

Justice Committee

Scottish Government Draft Budget 2012-13 and Spending Review 2011

Letter from the Cabinet Secretary for Justice

Thank you for your letter of 2 November. I have set out below my responses to each of the questions you raised in your letter.

Early Intervention Change Fund

Question: What is the total funding allocation for the Early Intervention Change Fund and from which portfolio does this funding come from?

Scottish Government response: The funding allocation is £50 million which comes from the Education and Lifelong Learning Portfolio (Directorate for Children and Families; Early Years and Social Services Workforce Division).

Question: Can you clarify the budget line(s) in which funding for the Early Intervention Change Fund lies?

Scottish Government response: The Early Years Change Fund is incorporated in the Positive Futures budget line.

Question: Can you provide some information on the aims of the Early Intervention Change Fund and the type of projects it will fund?

Scottish Government response: The Early Years Change Fund support projects designed to deliver effective early intervention in a child's life. The fund will help to deliver on the key themes of the spending review - improving outcomes for our citizens, delivering the reform of our public services and reducing costs to the public purse in this time of austerity - by:

- Supporting our universal ambitions – we want to reduce inequalities in a variety of policy areas and raise the bar for all children and families across Scotland;
- Taking action to identify those at risk and preventing that risk materialising;
- Making sustained and effective interventions in cases where problems have been identified
- Shifting the focus from service delivery to building the capacity of individuals, families and communities to secure outcomes for themselves, making use of high quality, accessible public services as required.
- Unlocking resources currently invested in dealing with acute problems. There are short, medium and long term savings to be made by a shift to preventative spend. In the longer term, a failure to effectively intervene to address the complex needs of an individual in early childhood can result in a nine fold increase in direct public costs.

Throughcare

Question: Can you provide further details and a timetable for the Scottish Government's review of Throughcare?

Scottish Government response: As part of the work of the successor programme to the Reducing Reoffending Programme, there will be a formal review of Throughcare. The successor programme will be a four year programme and the programme structure will provide a delivery focus as a number of specific workstreams are taken forward within Justice over the Parliamentary session.

For the review of Throughcare, the Scottish Government intends to work closely with relevant stakeholders to undertake a fundamental review of the current arrangements – both legislative and practical – for supporting both long term and short term offenders through the criminal justice system.

The intention is to review the effectiveness of services, and the structures and arrangements for commissioning services, in aiding an offender's reintegration to the community and ultimately in reducing reoffending rates. We are currently undertaking engagement sessions with stakeholders around the country which will help determine how and to what timescale particular pieces of work within the programme should be undertaken. We are happy to keep the Committee informed about the outcome of that work and how it relates to the Throughcare review.

Remand prisoners

Question: Can you provide details of the number of remand prisoners that are found not guilty of the crime for which they have been remanded or any crime?

Scottish Government response: Unfortunately that information is not available to the Scottish Government at present. When analysing the available data it is, for example, not easy to disaggregate where offenders may be remanded for one crime, but ultimately imprisoned for another. However a specific project is underway to do that work.

If it is helpful to the Committee to be aware, English data suggests that around 20% of those remanded are ultimately acquitted, 30% get a community sentence of some form, and around 50% get a custodial sentence. We would expect analysis of the Scottish position to show a broadly similar position but we would be happy to make the information available to the Committee once that work is complete.

Making Justice Work

Question: Would it be possible to receive regular updates on developments within the Making Justice Work programme as and when they arise?

Scottish Government response: The Scottish Government would be happy to send the Justice Committee regular updates on the Making Justice Work programme, as and when they arise. It will be sensible to send these following meetings of the programme board, which occur every three to four months, so we

will send a first update after the December meeting. We have also just launched a Justice Change Newsletter, a copy of which is enclosed with this letter. The Justice Committee will also receive future copies of this newsletter.

Kenny MacAskill MSP
Cabinet Secretary for Justice
4 November 2011