



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Cabinet Secretary for Environment,
Climate Change and Land Reform
Roseanna Cunningham MSP

c/o Clerk to the Committee
Room T3.40
The Scottish Parliament
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By email only

(RNID Typetalk calls welcome)

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24 July 2019

Dear Roseanna,

Preventative spending and the Scottish Budget

In its budget scrutiny last year, the Committee agreed to focus part of its scrutiny on preventative spend within the Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform portfolio. It sought to explore the opportunities to achieve wider benefits from environmental spend and the opportunities and challenges arising from preventative spend.

Background

In its letter to you on 10 October, the Committee raised its concerns about the decline in the budget in several areas and the impact of this on delivering key environmental, economic and health outcomes. In your response (December 2018), you agreed that “There is significant evidence highlighting that environment and health-based interventions are cost effective and can also contribute significantly to preventative spend.”

The Committee took evidence on 15 January 2018 from both you and the Cabinet Secretary for Finance, Economy and Fair Work—

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=11884>

And then on 7 May 2019 from three panels (Revenue Scotland, Office of the Chief Economic Adviser, Scottish Government (Wellbeing Economy) and Infrastructure Commission for Scotland)—

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=12086>

On 4 June 2019, the Committee held a roundtable discussion with environmental organisations and academics on tax powers and charging—

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=12170>

Climate Change Plan

Additionally, the Committee has already commented that monitoring whether the budget sufficiently funds Climate Change Plans (CCP) policies is challenging. The Committee is grateful that the Scottish Government agreed with its recommendation that the CCP monitoring reports be published in May, ahead of the next budget scrutiny period.

Next steps

After the summer recess, the Committee will consider its draft pre-budget report in which it will set out its views on the delivery, impact and funding of existing policy priorities.

The Committee wishes—

to seek an update from the Scottish Government on the work it is doing currently that links preventative spending within the ECCLR portfolio (for example, in the area of biodiversity) to economic and health benefits;

to ask how it intends to action the results;

and to understand how future spending will be directed to preventative action and how this will impact national outcomes and indicators.

We would welcome a response from you by 22 July 2019.

Yours sincerely,



Gillian Martin MSP
Convener
Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee