



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Social Justice and Social Security Committee

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

Social Justice and Social Security Committee
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
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Via email only

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30 November 2023

Dear Cabinet Secretary,

Social Security Scotland Key Performance Indicators

Following an evidence session on disability benefits processing times with Social Security Scotland, attended by David Wallace and Officials on [29 June 2023](#), the Social Justice and Social Security Committee requested further information on the parts of the process contributing to long processing times. In particular, the time between receiving all required supporting information and making a decision on an individual's case ([Official Report, col 26](#)).

David Wallace responded on [21 August](#)—

“As Ally McPhail said during the Committee appearance, we can confirm we are currently unable to measure or report on the time taken between the receipt of all supporting information and a decision being made in a case.

Work is ongoing to improve how our data is managed and accessed in order to strengthen the range and detail of data available to inform performance and reporting.”

Subsequently, following comments from a Member about the matter at a Committee meeting and a Chamber debate on 14 September, the Committee received an update from David Wallace on [28 September](#), explaining that statistics are published as experimental statistics and for all benefits include “what can be considered the full ‘end-to-end’ for a first decision to be made.”

He added that—

“Where an application does not have all the supporting information required for us to make a decision and we have to work with the client and/or third parties to obtain additional information, we were currently unable to report on the time taken between the receipt of all supporting information and a decision being made in a case, i.e., we cannot report on this particular sub-set of the ‘end-to-end’ journey.”

The Committee believes more comprehensive information is important to monitor and evaluate the service being provided.

As such, the Committee asks the Scottish Government for some further background about how the relevant disability benefits key performance indicators were designed, what further action it is taking to address the concerns set out above, and when any action would be taken. Specifically, the Committee would like to know whether the Government intends to develop systems so that in future Social Security Scotland will be able to report on the time taken between the receipt of all supporting information and a decision being made in a case.

To inform the Committee’s further consideration of this matter, it would be helpful to have your response by **20 December 2023**.

Yours sincerely,



Bob Doris MSP
Deputy Convener
Social Justice and Social Security Committee