



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Finance and Public Administration Committee

Shona Robison MSP
Deputy First Minister and
Cabinet Secretary for Finance
Scottish Government

By email

All correspondence c/o:

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28 June 2023

Dear Shona

Thank you for your letter of 23 June 2023 in which you provide additional information requested by Committee members at the evidence session on 13 June and you also offer an early view on a potential date of 14 December 2023 for publication of the 2024-25 Scottish Budget. We welcome your efforts to engage with the Committee on this matter at an early stage.

The Committee is keen that, in agreeing a date for publication, we ensure proper time to complete important forecast analysis and develop and take informed decisions on budget proposals, while protecting time to achieve effective and meaningful parliamentary scrutiny of the Scottish Budget 2024-25 document. I am confident that a balance can be struck to deliver the requirements of Government, Parliament and the Scottish Fiscal Commission. The Committee's view is that this can best be achieved with a publication date of 7 December 2023. This would also enable parliamentary committees to scrutinise the refreshed multi-spending envelopes for both capital and resource to be published alongside the Scottish Budget 2024-25, as well as the outcomes of the Scottish Government's engagement with its recently formed external tax stakeholder group, which according to the Medium-Term Financial Strategy are to feed into the Budget document.

Specific to the Finance and Public Administration Committee, you will be aware that the Scottish Government has committed to respond to the Committee's report on the Financial Memorandum (FM) for the National Care Service (Scotland) Bill of 1 December 2022 and provide an updated FM four weeks before the extended Stage 1 deadline at the end of January 2024. The Minister for Social Care, Mental Wellbeing and Sport indicated in her most recent letter to the Committee of 16 June 2023, this is an "extremely complex and important Bill". The Committee shares this view and therefore wishes to ensure it has sufficient time to effectively scrutinise the updated costs, which will appear at approximately the same time as the Budget on current timings.

The Committee looks forward to hearing from you regarding this proposal. In the meantime, we would be happy for the Clerks to the Committee to continue their ongoing dialogue with your officials.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kenneth J Gibson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'K'.

Kenneth Gibson MSP
Convener
Finance and Public Administration Committee