Do you consider that the Scottish Government’s health and sport budget for 2017-18 reflects its stated priorities (as set out in the National Performance Framework, the LDP standards and the National health and wellbeing outcomes)? If not, how could the budget be adjusted to better reflect priorities?

Given the challenge raised by Audit Scotland for Health Boards to improve their longer term financial planning; multi year budgets would facilitate this process, rather than the single year approach at present.

For the health and sport budget for 2018-19 where do you suggest any additional resources could be most effectively deployed and where could any further savings be found? What evidence supports your views?

Pressures are evident in relation to demographic factors and the need to improve and develop technological / digital solutions. Other external factors such as the introduction of the apprenticeship levy are having a significant impact on health board budgets. Resources to offset these are insufficient to cover the cost.

Is sufficient information available to support scrutiny of the Scottish Government’s health and sport budget? If not, what additional information would help support budget scrutiny?

Where there is additional investment to be made available eg £500m for primary care, it would be helpful to understand this investment on a year by year basis, with detail on the funding source each year ie the extent to which the funding is additional or a transfer from elsewhere within the overall budget.

What impact has the integration of health and social care budgets had on ensuring resources are directed at achieving the Scottish Government’s desired outcomes?

To gain the full benefit of integrated budgets across health and social care is challenging, given that the increase in social care funding via the NHS budget has been offset by the reduction in council funding to social care. The scale of ambition within integration services eg 10% reduction in unscheduled care beds will require additional investment to facilitate change. There is a significant challenge for health board to deliver the extent of savings required across all health services in order to break even and to release resources to transfer from secondary to primary / community care.