



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Economy and Fair Work Committee

Collette Stevenson MSP
Convener
Social Justice and Social Security Committee

27 January 2025

Dear Collette,

Addressing child poverty through parental employment report – follow up

Thank you for your letter of 2 December on the Scottish Government's progress to address child poverty and meet the targets in the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017, following your Committee's report on parental employment.

As set out in your letter, parental employment is a key factor when considering progress, as is low pay for those in employment. The focus of the Economy and Fair Work Committee continues to be the Scottish Government's economic policies, specifically support for business, support for women's enterprise, and skills development, all of which contribute to improved outcomes in employment.

Relevant to the recommendations in your report, you may be particularly interested in the Committee's most recent completed inquiry into [closing the disability employment gap in Scotland](#). Some of the Committee's recommendations from that work included—

- A cross-portfolio cultural shift across the whole of Government and its agencies on how disabled and neurodiverse people are viewed.
- That both the Scottish and UK governments make their data gathering more strategic to ensure policy can be better targeted.
- The delivery of a concrete action plan at scale and pace to target demands, with a clear emphasis on implementation.
- An appropriate level of funding for employability services moving forward, with long term funding certainty for providers of employability services.
- That the UK and Scottish governments better align the Jobcentre Plus network in Scotland with the devolved employability services.
- That the UK Government considers how to make the Access to Work Scheme more streamlined and responsive, including the removal of the funding cap, and the establishment of a specific scheme for self-employed and freelance workers.

Prior to this work, the Committee conducted two inquiries into achieving a just transition to net zero.

Contact: Economy and Fair Work Committee, The Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh, EH99 1SP. Email: economyandfairwork.committee@parliament.scot. We welcome calls through Relay UK and in BSL through Contact Scotland BSL.

The transition to net zero will impact communities across Scotland, those directly employed in carbon-intensive industries, and those in the wider supply chains. The Committee first considered this in the context [the Grangemouth area](#), and then in [the North East and Moray](#).

Over two reports, the Committee made several recommendations in areas such as—

- support for workers to re-train and re-skill;
- business support;
- STEM education; and
- support for the wider community and supply chains.

Following the publication of both reports, [the Committee led a Chamber debate on 3 October 2024](#) on its recommendations, which may be of interest to you.

Other related work is the Committee's post-legislative scrutiny of the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014. Fair work and the challenges of monitoring fair work obligations and requirements throughout the supply chain, beyond primary contractors, were issues considered as part of that scrutiny. The Committee's report can be found [here](#).

Finally, the Committee will shortly hold scrutiny sessions to consider the New Deal for Business. The focus of that work is likely to be an assessment of the relationship and partnership-working between the Scottish Government and business sector and progress against the priorities set out in the New Deal for Business Group's implementation plan.

I hope you find this information useful.

Yours sincerely,



Colin Smyth MSP
Convener