



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Education Children and Young People Committee

Edward Mountain MSP
Convener of the Net Zero, Energy, and
Transport Committee

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The Scottish Parliament
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By email only—

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7 September 2023

Dear Edward,

I am writing further to your letter of 3 July 2023 regarding the draft Climate Change Plan 2024-2040.

The Education, Children, and Young People Committee's work programme is currently full and does not leave any scope for CCP scrutiny.

However, the Education, Children, and Young People Committee is alive to the net zero and sustainability challenges that the education sector faces, including in the delivery of services to children and young people. These challenges are an ongoing part of our scrutiny and have been touched upon as part of our [scrutiny of universities and colleges' funding for 2023-24](#) on Wednesday 17 May 2023 and our inquiry into college regionalisation on [5 October 2022](#) and on [2 November 2022](#).

The Committee's [report on college regionalisation](#) particularly emphasised concerns regarding the ability of colleges to meet their net-zero climate emissions targets. This is compounded by several factors, including:

- Infrastructure issues: One-third of the college estate was found to be neither wind- nor water-tight in 2017 according to an estate survey;

- Funding issues: The annual funding allocated to maintenance in 2018-19 (c. £30m) was short of the level of funding required (£321m) for colleges to reach their target according to the same survey.

The Committee's recommendations were that:

- SFC should develop and implement its infrastructure investment at pace;
- The Scottish Government must remedy outstanding maintenance issues by exploring how the requisite resources can be provided to colleges to help them reach their net-zero targets.

We will seek every opportunity to scrutinise progress on the climate change agenda as part of our work where relevant and whenever possible. We will also update you as and when further issues relating to sustainability and net zero arise in our inquiries to feed into the work that you are doing.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sue Webber', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Sue Webber MSP

Convener