



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Social Justice and Social Security Committee

Colm Gildernew MLA
Chairperson of the Committee for Communities
Northern Ireland Assembly
Parliament Buildings
Belfast

[sent by email]

22 May 2025

Dear Chairperson

Proposed UK Welfare Reforms – Potential Joint Devolved Committee Response

Thank you for your letter of 19 March seeking this Committee's view on working collaboratively with you on a response to the UK Government's recent announcements about welfare system reforms. We note that a letter was also sent to the relevant committee at Senedd Cymru with the same request.

On 15 May, we held a round-table evidence session to consider the potential impact in Scotland of the UK Government's proposals to reform the welfare system, particularly in relation to disability benefits.

Following the roundtable evidence session, the Committee considered the evidence heard and agreed to contribute to a joint response to the UK Government.

This letter provides our view on how the UK Government's welfare reforms might impact in Scotland. We are unable to provide comment on any potential impacts in Northern Ireland and Wales.

However, there may be some underlying principles, which I hope that the members of all three committees might be able to agree to include in a letter to the UK Government.

The evidence we heard identified some of the impacts for people in Scotland, should the UK Government implement its proposed welfare reforms.

The financial impact of the UK Government's welfare changes on the Scottish Government's social security budget is expected to be significant. Current estimates provided by the Scottish Government indicate that by 2029-30, the Personal

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Independence Payment (PIP) block grant adjustment (BGA) will be £380 million lower than currently forecast and the Carer's Allowance BGA will be £45 million lower than forecast.¹

The Committee heard that:

- PIP and the Adult Disability Payment (ADP) are not income replacements. There is a fear that the welfare reform measures will have the opposite effect of enabling more disabled people to work and will instead displace costs into the health and social care sectors.
- The PIP and ADP assessments and the Work Capability Assessment (WCA) have fundamentally different purposes, and they are not interchangeable.
- There has been a lack of consultation with the Scottish Government, particularly around the issue of replacing the Work Capability Assessment with PIP. There needs to be improved co-ordination between the UK and Scottish Governments on this.

The evidence also identified the following underlying principles.

There are a lot of unknowns, which is causing fear and uncertainty. The UK Government needs to provide clear information on its proposed welfare reforms and the expected impacts.

There is a need to consider the devolved context in each nation, and to consult fully with devolved governments.

People with disabilities must be treated with dignity and have their human rights respected. The language used in relation to reform of benefits for disabled people should be respectful and reflective of a system which aims to support people to realise their potential.

We would wish to consider the terms of a draft letter to the UK Government prior to it being issued.

It would be helpful if you could please confirm whether the members of the relevant committee at Senedd Cymru have agreed to contribute to a joint letter and if you could provide an expected timeframe for writing to the UK Government.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,



Collette Stevenson MSP
Convener
Social Justice and Social Security Committee

¹ [Block grant adjustments from the UK Spring Forecast 2025: Letter from the Scottish Government.](#)