen by a forum of transport operators who collectively make decisions on the ticket and that SPT's role is as administrator of the forum. The forum has advised that the price of the ZoneCards had not increased in four years, and that the cost of operating ZoneCards has to be self-supporting.

SPT has also advised that it recognises the challenges that some customers are facing in response to the changes, and will seek to support customers in finding alternative options. I encourage your constituents to contact SPT to receive this support in considering ticket options.

The Scottish Government is continuing to work with operators and local authorities to maintain and improve services to make public transport a more attractive choice for passengers and to increase use by making it more accessible, available and affordable. The Fair Fares Review presents the recommendations and actions we will progress to deliver on our vision. This includes specific recommendations regarding integrated ticketing and fares. SPT advises that the Smart Zonecard pricing model used by the forum must not undercut any one operators full fare price.

ZoneCard's will be able to be purchased for a period which extends well beyond the planned end of the pilot to remove offpeak rail fares on 27 September 2024 and as such are priced according to the full fare price. We have listened to the many positive benefits the removal of peak fares on ScotRail services has had on passengers during the cost of living crisis. However, for this to be financially sustainable in the long term we would need to see passenger numbers grow significantly to offset the considerable additional subsidy that is required. The final evaluation of the pilot is currently underway. As you will appreciate, it would be inappropriate to make decisions in advance of the final evaluation, but please be assured the results of the pilot will be used to inform future fares strategy.

Yours sincerely

FIONA HYSLOP  
Cabinet Secretary for Transport Scottish Ministers,

**PH 6**

**From:** [Redacted s.38(1)(b)]

**Sent:** Tuesday, June 25, 2024 2:48 PM

**To:** Central Correspondence Unit <[scottish.ministers@gov.scot](mailto:scottish.ministers@gov.scot)>; First Minister <[firstminister@gov.scot](mailto:firstminister@gov.scot)>

**Subject:** Letter to First Minister and Lord Advocate of Scotland

Dear First Minister and Lord Advocate of Scotland,  
Please see a letter attached from Patrick Harvie MSP in his capacity as a regional MSP in regards to an investigation into the finances of Donald Trump.

Yours sincerely,

[Redacted s.38(1)(b)]

Patrick Harvie MSP – Glasgow Region

## **INVESTIGATION OF UNEXPLAINED WEALTH, DONALD TRUMP**

Dear First Minister & Lord Advocate,

I am writing to ask that Scottish Ministers urgently set out what action is being taken to investigate serious concerns around Donald Trump's acquisition of property in Scotland.

You will be aware that for many years I have raised serious concerns over the influence wielded by Donald Trump on the Scottish Government. Since February 2017 I have called for an investigation into the purchase of land for Trump International Golf Links in Aberdeenshire and the Trump Turnberry resort in Ayrshire. Specifically, I have suggested that Ministers use powers under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 to seek the grant of an Unexplained Wealth Order in respect of Donald Trump's property transactions in Scotland.

In February of this year, the New York State Supreme Court found Donald Trump guilty of civil fraud, ordering defendants to pay more than \$450 million. They were found to have falsely inflated the value of Trump's assets, including his golf course in Aberdeen. The Attorney General commented that

“For years, Donald Trump engaged in massive fraud to falsely inflate his net worth and unjustly enrich himself, his family, and his organization. While he may have authored the ‘Art of the Deal,’ our case revealed that his business was based on the art of the steal. When powerful people cheat to get better loans, it comes at the expense of honest and hardworking people.”

Donald Trump was also subsequently convicted by a New York jury on 34 counts of falsifying business records.

We now have indisputable and independent evidence in the public domain that Trump’s business dealings, including those in Scotland, were linked to fraud. Yet while Trump is finally being held to account by the legal system in the US, Scotland’s Civil Recovery Unit have provided the same comment that they provided in 2021, that they cannot “confirm or deny” whether a civil recovery investigation has commenced.

Stringing out this position is no longer tenable. Following the rulings in New York, there is now urgent public interest in what action is being taken to investigate Trump’s business dealings in Scotland.

I am sure that you will share my concern that continuing to provide evasive answers to legitimate enquiries and failing to demonstrate any progress suggests that the wealthy and powerful enjoy leniency in Scotland and risks bringing the Scottish legal system into disrepute.

I would therefore ask that you urgently provide an update to the Scottish public as to what action is being taken to investigate Donald Trump’s acquisitions of property in Scotland and to provide a timeline as to when this process will conclude and report publicly on its findings.

Yours sincerely,

Patrick Harvie MSP

PH7

Rt Hon John Swinney MSP  
First Minister of Scotland



St Andrew's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh EH1 3DG  
T: 0300 244 4000

Patrick Harvie MSP  
[Scott.Rutherford@Parliament.scot](mailto:Scott.Rutherford@Parliament.scot)

Our Reference: 202400420862

5 August 2024

*Dear Patrick,*

Thank you for your letter of 25 June to myself and the Lord Advocate asking for Scottish Ministers to "urgently set out what action is being taken to investigate serious concerns around Donald Trump's acquisition of property in Scotland."

Ross Greer MSP referred to this letter at First Ministers Questions on 27 June.

You have reiterated the possibility of applying for an Unexplained Wealth Order (UWO) to investigate Mr Trump's business acquisitions in Scotland. Any decision on whether to apply to the Court of Session for an UWO is made on behalf of the Scottish Ministers by the Civil Recovery Unit (CRU), which is responsible to the Lord Advocate in her capacity as a Scottish Minister.

It remains the position that, given the sensitive nature of civil recovery work, the CRU operates a policy that it will neither confirm nor deny the existence of an on-going civil recovery investigation or, in particular, whether investigatory orders are being applied for.

It would not be appropriate for me as First Minister to provide an update on any operational matters.

As I explained to Mr Greer on 27 June, any decision to apply for an UWO is entirely an operational matter for the CRU. The CRU must be able to undertake these duties free from any interference.

The investigation of alleged criminality is a matter for Police Scotland and any evidence of alleged criminal behaviour in Scotland should be sent to the Chief Constable at the following address:


Chief Constable  
Police Service of Scotland  
Tulliallan Castle  
KINCARDINE  
Kincardineshire  
FK10 4BE

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

---

I trust this explains the position and that you find this helpful.

This letter has been copied to the Lord Advocate.

*Yours,*  
  
JOHN SWINNEY

**PH8**

Dear Cabinet Secretary for Net Zero and Energy and Minister for Climate Action,

Please see attached correspondence from Patrick Harvie MSP regarding the latest research on the climate impacts of the SSE-Equinor gas-fired power plant at Peterhead.

Yours sincerely,

[Redacted s.38(1)(b)]  
Patrick Harvie MSP – Glasgow Region

[Redacted s.38(1)(b)]

Patrick Harvie Patrick Harvie Member of the Scottish Parliament Ball  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba Glasgow Glaschu

Cabinet Secretary for Net Zero and Energy  
Cc Minister for Climate Action  
Scottish Government St Andrew's House  
Regent Road  
Edinburgh  
EH1 3DG

07.11.2024

Dear Cabinet Secretary and Minister

Latest research on the climate impacts of the SSE-Equinor gas-fired power plant at Peterhead.

I am writing to you seeking the Scottish Government's response to recent research from Carbon Tracker which raises significant concerns about the climate impacts of the proposed power station at Peterhead. As you are aware from previous discussions, Scottish Green MSPs are deeply sceptical of the ability of carbon-capture utilisation and storage (CCUS) technology to aid Scotland in the transition to net zero. Indeed, we believe that such CCUS projects are a dangerous distraction from implementing the critical policies for heating our homes sustainably, electrifying our transport systems and land use change that we urgently

need to roll out across the country. Carbon Tracker's research highlights some key concerns that the project's Environmental Impact Assessment:

- Overestimates the amount of CO2 emissions that could be captured from the fossil fuels that would be burnt at the Peterhead plant. The EIA suggests this to be as high as a 90-95% capture rate which is unsupported by the evidence on CCUS technology trials to date.
- Does not include emissions that would be generated from the extraction and transportation of fossil fuels to the plant, or emissions generated during periods when CCUS capacity is turned off for maintenance or outages.
- Projects that the Peterhead plant would continue burning fossil fuels well into the 2050s, almost 15 years after Scotland is supposed to have achieved its net zero target.

Please could you outline the Scottish Government's response to this research and each of the issues raised above. In particular, I ask for your urgent confirmation that a fresh Environmental Impact Assessment for the Peterhead will be carried out before any decision is made by Ministers.

Yours sincerely  
Patrick Harvie MSP



