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17 February 2026

Dear Mr Pybus,

I am writing to provide you with a revision to recommendation 8 of the Scottish Government's response on 21 January 2026 to the SCoSS recommendations.

The SCoSS recommendation number 8 included that we should seek to disregard the Care Leaver Payment (CLP) from the Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) guidance manual. In our response we made a technical error which has subsequently been clarified by the policy leads for DHPs in Scottish Government.

DHPs provide financial assistance to a qualifying individual to meet, or help towards meeting, an individual's housing costs. DHPs for mitigation of the bedroom tax and benefit cap are to be paid by a local authority (LA) when they are satisfied that an individual has been affected by these reductions. After applying bedroom tax and benefit cap mitigation, LAs may award DHPs to eligible individuals at their discretion, ensuring that every application is assessed on its individual merits. As CLP is disregarded as income and capital for the purposes of Universal Credit it will be disregarded for the purposes of assessing means-tested reserved benefits. It may, however, be considered by LAs under the discretionary element of DHP funding.

The Scottish Government recognises that care leavers face unique challenges and are disproportionately at risk of homelessness. Following discussions internally it was made clear that the Scottish DHP guidance manual already explicitly identifies young people leaving LA care as a group to consider prioritising, with a clear emphasis on homelessness prevention. Considering each application on its own merit allows LAs to ensure that DHPs are paid to those most in need.

We believe the current guidance strikes the right balance between providing LAs with the discretion needed to respond to the most urgent local needs, while highlighting the

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importance of prioritising groups most vulnerable to homelessness, poverty and financial hardship. On this basis, we consider the guidance manual to be sufficient in its present form.

I would be grateful if you could note this letter of correction to recommendation 8 and share this with the board.

Yours sincerely,



Natalie Don-Innes MSP
Minister for Children, Young People and The Promise

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