



Social Security Scotland  
Tèarainteachd Shòisealta Alba

Social Security Scotland  
Agnes Husband House  
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Dear Deputy Convenor,

Thank you for your invitation to the Committee session on 11 January 2024. I look forward to discussing the progress being made with delivery of Scottish benefits, as well as our annual report, client survey, the Charter Measurement Framework and our budget plans for the financial year ahead, 2024-25.

In response to your correspondence titled **Social Security Scotland Key Performance Indicators**, I am aware similar correspondence was sent to the Cabinet Secretary and she advised you that I will respond on behalf of both of us.

### **Social Security Scotland Statistics**

In all of our published benefit statistics, we aim to highlight a suite of data that provides an overview of the benefit delivery, including a measure of processing times for applications. We also publish additional data and insights about how clients feel about the process through the annual client survey and the Charter Measurement Framework. These also focus on key aspects that people in Scotland fed back on the design of a new benefits system in Scotland.

For low income benefits, we measure processing times from the date an application was received to the date a decision was made on the application.

For disability benefits, we measure the processing times from the date 'Part 2' of the application form was received, to the date a decision was made (except in the cases of Special Rules for Terminal Illness). The 'Part 2' received date is used because the client supplies information about the impact of the disability within that part of the application form, which informs the decision making process. Essentially 'Part 2' completes the application process for the client with 'Part 1' specifically designed to be quick, straightforward to complete and to preserve the eligibility date if an application is successful.

### **Planned Action**

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The time taken between the receipt of all supporting information and a decision being made on an application, would provide useful detail on the processing of applications. We are looking at whether an indicator of sufficient quality can be reliably measured and the technology changes that may be required to enable such a change. I would be happy to say more about the Committee's focus for such a measure.

## **Performance Indicators**

Our Charter sets out a range of standards for our performance and we have worked hard to incorporate the importance of individual, team and organisational performance into our culture. Each year we publish the Charter Measurement Framework to share how we are delivering on Our Charter commitments. This highlights how open and transparent Social Security Scotland are with their performance and allows action to be taken if areas for improvement are identified. Our latest report was published 14 November. The measures in the Charter have been set by working with people with experience of the social security system and are not directly set by either Social Security Scotland or the Scottish Government.

We work closely with our Scottish Government colleagues where specific indicators are set, for example, the Scottish Government has committed to processing Funeral Support Payment applications within 10 working days of receipt of a completed application, with payment made as soon as possible thereafter and to process Special Rules for Terminal Illness disability payment applications within seven working days.

As highlighted above we are continuously improving the quality of our reporting capability, and this includes the production of operational management information. Work is ongoing with Scottish Government to enhance our management information so further insights can be drawn to support the management of performance within the organisation and underpin future continuous improvement activity. But these improvements inevitably must be balanced against the Agile Programme delivery of new benefits.

I look forward to attending the committee session on 11 January 2024 where we can discuss this in greater detail, as well as welcoming some members to Agnes Husband House in Dundee on 15 January.

Yours Sincerely,

**David Wallace**

Chief Executive  
Social Security Scotland

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