

Scottish Rural Action Response 12/02/2019

Questions on Policy Proposals

1 Are the eligibility criteria for the Job Grant clear?

Yes

2 We have proposed applications for Job Grant can be made 14 days in advance of the employment start date and up to 14 days after employment has commenced. Do you think that the proposed application period for Job Grant is suitable?

No

3 If no to question 2, please provide comments.

Comments:: This depends on how the grant is claimed. It may be difficult to claim the grant if a young person starts work immediately, and has to go into the Job Centre to make the claim. Accessing places like Job Centres can be particularly challenging if you are in a rural area. The travel time required to access an appointment may not allow for a young person to participate in work and attend an appointment at a Job Centre. A longer period of time for in-employment claims would allow some additional flexibility here.

4 We have proposed that Job Grant consists of one payment of £250, or £400 for young people with children. Do you agree with the proposed format of the payment?

No

5 If no to question 4, please provide comments.

Comments: : We are in general agreement here and appreciate the change made from bus pass to travel cost grant, as this allows more transport choice for young people which is particularly important in rural areas. However, we do think that those young people facing longer journeys may require some additional support here, and we therefore ask that consideration be given to an increase in the grant for young people living in remote rural areas who are more likely to pay more for travel and more likely to require car ownership to access employment.

6 Do you agree that the proposals for Job Grant set out in this consultation paper meet the policy intent to support a smooth transition into employment for young people on low incomes by helping to meet the initial costs of starting work?

Yes

7 If no to question 6, please provide details.

Comments::

8 Can you identify any potential unintended consequences which we have not considered in these proposals?

No

9 If yes to question 8, please provide details.

Comments: :

Impact Assessments

10 Are you aware of any impacts on groups who share protected characteristics we have not identified here?

No

11 If yes to question 10, please provide details.

Comments::

12 Are you aware of any impacts on children's rights and wellbeing which are not identified here?

No

13 If yes to question 12, please provide details.

Comments::

14 Are you aware of any impacts on businesses which are not identified here?

No

15 If yes to question 15, please provide details.

Comments::

16 Are you aware of any impacts on island communities which are not identified here?

Yes

17 If yes to question 16, please provide details.

Comments.: It can be more challenging and expensive for young people in island and rural communities to access employment due to exacerbated travel costs. An additional allowance here would be helpful.

It can be more challenging and expensive for young people in island and rural communities to attend Job Centres, and we have two concerns in regards to this: 1. young people in island and rural communities may be less likely to be registered as unemployed due to this difficulty, and therefore may be less likely to be eligible for the grant; 2. and they may find it harder to attend an appointment (even online given connectivity issues) to make their claim for the job grant, if that is how it will be administered.