



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Social Justice and Social Security Committee

Shirley-Anne Somerville MSP
Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice
Scottish Government

25 March 2025

Dear Cabinet Secretary,

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.

During the evidence session, the Committee heard from ALLIANCE that—

“There was a business case for the next stage of Connecting Scotland. It has moved from a lot of one-to-one support to being much more about providing services to many people, including things such as lending libraries. However, we are not clear on all the detail around that, where that is going or how it is supporting people now.”¹

Could you please provide details of the Scottish Government’s current funding of digital inclusion, in particular funding and plans for Connecting Scotland.

The Committee understands that a refresh of the Scottish Government’s digital strategy is currently underway and is keen to understand how it will improve access to public services for older people. Could you please confirm when an updated digital strategy will be published?

Finally, the Committee would welcome details of Digital Inclusion Alliance’s remit, aims and work programme. In particular, how its work is to inform the refreshed digital strategy.

¹ [Official Report](#), Social Justice and Social Security Committee meeting, 13 March 2025, Col 22

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

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

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C Stevenson', written in a cursive style.

Collette Stevenson MSP
Convener
Social Justice and Social Security Committee