

## **PRESS RELEASE**

**2 November 2016**

*For immediate release*

### **Be 'bold and innovative' Scottish Government urged to use new powers to lift children and young people out of poverty**

Children in Scotland has called on the Scottish Government to be 'bold and innovative' in its approach to supporting families who are currently marginalised and disenfranchised as a result of the poverty that they experience.

The calls were put forward in Children in Scotland's response to the consultation on social security in Scotland, seeking views on how the Scottish Government should implement welfare powers devolved to the Scottish Parliament as a result of the Smith Commission.

Specifically, Children in Scotland has joined the Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland (CYPCS), the Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG), Parenting Across Scotland and Common Weal in recommending that the Scottish Government utilises its ability to 'top-up' existing benefits by increasing the rate of Child Benefit by £5 per week — a move which could reduce rates of child poverty by 14%, according to independent analysis conducted by CPAG.

Welcoming the fact that the Scottish Parliament will have the power to implement initiatives such as the Best Start Grant, Carer's Allowance and the Job Grant, Children in Scotland has further challenged the Scottish Government to do what it can to ensure that eligibility requirements are as broad as possible so that young people in Scotland may benefit from the changes.

Jackie Brock, Chief Executive of Children in Scotland, said: "I welcome the fact that new powers over social security are about to be delivered to the Scottish Parliament and I sincerely hope that the Scottish Government seize this opportunity to design and deliver a system of welfare that is more responsive to the needs of children, young people and families, and succeeds in targeting support where it is needed most.

“I am pleased that the conversation is now underway on how we go about embedding greater dignity and respect into a system that is often felt to work against people, rather than for them.

“The Scottish Government must be bold in its actions and innovative in its approach if the powers that are about to be delivered are to be used to the benefit of those who need it most.”

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**Children in Scotland Media Contact:**

Nicola Pay

Tel: 0131 313 8849/ email: npay@childreninscotland.org.uk

Lynn Gilmour

Tel: 0131 313 8830/ email: lgilmour@childreninscotland.org.uk

**NOTES TO EDITORS**

- **Children in Scotland** is the collective voice for children, young people and families in Scotland; and for organisations and businesses that have a significant impact on children’s lives in Scotland. We are an influencing and membership organisation, comprised of more than 500 representatives from the voluntary, public and private sectors. [www.childreninscotland.org.uk](http://www.childreninscotland.org.uk)
- Read the full consultation *A New Future for Social Security Consultation on Social Security in Scotland* here.
- **The Smith Commission** was charged with taking forward the devolution commitments on further powers for the Scottish parliament. Read The Smith Commission’s full report here.
- Children in Scotland’s annual conference *Wellbeing and the world of the child: inspirational thinking for changing lives* takes place today (Wednesday 2 November) and tomorrow in Cumbernauld.