

A solid orange right-angled triangle pointing downwards and to the right.

David Wallace
Chief Executive
Social Security Scotland

By email to ce@socialsecurity.gov.scot

30 August 2022

Dear David,

The Scottish Fiscal Commission has published today its latest Statement of Data Needs. This publication describes the main areas where we believe improvements are required in the data and information we use for forecasting to support the Scottish Budget.

The statement covers the progress made by Social Security Scotland to publish data since our last publication in 2020. We also highlight our on-going data requirements in relation to the data produced by Social Security Scotland.

We recognise that the statistics team in Social Security Scotland has been working collaboratively with us to improve the statistical publications. We also recognise that the limited resources in the team mean the capacity to meet our needs is constrained.

However, we must emphasise the need for further improvements in data on the new disability payments published by Social Security Scotland and released by Scotland's Chief Statistician. We require detailed data on applications, awards and cases transferred from the Department for Work and Pensions to produce and revise our forecasts of social security expenditure and to support the Scottish Parliament in scrutinising the Scottish Budget and future spending plans.

The disability payments are forecast to account for around 60 per cent of all social security spending in 2024-25, and our forecasts are currently based on assumptions about how the introduction of new payments will affect spending. Without the required data on the new payments from Social Security Scotland, we will not be able to evaluate the assumptions we have made and improve our future forecasts, presenting a risk to future Scottish Budgets.

We appreciate the developments so far and look forward to continuing working with you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "G Roy".

Professor Graeme Roy
