



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

## Social Justice and Social Security Committee

Jane O'Donnell  
Chief Executive  
COSLA

**25 March 2025**

Dear Ms O'Donnell,

### **Pensioner Poverty and Digital Exclusion**

On [6 February 2025](#), the Social Justice and Social Security Committee held a roundtable discussion on the reasons for pensioner poverty and how they might be addressed. The Committee decided to consider the links between pensioner poverty and digital exclusion at an evidence session on [13 March 2025](#).

Following the evidence session, the Committee agreed to request information to better inform its scrutiny of how digital exclusion contributes to pensioner poverty.

Could you please confirm:

- the measures that local authorities have in place to provide a clear 'offline' alternative for their services, such as accessing council tax reduction information and applications for the Scottish Welfare Fund;
- whether the Blue Badge application is only available online and if so, whether accessible alternatives have been considered or are to be introduced; and
- COSLA's role in ensuring there is a consistent accessibility approach to accessing services across all local authorities.


A response by Friday, 11 April 2025 would be much appreciated to inform consideration of the Committee's next steps.

Correspondence on digital inclusion strategies and practices has also been sent to the Scottish Government and the Department for Work and Pensions.

Yours sincerely,

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Contact: Social Justice and Social Security Committee, The Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh, EH99 1SP. Email [SJSS.committee@parliament.scot](mailto:SJSS.committee@parliament.scot). We welcome calls through Relay UK and in BSL through Contact Scotland BSL.



**Collette Stevenson MSP**  
**Convener**  
**Social Justice and Social Security Committee**