



A GENDER EDIT OF THE SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT DRAFT BUDGET 2018-19

This document is a 'gender edit' guide to the Scottish Government Draft Budget 2018-19. It provides excerpts which refer directly to women and gender, but also captures sections on equalities and social justice where women and girls in Scotland would be directly impacted.

1. STRATEGIC CONTEXT

The Scottish Government Draft Budget sets out the draft spending and tax plans for 2018-19. In this year's draft Budget, the Scottish Government highlights its concerns with the economic uncertainty created by Brexit, as well as the continued UK austerity programme and the 'increasing pressure on public services as a result of an ageing population'.

In the draft Budget, the Scottish Government commits to using devolved powers to 'mitigate further cuts and to deliver a strong, dynamic economy supported by investment in public services, education, business, infrastructure and tackling inequality'.

2. HEALTH AND SPORT

The draft Budget commits to further enhancing health and social care services. To improve quality of care and the health of Scotland's population, the draft Budget proposes to:

- Over five years, introduce an additional 800 workers to ensure access to mental health professionals in A&E, GP practices, police custody units, and prisons;
- £10M in further funding for the Scottish Trauma Network;
- Implement the recommendations of the Best Start Maternity and Neonatal Review; and increase health visitor numbers to 500 more by the end of 2018 as well as the Family Nurse Partnership provision;
- Commission an additional 1,600 training places in nursing and midwifery this Parliament;
- An additional £66M to support social care, including support for the implementation of the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016; and
- Invest £9.2M in Self-directed Support;

With respect to sports, the Draft Budget commits to:

- Invest £0.3M in the Sporting Equality Fund to encourage more women and girls to take up sport; and
- Draw on the expertise of the Women and Girls in Sport Advisory Group to help shape future actions in sport in Scotland.

3. EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Education is the Scottish Government's 'defining mission'.

With respect to children and families, the draft Budget sets out the following:

- Invest £243 million to progress towards 1,140 hours of fully funded early learning and childcare from 2020. This includes supporting the recruitment and training of staff, the delivery of new premises, and ensuring that some communities begin to benefit from the increase to 1,140 hours ahead of 2020;
- Establish the Best Start Grant¹;
- Contribute to upskilling and raising the quality of the social service workforce, and to supporting the expansion of the Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) workforce.

Concerning the Scottish Funding Council² priorities, the draft Budget commits:

- To work with the college and university sectors to address gender equality at all levels from course choices to senior staff and board; and
- Contribute to the implementation of the STEM strategy, in particular increasing participation in STEM study and research at colleges and universities;

4. ENTERPRISE AND SKILLS BODIES

The enterprise and skills bodies draft budget commits to:

- Working with companies across Scotland to encourage more women into leadership roles; and

¹ The Best Start Grant is one of the social security powers devolved to the Scottish Parliament.

² Scottish Funding Council budget invests in Scotland's further and higher education sectors.

- Contributing to the implementation of the STEM Strategy, in particular taking forward the actions around improved STEM-related careers advice and guidance and increased participation in STEM-related apprenticeship.

5. JUSTICE

To contribute to the safety and security of communities, the draft Budget proposes to:

- Fund violence reduction educational programmes, anti-violence initiatives, and support the work of national Violence Reduction Unit;
- Support training requirements for police officers in preparation for the introduction of the new domestic abuse offence;
- Implement justice actions in the Equally Safe Delivery Plan;
- Support the improvement of services for adults and children who have experienced rape and sexual assault;
- Expand the innovative Caledonian Programme so that more male perpetrators of domestic abuse can receive specific rehabilitation services designed to address the issues giving rise to their offending behaviour;
- Bring forward a Bill to enable the much greater use of pre-recording evidence of child and vulnerable witnesses in advance of the criminal trial; and
- Take forward the Strategy for the Management of Women in Custody, including the development of a smaller national facility and the design of two community-based custody units for women in Glasgow and Dundee.

6. ECONOMY, JOBS AND FAIR WORK

The draft Budget proposes to continue to develop ‘opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish through increasing sustainable economic growth’. Specifically, the draft Budget outlines:

- £9.9 million in the employment and employability budget to support the delivery of new devolved employability programme;
- Provide tailored, person-centred support to people who face barriers to work through Fair Start Scotland;
- Continue to work with the Poverty Alliance and others to create the first Living Wage towns, cities and regions; and
- Over the next three years, double the number of low-paid workers who receive a pay increase as a result of their employer becoming Living Wage accredited (from 25,000 to 50,000) and increase the proportion of accredited employers in low-paid sectors such as hospitality and tourism.

7. COMMUNITIES, SOCIAL SECURITY AND EQUALITIES

This portion of the draft Budget focuses on the Scottish Government's ambition to create a 'fairer Scotland', one that supports inclusive growth and promotes 'community empowerment and the participation of people in all aspects to Scottish life'. The draft Budget states that the Scottish Government intends to:

- Provide £50M to allow local authorities to mitigate the effects of the bedroom tax with additional funding for Discretionary Housing Payments for those affected by other UK Government welfare reforms including Local Housing Allowance rates and benefit cap;
- Introduce a Tackling Child Poverty Fund (£50M) over the period of the Child Poverty Delivery Plan and a new Financial Health Check Guarantee for families with children;
- Sustain funding to the Scottish Welfare Fund;
- Fund access to free sanitary products for students in schools, colleges and universities, and consider action to support those on low incomes.

8. RURAL ECONOMY AND CONNECTIVITY

The draft Budget commits to:

- Taking forward the actions recommended by the Women in Agriculture Taskforce aimed at increasing gender equality in the sector; and
- Supporting the Scottish Disability Equality Forum to develop and host an accessible travel hub and engage with disabled people in line with our Accessible Travel Framework.

9. ADMINISTRATION

The Administration budgets covers the costs of administering the Scottish Government's purpose and strategic objective. In this year's draft Budget, the Scottish Government states that it will 'continue to invest in our people, demonstrating that we are an exemplar in employee engagement, diversity, equality and wellbeing, through the implementation of our People Strategy, public sector equality duties and the delivery of the Civil Service diversity agenda'.

10. CROWN OFFICE AND PROCURATOR FISCAL SERVICE

To 'secure justice for people in Scotland', the draft Budget puts forward the following:

- Provide appropriate support to victims of crime, vulnerable witnesses and bereaved relatives;
- Respond to the increasing number of serious sexual offences that are reported to COPFS;
- Subject to the approval of Parliament, implement the provisions of the Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Bill; and
- Improve communications with victims and witnesses.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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ABOUT US

Engender is a membership organisation working on feminist agendas in Scotland and Europe, to increase women's power and influence and to make visible the impact of sexism on women, men and society. We provide support to individuals, organisations and institutions who seek to achieve gender equality and justice.