

Item 1 – Email exchange between the Scottish Government’s Deputy Director for Fiscal Policy and Constitution and David Eiser:

From: Elsby M (Matthew) [redacted]
Sent: 13 July 2022 15:39
To: David Eiser [redacted]
Cc: [redacted]
Subject: RE: SG Independence Prospectus - Fiscal Policy

Thanks David,

Very happy for Mairi to join – it would be terrific to get her take on this too!

[redacted] and I are leading on developing the fiscal policy input for the Scottish Government’s independence prospectus series. The thing we’re particularly keen to test with you is – what do you think are the key issues that our fiscal policy material should address?
[redacted]

We are keen to test this issues with a small group of trusted stakeholders, so it would also be helpful to talk through how best we can work with you, and who else we might want to engage.

Thanks,
Matt

Matt Elsby | Deputy Director: Fiscal Policy and Constitution | DG Exchequer: Fiscal Policy and Constitution
Email: [redacted]

-----Original Appointment-----

From: David Eiser [redacted]
Sent: 13 July 2022 11:33
To: Elsby M (Matthew)
Subject: Accepted: SG Independence Prospectus - Fiscal Policy
When: 19 July 2022 10:00-10:30 (UTC+00:00) Dublin, Edinburgh, Lisbon, London.
Where: Microsoft Teams Meeting

Hi Matt

That would be fine. If you would be interested in involving FAI Director Mairi Spowage in the same meeting let me know and I can find out if she is free to come along. Otherwise, see you then.

If you can give any indication in advance of the sort of issue you’ll seek a view on, I can try to give some thought to those issues before we meet.

Best wishes
David

-----Original Appointment-----

From: Elsby M (Matthew)
Sent: 13 July 2022 10:28

To: Elsby M (Matthew); David Eiser; [redacted]; [redacted]

Cc: [redacted]; [redacted]; Mairi Spowage

Subject: SG Independence Prospectus - Fiscal Policy

When: 19 July 2022 10:00-10:30 (UTC+00:00) Dublin, Edinburgh, Lisbon, London.

Where: Microsoft Teams Meeting

Hi David – would this time work to chat through our work on the independence prospectus?

Section 29(1)(a) – formulation or development of government policy

An exemption under section 29(1)(a) of FOISA (formulation or development of government policy) applies to some of the information requested because it relates to the formulation of the Scottish Government's policy on future fiscal policy for an independent Scotland.

This exemption is subject to the 'public interest test'. Therefore, taking account of all the circumstances of this case, we have considered if the public interest in disclosing the information outweighs the public interest in applying the exemption. We have found that, on balance, the public interest lies in favour of upholding the exemption. We recognise that there is a public interest in disclosing information as part of open, transparent and accountable government, and to inform public debate. However, there is a greater public interest in high quality policy and decision-making, and in the properly considered implementation and development of policies and decisions. This means that Ministers and officials need to be able to consider all available options and to debate those rigorously, to fully understand their possible implications. Their candour in doing so will be affected by their assessment of whether the discussions on future fiscal policy for an independent Scotland will be disclosed in the near future, when it may undermine or constrain the Government's view on that policy while it is still under discussion and development.