

Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee

4th Meeting, 2022 (Session 6), Tuesday, 1 February 2022

Evidence session with the Scottish Government on the Scottish Budget 2022-2023

Note by the clerk

Introduction

1. On 9 December 2021, the Scottish Government introduced the [Budget \(Scotland\) Bill](#). The Budget Bill is how the Parliament agrees public spending in Scotland and is introduced to the Parliament every year ahead of the new financial year starting in April. This one is for 2022-23.
2. Alongside the Bill, the Scottish Government also published the 2022-23 draft Scottish Budget. [All of the budget documents can be found on the Scottish Government's budget webpages](#). This includes the 'Level 4' budget spreadsheet, which provides the most detailed breakdown of the budget, including spending on budget lines falling within the remit of the Cabinet Secretary for Net Zero, Energy and Transport. It also includes (under "Supporting Documents") the carbon assessment of the capital budget.
3. On Thursday 27 January, the Parliament is debating the general principles of the Budget Bill at Stage 1. Should the general principles be agreed, the Finance and Public Administration Committee will undertake Stage 2 on Tuesday 1 February, with Stage 3 (final stage) scheduled to take place in the week commencing 7 February.
4. The Scottish Parliament Information Centre (SPICe) has published several general publications on the budget, including:
 - [A SPICe blog with an initial analysis](#)
 - [A detailed briefing on the budget](#).

Parliamentary scrutiny by the NZET Committee

5. Subject committees (i.e. Scottish Parliament committees that scrutinise major policy areas with significant public spending) normally make pre-budget recommendations to the Scottish Government each autumn, after taking

evidence from stakeholders. These are recommendations on matters the Scottish Government should take into account in the preparation of the next budget. [The NZET Committee wrote to the Scottish Government on 28 October 2021.](#)

6. The Committee's pre-budget scrutiny letter captured key issues and questions on:
 - Funding and achieving Net Zero
 - Adaptation funding and finance
 - Circular economy
 - Biodiversity and natural infrastructure
 - SEPA cyberattack and public sector cybersecurity
 - Scottish National Investment Bank and Enterprise Agencies
 - Decarbonising heat in buildings
 - Transport
7. [The Scottish Government responded on 15 December 2021](#) noting how it had reflected on the Committee's letter in the development of the budget this year.

Evidence session

8. On 1 February 2022, the Committee will explore the Scottish Government's budget priorities across its remit with the Cabinet Secretary for Net Zero, Energy and Transport, Michael Matheson MSP and supporting officials.
9. The main purpose of the evidence session is to enable a discussion about the Cabinet Secretary's budgetary priorities within his department for the coming year and to drill down into whether issues raised in the Committee's pre-budget letter influenced his budgetary decision-making, prior to a final vote by the whole Parliament on whether to approve the Budget Bill (with or without amendments) later in February.
10. Later during the 1 February meeting, the Committee will discuss the evidence it has just heard, and any potential next steps as a result.