

Kate Forbes MSP
Cabinet Secretary for Finance and the Economy
Scottish Government
St Andrew's House
Edinburgh
EH1 3DG

Thursday 18th November 2021

Dear Cabinet Secretary,

Child poverty and the 2022-23 Scottish Budget

As a broad coalition of children's charities, women's organisations, disabled people's organisations, anti-poverty campaigners, think tanks, community groups, academics, trade unions and faith groups, we are writing to urge you to make the necessary financial commitment in the upcoming Scottish Budget **to double the Scottish Child Payment immediately.**

We welcome the Scottish Government's commitment to tackling child poverty, evidenced in the setting of statutory child poverty targets, the introduction of the Scottish child payment and subsequent commitment to doubling its value, and the ongoing commitment to incorporate the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. This action lays a real foundation for delivering on the national mission to end child poverty in Scotland.

However, the evidence shows that current commitments do not, as yet, go far enough to meet the government's own statutory child poverty targets for 2023/24.

We were pleased that the First Minister confirmed the commitment to double the Scottish child payment in the Programme for Government and that the intention of the Scottish Government is "to deliver this as early within the life of this Parliament as possible" and that "how and exactly when this commitment will be met" will be set out when the Budget Bill is published. However, **action is needed as a matter of utmost urgency to meet these targets and protect families from a perfect storm of financial uncertainty.** The UK government's removal of the £20 universal credit uplift, the increase in energy prices and the broader rise in the cost of living are increasing financial insecurity for those who have been hardest hit by the pandemic – particularly women, single parents, disabled people and those from black and minority ethnic communities. Their incomes will not stretch any further. Many more families are now at risk of poverty.

Doubling the Scottish Child Payment is the single most impactful thing the Scottish Government can do now to protect families and give Scotland a chance to meet our child poverty targets. Families cannot wait any longer for this financial support.

We know that unlocking children from poverty requires long-term work to tackle the structural inequalities parents and carers, especially women, face in the labour market. It will also require action like expansion in funded childcare and investment in affordable housing. But taking immediate action to boost incomes is a necessary next step. Delay in doubling the payment will leave thousands of children in Scotland in poverty and jeopardise the chance of meeting the child poverty targets.

Every level of government has a duty to ensure adequate incomes where it can, and we are clear that the UK Chancellor must reverse the unjust £20 universal credit cut and invest more in support for families. But just as the UK Government has a moral responsibility to do the right thing, so too the Scottish Government has a moral responsibility to make maximum use of the resources at its

disposal to loosen the grip of poverty on children's lives.

We therefore urge you to do the right thing and use the budget to make resources available so that the Scottish Child Payment can be doubled immediately. Amid a rising tide of poverty, children living in poverty right now simply cannot wait.

Yours sincerely,

Sally Ann Kelly, Chief Executive, Aberlour Child Care Trust

Paul Carberry, Director for Scotland, Action for Children

Martin Crewe, Director, Barnardo's Scotland

Mary Glasgow, Chief Executive, Children 1st

Dr Judith Turbyne, Chief Executive, Children in Scotland

Anna Ritchie Allan, Executive Director, Close the Gap

John Dickie, Director of CPAG in Scotland

Eilidh Dickson, Policy and Parliamentary Manager, Engender

Satwat Rehman, Director, One Parent Families Scotland (OPFS)

Jamie Livingston, Head of Oxfam Scotland

Clare Simpson, Manager, Parenting Across Scotland

Peter Kelly, Director, Poverty Alliance

Claire Telfer, Head of Scotland, Save the Children

Polly Jones, Head of Scotland, The Trussell Trust

Karen Birch, Chief Officer, Abundant Borders

Linda Tuthill, CEO, Action Group

Suzanne Slavin, CEO, Ayr Housing Aid Centre

Sally Clough, Manager, Belville Community Garden Trust

Frank Mosson, Manager, Bridgeton Citizens Advice Bureau

Annie McCormack, Chair, Broke Not Broken

Alan Thornburrow, Director, Business in the Community Scotland

Emma Walker, Director, Camphill Scotland

Margaret Caldwell, Chairperson, Care for Carers Edinburgh

Paul Traynor, Head of External Affairs, Carers Trust Scotland

Jennifer Wallace, Director, Carnegie UK

Fiona Rae, Interim Chief Executive, CFINE

Teresa Sutherland, Interim Project Manager, CHAI

Rami Okasha, Chief Executive, Children's Hospices Across Scotland (CHAS)

Dr Colin Morrison, Co-Director, Children's Parliament

Emma Jackson, National Director Scotland, Christians Against Poverty

The Rt Hon Lord Wallace of Tankerness QC (Jim Wallace), Moderator of the General Assembly, The Church of Scotland

Sensei Karl Kaliski, Cloud Water Zen Centre

Claire Cairns, Director, The Coalition of Carers in Scotland

Pauline Buchan, Manager, The Cottage Family Centre

Bruce Adamson, Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland

Marie Ward, CEO, Cranhill Development Trust

Javarea Imran, Projects Manager, Crookston Community Group

Ewan Aitken, CEO, Cyrenians

Jane Brumpton, Chief Executive, Early Years Scotland

Roslyn Neely, Chief Executive, Edinburgh Children's Hospital Charity

Bethany Biggar, Director, Edinburgh Food Project

Larry Flanagan, General Secretary, Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS)

Frazer Scott, CEO, Energy Action Scotland

Prof Nancy Loucks OBE, Chief Executive, Families Outside

Jimmy Wilson, CEO, FARE Scotland

John McIntyre, Principle Trustee, Ferguslie Community Development Trust

Laura Falconer, Chief Executive, Forces Children Scotland

Biddy Kelly, Managing Director, Fresh Start

Elizabeth Allen, Clerk, General Meeting for Scotland of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)

David Walsh, Public Health Programme Manager, Glasgow Centre for Population Health

Ian Bruce, Chief Executive, Glasgow CVS

Tressa Burke, Chief Executive, Glasgow Disability Alliance

Professor Ian Welsh OBE, Chief Executive, Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland (the ALLIANCE)

Gavin Yates, CEO, Homeless Action Scotland

Susan Capaldi, Home-Start Cowdenbeath

Martin Dorchester, Chief Executive, Includem

Moira Tasker, Chief Executive, Inclusion Scotland

Sabine Goodwin, Coordinator, Independent Food Aid Network

Innes McMinn, Manager, Independent Living Support

Russell Gunson, Director, IPPR Scotland

William Nolan, Bishop President of Justice and Peace Scotland

Angela Moohan, CEO, The Larder

Dr Niki Powers, Managing Director, Let's Talk (Young People)

Liane Coia, Operations Manager, Maryhill Integration Network

Anne Sutherland, Manager, Merkinch Partnership

Mairi McCallum, Project Manager, Moray Food Plus

Dr Patrick Roach, General Secretary, NASUWT

Craig Samuel, Scotland Representative, National Association of Welfare Rights Advisers

Pete Ritchie, Executive Director, Nourish Scotland

Rhoda Walker, Secretary, Orkney Foodbank

Glenn Liddall, Chief Executive, People Know How

Lesley Ross, Project Manager, Pilton Youth and Children's Project

Elaine Downie, Co-ordinator, The Poverty Truth Community

Marguerite Hunter Blair, Chief Executive, Play Scotland

Shumela Ahmed, Managing Director, Resilience Learning Partnership

Kate Polson, CEO, The Rock Trust

Dr Mairi Stark, Officer for Scotland, Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health

Christine Carlin, Director, Scotland Home-Start

Graeme McAlister, Chief Executive, Scottish Childminding Association

Dr Carey Lunan, GP Craigmillar Medical Group, Chair of Scottish Deep End Project

Rhona Willder, Development Manager, Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance

Justina Murray, Chief Executive Officer, Scottish Families Affected by Alcohol & Drugs

Irene Audain MBE, Chief Executive, Scottish Out of School Care Network

Dr Marsha Scott, Chief Executive, Scottish Women's Aid

Charandeep Singh, Executive Director, Sikhs in Scotland

Trishna Singh OBE, Director, Sikh Sanjog

Pauline Gordon, Director, Social Enterprise Network Scotland

Danny Collins, National President, The Society of St Vincent de Paul Scotland

Susan Lyons, Manager, SPIRIT Advocacy

Professor John H McKendrick, Co-Director, SPIRU, Glasgow Caledonian University

Sharon McAulay, Chief Executive, STAR Project

Rozanne Foyer, General Secretary, STUC

Juliet Harris, Director, Together (Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights)

Paul Stuart, Branch Secretary, Unison Housing & Care Scotland Branch

Mike J Kirby, Secretary, UNISON Scotland

Pat Rafferty, Regional Secretary, Unite Scotland

Adrian Sinfield, Professor Emeritus of Social Policy, University of Edinburgh

James Mitchell, Professor of Public Policy, University of Edinburgh

Annette Hastings, Professor of Urban Studies, University of Glasgow

Nick Bailey, Professor of Urban Studies, University of Glasgow

Sharon Wright, Professor of Social Policy (Urban Studies), University of Glasgow

Kimberley Somerside, Policy Engagement Officer, Voluntary Health Scotland

Rob McDowall, Chair, Welfare Scotland

Carolyn Currie, Chief Executive, Women's Enterprise Scotland

Hugh Foy, Director, Xaverian Missionaries UK Region

Rachel Adamson, Co-Director, Zero Tolerance