

Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee
Tuesday 3 February 2026
3rd Meeting, 2026 (Session 6)

Post Budget Scrutiny 2026-27 – evidence session with Ministers

Introduction

1. The purpose of this paper is to provide information to help inform the Committee's post budget evidence session with the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government and the Minister for Equalities.
2. At this meeting, the Committee will take evidence from the following—

Evidence with the Cabinet Secretary and Minister

- Shona Robison MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government
- Kaukab Stewart MSP, Minister for Equalities
- Rob Priestley, Head of Mainstreaming Unit
- Simon Fuller, Deputy Director, Fiscal Strategy and Analysis

Background information

3. The Scottish Government published its [budget for 2026-27](#) on 13 January 2026. This is the final budget of this session of the Scottish Parliament.
4. At this session the Committee will hear from the Cabinet Secretary and Minister on:
 - Equalities and Human Rights in the Scottish Budget 2026-27.
 - The new [Strategic Integrated Impact Assessment](#), which replaces the Equality and Fairer Scotland Budget Statement.
 - The [Scottish Government's response](#) to the [Committee's pre-budget report](#).
5. In its pre-budget scrutiny the Committee continued its focus on human rights budgeting. This was third and final year of the Committee's agreed focus on human rights budgeting and with a particular focus on accountability as well as reflection on the Committee's scrutiny over the session.
6. As a reminder, the Committee's approach to Budget Scrutiny this session is summarised below, based on the year in which the Committee's scrutiny took place.
7. [2021 \(for Budget 2022-23\)](#) – An introduction to human rights budgeting, with a focus on the anticipated incorporation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) into Scots law. A call for views was held,

and three panels gave evidence before the Committee heard from the Cabinet Secretary.

8. [2022 \(for Budget 2023-24\)](#) – An in depth look at human rights budgeting and using principles of participation, transparency and accountability as a framework for scrutiny.
9. [2023 \(for Budget 2024-25\)](#) – The start of the Committee’s 3-year approach, exploring participation. This included a broad public survey aimed at understanding the way in which the public understand the budget and how it connects to their lives. This was followed up by deliberative work with the Whole Family Equality Project, during which the Committee took part in a facilitated workshop with citizens exploring the spending areas which impact most on human rights, using the lived experience of participants. The participants then went on to draft questions for the Minister, which the Committee asked after taking evidence from the participants to understand how questions were developed.
10. [2024 \(for Budget 2025-26\)](#) – Transparency was the agreed focus for this year. An initial public survey was run exploring the Scottish Government’s Capital spending plans through a human rights lens and was expected to inform evidence taking and further participation work. However, the UK election led to delays to the Programme for Government and uncertainty about the Committees.

Next steps

11. The Committee will consider the evidence it has received.

Conclusion

12. The Committee is invited to consider the above information in its evidence sessions with the Cabinet Secretary and Minister.

Clerks to the Committee
January 2026