

A New Future for Social Security

Consultation on Social Security in
Scotland



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
gov.scot

Background

Why is the Scottish Government Consulting?

- The UK Government is going to transfer responsibility for a number of social security benefits to the Scottish Government as a result of the Smith Commission and then the Scotland Act 2016
- This consultation is the next stage in a process that began with Royal Assent for the Scotland Act 2016 and has continued with the publication, earlier this year, of the paper, *A New Future for Social Security in Scotland* , in which the Scottish Government set out the Vision and the principles which will guide the delivery of social security in Scotland



Context

Benefits to remain reserved to the UK Government	Benefits being devolved to the Scottish Government
Universal Credit (which replaces Jobseeker's Allowance, Income Related Employment Support Allowance, Working Tax Credits, Child Tax Credits and housing Benefit)	Ill Health and Disability Benefits which means – Disability Living Allowance, Personal Independence Payment, Attendance Allowance, Severe Disablement Allowance and Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit
State Pension and Pension Credit	Carers Allowance
Contributory Employment Support Allowance	Sure Start Maternity Grants (which we propose should be replaced by the Best Start Grant)
Child Benefit	Funeral Payments
Maternity and Paternity Pay	Cold Weather Payments and Winter Fuel Payments
	Discretionary Housing Payments
	Some powers in relation to Universal Credit (i.e. to split payments between household members)

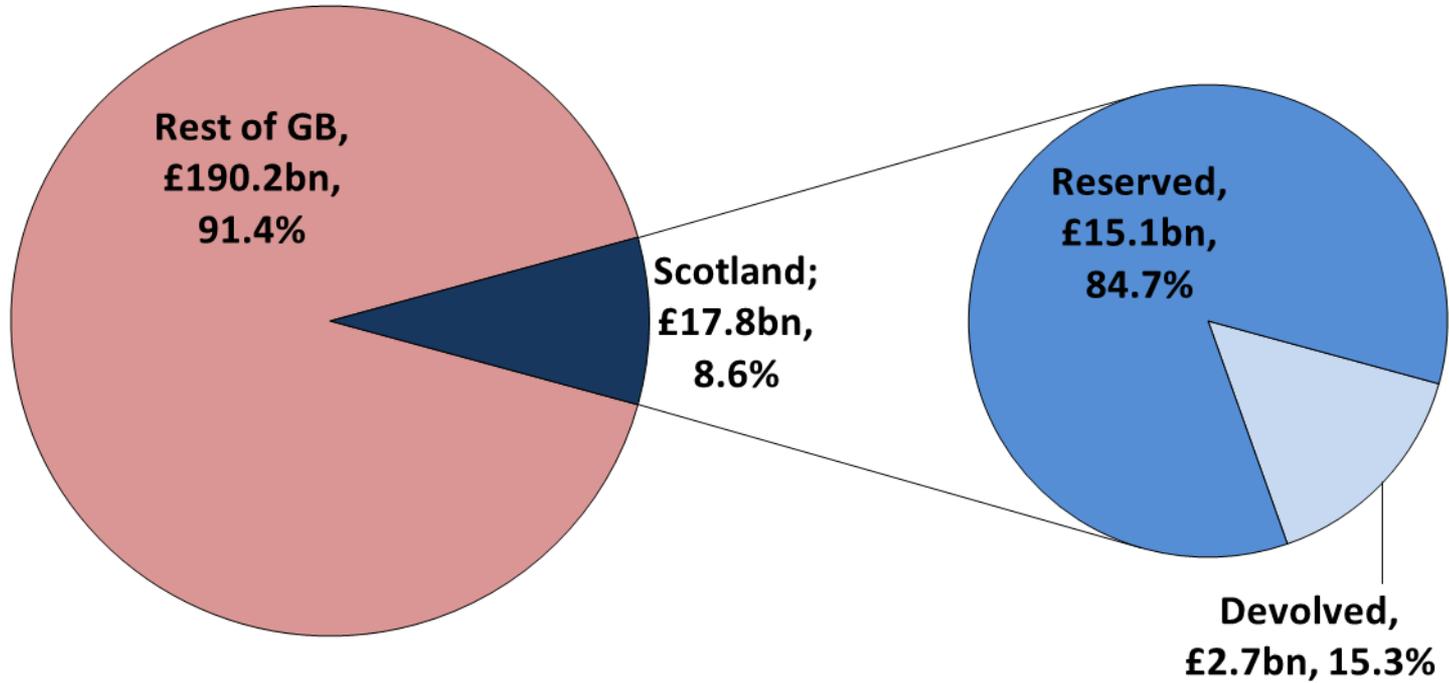


Context

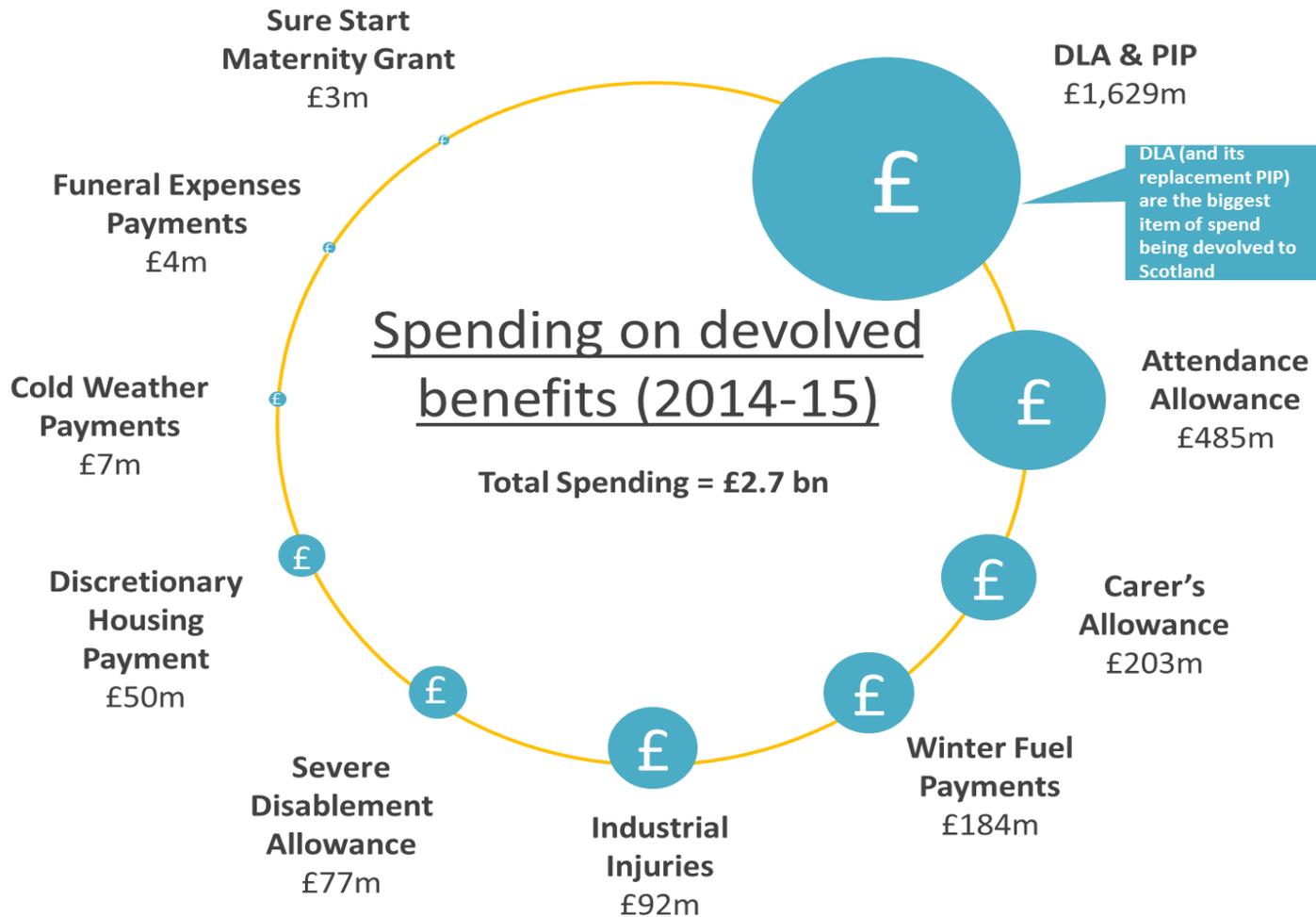
- The UK Government currently spends around £18 billion on social security benefits in Scotland every year. The following diagrams show that the devolved benefits only account for about £2.7 billion or 15% of this spending. The remainder (£15.1 billion or 85%), remains under the control of the UK Government



Context



Context



The Journey so Far

- **Summer 2015:** Consultation as part of Fairer Scotland discussions
- **September 2015:** Announced that we would bring forward a social security Bill before the end of the first year of the next Parliament
- **March 2016:** Published our 'Vision' for the future of social security in Scotland, including five principles that will govern our decisions on policy and delivery
- **March 2016:** Published a report on Part 1 of our appraisal of the options for delivery of social security
- **March 2016:** Announced our intention to establish a social security agency



Commitments Already Made

Carer's Allowance	To improve the support we offer to carers by increasing Carer's Allowance to the level of Jobseeker's Allowance.
Disability Benefits	<p>We will extend winter fuel payments to families with severely disabled children and end the degrading DWP approach to disability assessments. We will maintain disability benefits and ensure they are not means tested.</p> <p>We have also committed to Disability Benefits Assessment Commission to provide recommendations and guidance on how often assessments should be, what conditions should be given an automatic or lifetime awards, and eligibility criteria</p>
Universal Credit	Universal Credit remains reserved to the UK Government, but we will use administrative flexibilities to pay direct to social landlords, and to offer fortnightly payments to recipients rather than monthly payments



Commitments Already Made

Best Start Grant	To extend the support currently offered by Sure Start Maternity Grants
'Bedroom Tax'	Once powers are devolved, we will effectively abolish the bedroom tax
Job Grant	To introduce a new Job Grant for young people <u>at risk of long-term unemployment</u> entering the labour market



Vision and Principles

Vision:

Social security is important to all of us and able to support each of us when we need it



Vision and Principles

Principles:

- Social security is an investment in the people of Scotland
- Respect for the dignity of individuals is at the heart of everything we do
- Our processes and services will be evidence-based and designed with the people of Scotland
- We will strive for continuous improvement in all our policies, processes and systems, putting the user experience first
- We will demonstrate that our services are efficient and value for money



Responding to the Consultation

- The Scottish Government want to hear your views
- The Consultation will be open from 29th July to 28th October
- You will have a chance to discuss aspects of the consultation today but you are also very welcome to respond individually
- You can choose to respond in a variety of ways and do not need to answer every question



Responding to the Consultation

- A shorter summary document is also available
- Will be online – the optimal way to respond
- We have worked hard to ensure the consultation is as accessible as possible
- Will be available in various formats and languages upon request
- You do not need to answer every question



Part 1 – A Principled Approach

- How a social security system can be developed that is based on a distinctively Scottish guiding vision set of principles. How the vision and principles can be reflected in the following ways:
 - In legislation;
 - In outcomes and the user experience;
 - In deciding which option will be best to deliver social security benefits and services; and
 - In addressing equality issues



Part 2 – Devolved Benefits

- Focusses on powers over specific benefits that will transfer to Scotland – the devolved benefits.



Part 3 – Operational Policy

- Part 3 looks at the strategic functions that the social security system will need to carry out in order to operate competently. This means functions that are not specific to any individual benefit but could apply to any of the devolved benefits – the ‘operational policy’ areas



The Consultation Timeline

- **29 July 2016:** Launch consultation on the future of social security in Scotland - engage stakeholders in development of devolved powers and how they might be framed in legislation
- **Post-publication:** Stakeholder engagement, to add further insights and detail to the information we will gather through our consultation
- **Early 2017:** Scottish Government response to the consultation to be published
- **Early 2017:** Scottish Government report on Stage 2 of our appraisal of the options for delivery of social security
- **2017:** Scottish Government will introduce its first, devolved social security Bill



Universal Credit Roll Out

- The UK roll-out of Full Service has been slowed. It will now be at a rate of 5 jobcentres a month till June 2017 (it was previously due to increase to 50 sites per month from February 2017).
- This will increase to 30 sites in July. There will then be a break in August / September after which the rate will be 55 jobcentres per month between October and December 2017.
- This will increase again February 2018 to 65 jobcentres per month and roll out is due to complete in September 2018.
- Managed migration of the existing legacy benefit claims will now start in July 2019 (previously scheduled for June 2018) and will finish in March 2022.



Scottish UC Roll Out

- All jobcentres across the UK now offer UC for single claimants. This is on the 'Live Service'.
- The new digital service 'Full Service' is currently only live in a handful of sites across the UK (there are two in Scotland: Musselburgh and Inverness).
- It was originally planned that the five remaining Highland jobcentres would go live on UC Full Service in November of this year. Instead of this, the November 2016 sites will now be Port Glasgow, Greenock and Kirkintilloch.
- Following that, the next sites in Scotland to go live with Full Service will be Dalkeith and Penicuik in March 2017.
- Roll out beyond March 2017 is not yet known. DWP have committed to publishing this in the autumn to inform discussions with Local Authorities about their funding for 17/18.



Housing/UC Consultation

- **Discretionary Housing Payments (p.76)**
 - SG will take responsibility from April 2017
 - Proposing these continue to work in broadly the same way for 17/18, views on improvements that could be made
- **Universal Credit – admin flexibilities (p.79)**
 - Already planning more frequent payments and payments direct to social landlords
 - Views on split payments and payments direct to private landlords
- **Universal Credit – housing element (p.82)**
 - Already planning bedroom tax mitigation
 - Views on other ways we could use this power



Housing & Social Security Group

- Previously called Housing Benefit Reform Stakeholder Advisory Group
- Updated role + remit to include new social security powers
- Attended by representatives from housing, local govt. and the third sector
- Use to inform approach to social security



Scottish Government Contact Details

- **Consultation:**

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Scottish Government Contact Details

- Keep up to date on what is happening with the Scottish Government's Social Security newsletter:

<http://register.scotland.gov.uk/Subscribe/Step1>

