



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

**Finance and Public
Administration
Committee**



Senedd Cymru
Welsh Parliament

Y Pwyllgor Cyllid

—
Finance Committee



**Northern Ireland
Assembly**

Rt. Hon Rachel Reeves,
Chancellor of the Exchequer

Copy to: Treasury Committee; Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs
Committee; Northern Ireland Affairs Committee

24 September 2024

Dear Chancellor

Interparliamentary Finance Committee Forum

The Interparliamentary Finance Committee Forum (IFCF), which comprises the Finance Committees of the devolved nations, looks forward to working with you in your new role as Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The IFCF was established in June 2022 by the Scottish Parliament's Finance and Public Administration Committee and the Welsh Parliament's Finance Committee, with the Northern Ireland Assembly's Finance Committee later joining following the recent Stormont elections. The Forum was established to provide a collective voice for the Finance Committees in the devolved legislatures to raise issues of common interest and concern with the devolved governments and the UK Government. The IFCF also provides opportunities for information-sharing, to hear from relevant Ministers, and to consider common challenges.

We wrote to your predecessor in March 2024 expressing our disappointment about the apparent blanket approach of the then Treasury Ministers and officials to refuse invitations to speak with our respective Committee meetings, as well as our last IFCF meeting held in London in March 2024.

We note the Prime Minister's ambition to "forge new co-operation with politicians from across different political parties" and we hope that this marks a return to the constructive approach of Treasury Ministers of earlier UK Governments. As you know, effective budgeting is essential in the context of the shared fiscal pressures faced by the UK Government and the devolved administrations. Further devolution and the sharing of powers in recent years has also led to budgetary decisions in the UK and the devolved nations becoming more closely linked. Discussion of these matters with HM Treasury is therefore very important to our Committees' roles in holding our respective devolved governments to account for their taxation and spending decisions.

The Forum very much welcomes your intention for spending reviews to “take place every two years, with a minimum planning horizon of three years, to avoid uncertainty for departments and to bring stability to the public finances.” We also seek your support in providing greater certainty to the devolved governments and Parliaments regarding the timing of major fiscal events each year as well as the earlier sharing of information. This is particularly in relation to final supplementary estimates which can substantially impact on the in-year budget plans when there is less flexibility for devolved governments to respond to significant budgetary changes.

The IFCF is keen to reopen dialogue with HM Treasury on these issues and remains ready to welcome you and your Ministerial finance colleagues to the Scottish Parliament, the Senedd and the Northern Ireland Assembly for discussions and formal scrutiny of budgetary issues. We would be very keen to welcome you to the IFCF to explore common areas of interest across the UK.

We therefore invite you to update us on how you would wish to engage with the Finance Committees in the devolved Parliaments.

Yours sincerely,

Kenneth Gibson
Convener
Finance and Public
Administration
Committee
The Scottish Parliament

Peredur Owen Griffiths
Chair
Finance Committee
Senedd Cymru

Mr Matthew O'Toole
Chairperson
Committee for Finance
Northern Ireland
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