
Director General for RegulationPam Duncan-Glancy MSP
(By email)

06 March 2023

Dear Pam,

Scottish Government Cost of Living

Thank you for contacting us and raising your concerns about claims made by Scottish Government that it has allocated £3 billion in the 2022/23 financial year to help with the cost-of-living crisis. You were concerned that some policies included in the £3 billion pre-date the cost-of-living crisis and the Scottish National Party's (SNP) term of government.

The Scottish Government published a [press release](#) on 12 July 2022 with details of policies and payments contributing toward the £3 billion. While the press release sought to be transparent in listing the contributing policies, it lacked clarity on how those policies were selected for inclusion and therefore how much of the funding was newly allocated in 2022/23.

As you point out in your letter, the Scottish Parliament's Independent Information Centre published a [blog](#) on 29 July 2022, setting out a clear timeline of when the contributing policies were implemented. The timeline highlights that some of the policies included in the announcement predate the cost-of-living crisis and that the level of new funding allocated this financial year would be closer to £490 million.

Funding announcements should be clear as to whether they relate to new money or the reallocation of existing resources, including where increases in funding cover spending previously announced. This includes clarifying whether policies have been extended, implemented, or continued for a longer period.

Transparency and clarity support public confidence in statistics and the organisations that produce them and minimise the risk of misinterpretation of statistics and data. We would like to see Scottish Government communicate externally how policies were chosen to be included in the announcement, to aid understanding of how much extra funding was allocated to support the cost-of living crisis. The Office for Statistics Regulation's [guidance on statements about public funding](#) provides practical advice on how to ensure statements can be understood by all.

I am copying this letter to Alastair McAlpine, Chief Statistician in Scottish Government, for wider dissemination in Scottish Government.

Yours sincerely

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

Ed Humpherson
Director General for Regulation