

Public Service Reform Committee
Thursday 1 October 2026
7th Meeting, 2026 (Session 7)

Pre-budget scrutiny

Note by the Clerk

1. At its meeting on 3 September 2026, the Committee agreed to hold a series of evidence sessions on its pre-budget scrutiny inquiry on how the 2027-28 Scottish Budget can best advance public service reform. This will be the third, and final, such evidence session.

Background

2. The Committee's pre-budget scrutiny inquiry will consider how the 2027-28 Scottish Budget can support public service reform, including by:
 - removing barriers to progress,
 - promoting preventative approaches, and
 - simplifying the delivery of public services.
3. As part of its pre-budget scrutiny inquiry, the Committee ran a call for views between 1 July and 14 August 2026, which received 143 submissions in total. These submissions can be [viewed on the Committee's webpage](#).

Evidence

4. At this third, and final, evidence session, the Committee will hear from the Cabinet Secretary for Public Service Reform, who will be supported by the following Scottish Government officials—
 - Simon Mair, Deputy Director for Place Based Service Change and Reform; and
 - Cathy Sumner, Interim Deputy Director, Spending and Pay Strategy.

Previous meetings

5. At its previous meeting, on 24 September, the Committee heard evidence from the following witnesses—
 - Ian Bruce, Chief Officer of Glasgow Council for the Voluntary Sector, [TSI Scotland Network](#);
 - Kirsty Cumming, CEO, [Community Leisure UK](#);

- Helen Malo, Senior Policy and Public Affairs Manager Scotland, [Hospice UK](#);
 - Kirsty Morrison, Policy and Public Affairs Manager, [Chest Heart & Stroke Scotland](#);
 - David Robertson, Chief Executive, [Scottish Borders Council](#); and
 - Mark McAteer, Director of Governance, Strategy and Change, [Scottish Fire and Rescue Service](#).
6. During this evidence session, the Committee explored a number of themes, such as the voluntary sector perspective, including the focus on efficiencies, budget setting, reporting on progress, and prevention, as well as the public service perspective, including past experiences of service reform and redesign, the Programme for Government announcements, views on efficiencies, and data sharing and digital transformation.
7. The Official Report for this evidence session will be available on the [Committee's webpage once published](#).
8. At its earlier meeting, on 17 September, the Committee heard evidence from the following witnesses—
- Victoria Carson, Engagement and Influence Director, [The Wise Group](#);
 - Jayne Jones, Chief Executive, [Scottish Food Commission](#);
 - David Phillips, Head of Devolved and Local Government Finance, [Institute for Fiscal Studies](#);
 - Dr Spencer Thompson, Senior Knowledge Exchange Fellow, [Scottish Health Equity Research Unit \(SHERU\), University of Strathclyde](#);
 - Liam Davenport, Industrial Officer, [PCS Union](#);
 - Carmen Martinez, Policy and Engagement Lead, [Scottish Women's Budget Group](#); and
 - Dr Chris Williams, Vice Chair, [Royal College of General Practitioners Scotland](#).
9. During this evidence session, the Committee explored a number of themes, such as the fiscal perspectives of public service reform, including the focus on efficiencies, reporting on progress and prevention, as well as the economic perspectives, including workforce issues and social care reform.
10. The Official Report for this evidence session is available to [view online](#).

Future meetings

11. Following this final evidence session, the Committee will consider a draft report and publish it once agreed in October/November.

Committee Clerking Team
September 2026