



Introduction

The Scottish Women's Budget Group has been an authoritative voice on gender and equality analysis in budgetary processes for over ten years. SWBG was instrumental in the formation of the Equality and Budgets Advisory Group (EBAG) within the Scottish Government, and have consistently provided evidence to various committees of the Scottish Parliament and other bodies. SWBG members are also members of the European Gender Budgeting Network and the UK Women's Budget Group, in addition to national and international academic profiles and consultancy.

SWBG members are drawn from across Scottish public, civic and political life, with expertise and perspectives from academia, local government, public authorities, civil society organisations including gender-based violence, health, poverty, remote and rural equality, age equality, and access to justice.

As a trusted source of information and analysis, SWBG have been an effective champion of gender equality analysis in the Scottish national budgetary process, and in influencing the development of equality analysis in policy formulation and resource allocation processes. Since 2000, SWBG has consistently pressed for robust equality analysis of policy options and proposals, and evidence of follow-through analysis in the decision-making processes on resource allocation.

SWBG acknowledge and welcome the positive progress achieved by the Scottish Government, and in particular the work of EBAG, the commitment of the Cabinet Secretary for Finance, Employment and Sustainable Growth, and officials within the Scottish Government. There has been significant progress in the development of the Equality Statement attached to the Draft Budget, now in its third iteration. This important work demonstrates ongoing political commitment to improve equality analysis in the budgetary process.

This response to the 2012-13 Draft Budget and 2011 Spending Review from SWBG highlights specific areas of concern, both in the overarching frameworks of Scottish Government policy and direction, and in particular policy and delivery areas.

SWBG welcomes the Equality Statement attached to the Draft Budget 2012 and the Spending Review 2012-13, and commends the Scottish Government for the evident progress as this work develops. There is evidence of improved understanding of equality analysis in the budget process, and greater engagement across departments and portfolio managers. As acknowledged by EBAG, this is work in progress and to which the Scottish Government is committed. SWBG will continue to press for specific actions within the Scottish Government, building on improvements in data collection and specifically the development of process indicators and targets for spending departments which will underpin the ongoing development and embedding of effective equality analysis.

SWBG are acutely aware of the current economic climate and challenges for government and for public spending. Furthermore, SWBG seeks to draw attention to the considerable evidence generated by various sources in Scotland and across the UK on the impact of both the scale and nature of public spending cuts on women as workers, as service users, as mothers and carers. It is with this background perspective that SWBG members comment upon and challenge proposals in the Draft Budget, Spending Review, and the Government Economic Strategy.

2. Key Areas of Challenge and Concern

A core contention from SWBG, and increasingly other voices across Scottish civil society, is that equality is both a key driver of economic growth as well as an outcome of improved economic performance and redistribution. SWBG welcome the increased concern to achieve greater equality stated in the recent 'refresh' of the Scottish Government Economic Strategy, but consider that there must be an improved understanding, and clearer articulation of how concerns for greater equality will inform and shape Scottish Government policy in the short and longer term.

Specifically, SWBG have a series of questions and challenges relating to the focus on capital investment; affordable finance and enhanced economic confidence as set out in the Scottish Government's plan for economic recovery. SWBG would argue that the proposed action in these three priority areas is informed by a particular way of thinking that represents a limited understanding of the contributing factors to economic growth. The focus on capital investment and affordable finance, in particular, fails to account for economic activity within the household and the impact that reduced resources, both at a micro and macro level have on the resilience of households and wider communities.

Furthermore, SWBG question the underlying assumptions and economic models informing the strategy for sustainable growth. For example, the

Government Economic Strategy places an appropriate emphasis on job creation as a stimulus to economic growth. However, this strategy is undermined by an absence of gender analysis of labour market dynamics and population. This lack of gender awareness is further reflected in the limited discussion within the Equality Statement around occupational segregation, in itself a key feature of women's disadvantaged position within the labour market. Whilst recognising the analysis undertaken to date by the Equality Unit and ASD, SWBG continue to argue for improved data and improved analysis, specifically within portfolios.

SWBG welcome the Scottish Government's framing of public spending within the priority on *preventative spend*. We have previously highlighted¹ the importance of ensuring prevention of gender-based violence, gender-based segregation in education, skills and employment opportunities which are detrimental to individuals' health and wellbeing, attainment and national economic performance. For the Scottish Government's approach to prioritise prevention of disadvantage in early years, or to redress the persistent inequalities in health that currently define Scotland, it is imperative that all policy proposals, across all portfolios given their inter-related and inter-dependent character, are fully informed by effective gender-sensitive data and analysis.

SWBG is concerned with how the Draft Budget, Government Economic Strategy, and Equality Statement approach and address the concerns raised above, and the extent to which the Budget process and surrounding policy processes include equality analysis, and meet the public duties on gender and equality analysis.

SWBG recognise the significant improvement in the treatment of equality concerns in the Government Economic Strategy refresh and welcome the willingness within the Scottish Government to improve and develop understanding across portfolios. However, the limited coverage and consideration of equality in the Economic Recovery Plan is of concern and the framing of 'equity' interests in the GES demonstrates a very narrow and limiting understanding of the structural causes of inequality and discrimination.

The following comments on specific policy areas are raised by SWBG in the context of seeking to support ongoing work to improve the understanding of the explicit relationship between equality considerations and economic performance. However, the Draft Budget, Spending Review and the Government Economic Strategy are the key policy statements reflecting the

¹ See SWBG response to Finance Committee Inquiry into Preventative Spend, 2 September 2011

Governments position with respect to resource allocation, investment and distribution. Subsequently those documents should also reflect a comprehensive and clearly set out approach to the integration of equality considerations into mainstream economic policy and processes.

Reform and reconfiguration of public services

The Equality Budget statement sets out that 'the programme of reform will draw on the best evidence available and continue to be informed by independent expert analysis and advice'. We welcome this approach, and hope that this will include working with and considering the views set out by the Scottish Women's Budget Group in relation to improving gender equality

- **Partnership Working** - There is a greater emphasis on partnership working in the delivery of services. Experience proves that partnership activity can be somewhat lacking in rigour in areas such as gender equality and meeting the public sector equalities duties. With the increase in partnership working in the delivery of services, following proposals from the Christie Commission and the Draft Budget, SWBG seeks assurances from the Scottish Government that the statutory requirements in relation to the Equality Act 2010, and specifically on gender equality are key to decisions taken in partnership working.
- **Community Empowerment** - SWBG welcomes the move to greater community empowerment within the reform and reconfiguration of public services. SWBG recommend that SG consider the views of women, those working around gender issues, as well as those in receipt of services. This will ensure that it is not just those with the loudest voices and those who are empowered that are heard and whose views may be disproportionate.
- SWBG welcomes the Scottish Governments proposals to improve performance, openness and transparency in the reform of public services. In order for these developments to be successful, it is imperative they are underpinned by effective gender analysis of performance and the impact of specific measures on women, and how these have contributed to greater equality for women etc.

Council Tax

SWBG are concerned that at a time when funding for public sector services is being reduced that the Scottish Government is continuing to freeze the value

of Council Tax without analysis or public debate on the impact of this policy. Additionally, SWBG have highlighted concerns that the public sector pay freeze will likely cancel out any benefit to households from the Council Tax freeze. Furthermore, recent data from the Scottish Government highlights again the rise in number of households in Scotland headed by single mothers many of whom will be affected by pay freeze and job losses in the public sector, and job losses in the private sector.

Welfare Reform and Housing

The Scottish Government's Equality Statement acknowledges that the UK government's plans for housing and other welfare benefits reform will hit poorer and more disadvantaged groups most and that these changes threaten to deepen established inequalities. In particular, the statement highlights that single mothers are set to be disproportionately and negatively affected and that "unless mitigating action is taken, there may be significant and disproportionate negative impacts for some equality groups which may exacerbate existing inequalities" (p15).

Women and disabled people are the key groups who stand to suffer financial losses. In the example of housing benefit changes, an important change is the plan to reduce the amount of housing benefit payable to working age social sector tenants considered to be under-occupying their homes. Key issues include²:

- individuals who stand to lose in the region of £9 to £16 or more from their housing benefit from April 2013
- 95,400 households – more than a third - are under-occupying their homes while 26,000 households are overcrowded (5% of all tenants)
- UK wide, the DWP estimates that more than half those affected are women (52%) and the remainder are either male tenants or couples. More than half are aged 45 to state pension age, reflecting the greater likelihood of under-occupation because grown-up children have left home³

The UK government believes people have a choice to move or to meet the additional cost from their income. However, the Scottish Government's

² Scottish Government (2011) Modelling Impact of Benefit Changes on those of Working Age Under Occupying a Socially Rented Property. Available at: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Built-Environment/Housing/supply-demand/chma/Benefitchangesunderoccu>

³ DWP (2011) Housing Benefit: size criteria for people renting in the social rented sector Equality Impact Assessment
<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/eia-social-sector-housing-under-occupation-wr2011.pdf>

analysis of under- and over-occupancy makes it clear that there is “no feasible way for the majority of those under occupying social housing to find social housing of the right size”.⁴ The knock-on consequences for homelessness are also highlighted and estimates suggest that if 5% of those affected become homeless this would lead to an increase of 4,700 homeless assessments from the sector.

Given the scale of the impact of this change, combined with other housing benefit changes, it is disappointing to note that the Budget Equality Statement does not engage with these issues or their consequences in relation to housing and Regeneration spending plans, nor does it recognise or address the significant negative effects of these changes for women. Funding for Housing Option Hubs (Equality Statement, p 72) are unlikely to address the scale of the mismatch identified above. The scale of the consequences of these and other changes, not just for Scottish Government targets (which are acknowledged), but for poor and disadvantaged individuals across Scotland, particularly women, needs to be reflected in mainstream policy and spending decisions on housing (including building new homes), homelessness and housing benefits. Does the government need to work with a different definition of ‘affordable housing’? What changes to house building are needed to reflect the different profile of demand that will emerge? These are major changes that would need to be considered and addressed within the spending review period, but it is not clear from documentation that they are being tackled or even considered.

Further reductions in tax credit announced by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the autumn statement on the 30th of November will be offset in Scotland by £42 million for capital expenditure. It is widely recognised that tax and benefit changes as well as projected job losses in the public sector will adversely affect women more than men. These unequal effects in current income and expenditure need to be counterbalanced.

The UK Women's Budget Group have published analysis and commentary on the UK Government's Autumn Statement, in addition to specific measures within welfare reform⁵.

Capital Investment and Infrastructure

SWBG appreciate that the Scottish Government priority is to promote economic recovery and infrastructure projects are considered an essential contributor to productivity and economic growth. In this context a range of key

⁴ See note 1

⁵ <http://www.wbg.org.uk/index.htm>

infrastructure projects have been proposed alongside a number of innovative financing mechanisms to enable the capital programme to be delivered. However some of these mechanisms are based on borrowing on the basis of predicted future revenue streams. The government is also encouraging local government to borrow for capital projects. SWBG are concerned that this represents an undesirable risk that serves to threaten public sector services in a future time period given the volatility of financial markets combined with the need to provide for debt payments.

By the Scottish Government's own estimates, it is expected that public sector finance will not return to the recent levels until at least 2025-26 and therefore there is a need to ensure that capital projects are affordable both in terms of capital funds but also in relation to future revenue streams. There is obvious opportunity costs associated with borrowing on the basis of future revenue and it is crucial that those calculations account for the very significant social costs resulting from a squeeze on essential public services in the future. The government should ensure that the need for and probable return on capital assets is soundly based on the current and medium term economic outlook and that cost/benefit analysis take account of relative community needs and returns to ensure that funds support the economic and social activity of both men and women equally.

Job Creation and Gendered Labour Market Dynamics

SWBG argue that while it is clearly important to stimulate job creation and growth in employment, it is imperative that the gendered effects of occupational segregation, gender stereotyping and the persistence of unpaid labour and caring roles performed mainly by women are simultaneously addressed. This section raises some concerns on the implications of proposals in the relevant documentation outlining both spending proposals and the economic strategy. In respect of this particular set of concerns, the lack of detailed analysis within the relevant high level policy documentation is extremely disappointing given the sustained and consistent efforts of EBAG, the Equality Unity and ASD, feedback from Close the Gap – funded by the Scottish Government – and the now disbanded Occupational Segregation Working Group.

Job Creation

The Scottish Government is placing considerable emphasis on the importance of job creation and the emphasis on capital spending projects to preserve and stimulate employment. SWBG contend that there is a clearly gendered dimension to these proposals as the jobs created from such expenditure will mainly benefit male workers. SWBG are not opposed to major infrastructural

projects, but would like to see less of an exclusive concentration on big projects and more consideration given to a broader range of projects that support a more diverse population.

SWBG have also raised concerns on the extent to which any increase in capital investment is to be funded, at least partially, by the ceilings and moratoria placed on public sector spending, specifically spend on wages. These concerns prompted the previous Equal Opportunities Committee of the Scottish Parliament to commission SPICE to investigate the effectiveness of the analytical tools used by the Scottish Government to assess these impacts on women and the knock-on effect on local and national economies as women's incomes are reduced, affecting their propensity to spend⁶. In addition to yielding very useful information, this exercise was a demonstration in effective collaboration across different elements and functions of government, including both the legislature and the executive, and points to positive ways of working on equality analysis in the budgetary process in the future.

Furthermore, the proposed capital expenditure is to be supported by a transfer from revenue funds. Revenue funding for public sector services is already being cut and as a result public sector jobs are being lost, around 80% of which are women's jobs. In addition the revenue funding that is being transferred could support front line services that provide greater support to women.

As SWBG has previously emphasised, there must be greater synergy across government priorities involving key sectors relating to employment, job creation, environmental and renewable policies, all of which have implications for job opportunities for women and men. Furthermore, this area of investment must tie-in with evidence and analysis of the experience of women in science, technology and engineering subjects. Women remain underrepresented in these essential occupations despite their increasing academic success in the relevant academic disciplines, indicating the persistence of significant barriers into these jobs for suitably qualified women.

Where local jobs are created through the use of community/social benefit contract clauses the government should ensure that the jobs created are not gendered and that there are equal employment opportunities for men and women. For example, there could be significant allocation from the £42 million capital expenditure programme to a programme of insulating the housing stock "energy efficient homes".

⁶ Financial Scrutiny Unit Briefing, *Impact of Scottish Government Pay Freeze*, Hudson and Wakefield (2011)
<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefingsAndFactsheets/S4/SB11-65.pdf>

Lack of recognition of unpaid labour

Most policy attention in relation to women and men's labour is focused on time and type of activity pursued within the labour market. Little, if any, attention is paid to the time and effort involved in managing and delivering the various caring and domestic tasks that are unpaid but play a vital role in the UK/Scottish economy.

A recent special issue of *Feminist Economics* (October 2011) on unpaid work, time use, poverty and public policy draws together a number of critical points that encourage a fuller and more accurate picture economic life in Scotland. Notably:

- Time use data shows that women and men are not equally participating in caring activities [more on this later].
- Women's role in delivering unpaid care is at the core of continuing gender inequality.
- Time spent on unpaid care is affected by the organisation of the welfare system (including high quality affordable childcare available at appropriate times and locations to support parents effectively) as well as household structure and household income.
- Gender aware policy can only occur where unpaid work is recognised and valued, not just by putting a numeric value on this work for accounting purposes, but also recognising the valuable and vital contribution that is made to the economy and society more generally by the range of unpaid work taking place.

International analysis of time use data (Kan et al, 2011), that includes data analysis for the UK, but not specifically Scotland highlights that:

- Women continue to do far more unpaid work than men across all countries involved in this analysis.
- The gap between women and men's time contribution to unpaid work is narrowing, but in the UK remains wide – men spending on average 148 minutes per day on domestic work compared with 280 minutes by women.
- While the gap has narrowed dramatically over the last 40-50 years, the change is slowing down. This is said to be a result of a combination of interactional and institutional barriers limiting further progress.
- Interactional barriers relate to continuing inequalities in the types of domestic labour women and men participate in – with women continuing to do more of the routine housework and child care and men DIY and shopping. Continued gendering of particular tasks creates barriers to significant change in the roles that women and men play in the domestic sphere.

- Institutional barriers are associated with the provision of state welfare, employment policies and overarching gender ideology. The affects of provision of services and the structure of employment are important in limiting of facilitating change in the delivery of paid and unpaid labour, including child and family care. The dominance of a 'male breadwinner' ideology plays some part in maintaining a position where women take on principle role as carer combined with part-time employment while men are expected to financially provide for the family through extended engagement with the labour market.

Childcare

Demand for provision of flexible, available, and affordable childcare is not diminishing as a necessity for working – and non-working parents – and nor is it less essential at a time of economic recession or pressures on public services and spending. Childcare is often overlooked in employment and economic growth policies, based largely on the assumption that women – either as parents, grandparents or other carers will serve as unpaid labour, (Crompton and Lyonette, <http://www.genet.ac.uk/workpapers/GeNet2008p34.pdf>.)

Additionally in the context of job searching and accessing paid employment, access to childcare provision is a considerable problem for many women – and men – and particularly for refugee and asylum seeking women⁷.

Modern Apprenticeships

SWBG have repeatedly commented on the enduring issues and concerns that are deeply embedded in the structure and outcomes of the Modern Apprenticeship scheme in Scotland. In numerous responses, in evidence to Committees, cross-party groups, and government advisory bodies, SWBG has consistently raised concerns over the systemic failure to integrate awareness and understanding of the gendered nature of Modern Apprenticeships and the differential and disadvantageous outcomes for women from this multi-million pound investment scheme. Numerous research reports, including the Scottish Government's own Working Group on Occupational Segregation, have highlighted the disproportionate spend and outcomes for women. Recent press commentary (see Lesley Riddoch, *The Scotsman*, 12 December 2011⁸) have also highlighted the ongoing disparities.

⁷ Refugee Women's Strategy Group, "*The Struggle to Contribute*", Scottish Refugee Council, November 2011

⁸ http://www.scotsman.com/lifestyle/arts-blog/lesley_riddoch_gender_blinkers_are_stifling_scotland_1_2004234

Regardless however of this weight of evidence, the Equality Statement makes limited reference to this persistent issue nor to the need for significant improvement and visibility of equality analysis processes within this substantial area of government spend. SWBG understand the Cabinet Secretary is committed to improving understanding of this enduring discrimination and its negative effect on skills development and economic participation. SWBG welcome the proposed developments and look forward to the work of EBAG and appropriate partners within the budget period under review.

Successive Scottish administrations have made commitments to increasing the numbers of available modern apprenticeships, and there is political consensus around its importance to Scotland's economic performance. The 2010 refresh of *Skills for Scotland* includes a clear commitment to the Modern Apprenticeship programme.

“This strategy establishes high-level targets for the National Training Programmes in 2010-11. Individually these targets are for 15,000 Modern Apprenticeship starts, 14,500 training places to support the unemployed and 5,000 new flexible training opportunities to meet the needs of businesses. On top of these targets new European Social Funding provision has been secured for an additional 5,000 all-age Modern Apprenticeships, and 800 targeted pathway places for 16 and 17 year olds, taking the total allocation to over 40,000 training places in 2010-11”.⁹

The draft budget commits further resources to the Modern Apprenticeship programme, and support for a 'record level of Modern Apprenticeship places'.¹⁰

Gendered segregation within the modern apprenticeship programme is acute, and persistent, and this has been of significant concern to agencies working around occupational segregation and the gender pay gap.

TABLE 1. Participation in selected MA Frameworks: Scottish Enterprise/ Lowlands and Uplands areas*

	1999	1999		2004	2004		2009	2009	
Sector	All	Female		All	Female		All	Female	
		No.	%		No.	%		No.	%
Plumbing	414	2	0.5	1238	4	0.4	1586	25	1.6
Construction	2156	25	1.2	5848	41	0.7	6443	82	1.3

⁹ Scottish Government (October 2010) *Skills for Scotland: Accelerating the Recovery and Increasing Sustainable Economic Growth* Edinburgh: Scottish Government

¹⁰ Scottish Government (2011) *Equality Statement: Scottish Spending Review 2011 and Draft Budget 2012-13* Scottish Government: Edinburgh p.10

Engineering	1324	25	1.9	2084	50	2.4	3324	62	1.9
Childcare	20	19	95.0	980	965	98.5	915	904	98.8

Sources: Campbell et al (2009); Skills Development Scotland:
<http://www.scottish-enterprise.com/se/sds/sds-training-providers/sds-statistics.htm>

The 2005 general formal investigation by the Equal Opportunities Commission into gendered occupational segregation within the programme made a number of recommendations for action to mitigate the long-term effects of the clustering of men and women into different frameworks. The Scottish Government responded with the establishment of the cross-directorate working group on occupational segregation, which also included representatives from the Equal Opportunities Commission and Close the Gap. This group produced no recommendations for changes in delivery of the Modern Apprenticeship programme.

Skills Development Scotland undertook an equality impact assessment of national training programmes in 2010. This was done with the aim of 'understand[ing] and remov[ing] barriers to participation by underrepresented groups.'¹¹ The preamble to the EQIA goes on to say that, 'The data also shows the programmes are characterised by gender segregation, mirroring the gender segregation of the wider labour market.' Although the EQIA's contents provide evidence of a wide-ranging literature review, providing a broad evidence base, the links between the research on occupational segregation, the specific barriers that persist in the operation of the programme, and the actions that might mitigate this segregation, are weak, as evidenced in the language used to describe the actions proposed, such as 'exploring', 'identifying' and 'embedding good practice.' Along with many other EQIAs, the action plan is not outcome-focused, and it is not clear what the indicators of successful delivery will be.

The current Equality Statement on the Draft Budget does not provide further illumination on either the allocation of resources to a programme that entrenches occupational segregation, or to the considerable decline in the number and proportion of women participating in modern apprenticeships at all (Table 2).

Table 2. MA Programme Participation by gender 1999-2009, Scottish Enterprise/ Lowlands and Uplands (Scotland excluding Highlands & Islands)

Year	All	Female	Male
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¹¹ Skills Development Scotland (2010) *National Training Programmes: Equality Impact Assessment & Action Plan* Skills Development Scotland: Glasgow

	No.	No.	%	No.	%
1999	10 525	1,356	12.9	9,169	87.1
2004	28,149	9,962	35.4	18,187	64.6
2005	30,664	10,675	34.8	19,989	65.2
2006	30,614	8,689	28.4	21,925	71.6
2007	28,864	7,876	27.3	20,988	72.7
2008	27,520	6,118	22.2	21,402	77.8
2009	23,795	3,963	16.7	19,832	83.3

Source: Campbell et al (2009) and Skills Development Scotland:
<http://www.scottish-enterprise.com/se/sds/sds-training-providers/sds-statistics.htm>

The Equality Statement states that “In this context we recognise the diversity of young people and will be interested to see what investment in measures such as Modern Apprenticeships can offer to tackling occupational segregation.¹²”

The public sector equality duty, and the Government's welcome engagement with the issue of occupational segregation, including a restatement of its impact on growth in the *Government Economic Strategy*¹³, would suggest that a more active role than 'taking [an] interest' is required. In the absence of strategic action to address the structural barriers to women and men's participation in non-traditional frameworks, the Modern Apprenticeship programme will continue to perpetuate occupational segregation, and gender pay inequality across women's lifetimes.

Concluding Comments

SWBG is concerned to highlight the cumulative impacts and effects of welfare and housing reform; public sector spending reduction and withdrawal of services on women who are the largest users – and providers - of public services. The limited economic growth and labour market downturn for women pose significant and potentially enduring threats to women's earnings and economic independence. It is imperative that in progressing proposals in the GES, Plan for Recovery and the Draft Budget that the Scottish Government and its delivery partners ensure resources and priority for

¹² Scottish Government (2011) *Equality Statement: Scottish Spending Review 2011 and Draft Budget 2012-13* Scottish Government: Edinburgh p.10

¹³ Scottish Government (2011) *The Government Economic Strategy* Scottish Government: Edinburgh p.92

employment and skills development opportunities for women, and that the supposedly 'gender neutral' proposals around capital expenditure and the ensuing employment outcomes do not solely benefit male workers.

The impact of housing reform and the welfare reform measures to be imposed by the UK government are set to have a devastating effect on the lives of women, disabled people, and carers. It is essential that the Scottish Government act to mitigate the impact of these proposals through political action and the provisioning of services and resources to eliminate the worst excesses of these ill-conceived policies.

Within the current term of government, the SNP majority government has stated its intention to hold a referendum on Scotland's constitutional status. As the public debate progresses, SWBG along with other voices across Scottish civil society, wish to put on record the need for clear articulation of equality in the visioning for a future Scotland. SWBG is calling for a clear and meaningful commitment to equality and human rights as defining characteristics in a differently constituted Scotland, and as the touchstone for public policy and resourcing in the future.

Finally, there has been significant progress by the Scottish Government and Scottish Parliament Committees in developing improvements in the budgetary process. SWBG urge the Scottish Government and Scottish Parliament to continue their commitment to rigorous equality analysis in the budget process. For this to progress meaningfully, there must be clear process indicators that bind spending departments to continuous improvement in their equality analysis of spending proposals and which actively contribute to stated political objectives on the promotion and achievement of a more equal and prosperous Scotland. SWBG look forward to seeing these measures within the proposed workplan for the Equality and Budgets Advisory Group alongside specific tasks to address ongoing segregation and inequality in outcomes and resource allocation in the Modern Apprenticeship Scheme, and effective gender analysis across all spending portfolios.