Dear Mr Aitken,

**Gender pay gap inquiry**

As you are aware, the Economy, Jobs and Fair Work Committee has been carrying out an inquiry into the gender pay gap. We have heard evidence from a range of organisations from the public and private sector and visited some relevant businesses and projects. More information about the inquiry can be found at the following link:


We had hoped to hear evidence from the CBI so that we could hear about this issue from a business perspective. As a key representative body of businesses in Scotland, we were keen to hear your perspective on the issue. We were disappointed that you were unable to attend to give evidence when invited. We are, however, grateful to you for sending us information about the work that the CBI has carried out in this area.

The Committee has agreed that I should write to you to ask for further information on the CBI’s view on the gender pay gap. I would be very grateful if you could respond to the following questions:

- The Committee has heard evidence highlighting economic benefits of closing the gender pay gap. Do businesses recognise such economic benefits?
• Is the issue of closing the gender pay gap a priority for the CBI and the businesses that you represent? Do companies see gender diversity as a business priority?
• Is support offered to businesses for reducing their gender pay gap?
• What are the CBI’s views on the forthcoming pay gap reporting legislation?
  ➢ Do you believe this will help to reduce the gap?
  ➢ Scotland is largely an SME economy and the question arises as to how much of an impact the legislation will have in Scotland with reporting guidelines that only apply to those companies with 250 employees or more? Should it apply to smaller companies?

• Can procurement play a role in addressing the gender pay gap and if so, how would this be achieved?

• Are there any additional actions that the Scottish Government could take to address the pay gap in Scotland?

These are key questions for the Committee to consider in reaching conclusions for its final report on the gender pay gap. Your input at this stage would be greatly appreciated. If you could respond to me by 25 May, that would be helpful.

Kind regards

Gordon Lindhurst MSP
Convener