

Jamie Hepburn's meetings with the Scottish Funding Council on September 7, 21, and October 26, 2022.

Agenda September 7 2022

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|-------------|----|----------------------------------|
| 11:00-11:05 | 1. | Welcome |
| 11:05-11:15 | 2. | Progress updates by exception |
| 11:15-11:50 | 3. | Deep Dive – Regional Pathfinders |
| 11:50-11:55 | 4. | Update on SOF Finalisation |
| 11:55:12.00 | 5. | AOB |

Bilateral meeting between Minister for Higher Education, Further Education, Youth Employment and Training and the Chief Executives of Skills Development Scotland and the Scottish Funding Council, 7 September 2022

Minute of the meeting

Attendees

Jamie Hepburn, Minister for Higher Education, Further Education, Youth Employment and Training (JH)

Scottish Government

Helena Gray (HG) Director of Fair Work, Employability and Skills (FWES)
Helen Webster (HW), Deputy Director, Advanced Learning and Science (ALS)
Adam Reid (AR), Deputy Director (FWES)
[REDACTED]

Scottish Funding Council

Mike Cantlay (MC) Chair
Karen Watt (KW) Chief Executive
Claire McPherson (CM) Deputy Director, Policy and Insights
Sharon Drysdale (SD) Deputy Director, Skills and Economic Recovery
James Dunphy (JD) Director of Access, Learning and Provision
[REDACTED]

Skills Development Scotland

Frank Mitchell (FM) Chair
Damian Yeates (DY) Chief Executive
Chris Brodie (CB) Director of Regional Skills Planning and Sector Development
Diane Greenlees (DG) Director, Critical Skills and Occupations

Apologies

Stephen Pathirana (SP), Director of Advanced Learning and Science (ALS)

Welcome

1. The Minister welcomed participants to the meeting and thanked everyone for their contributions to the papers. This meeting followed on from the Shared Outcomes Assurance Group meeting which had taken place on the 23 August 2022.

2. The Minister noted briefly the challenging fiscal context and the proposed review of Skills delivery on which he had answered a Government Inspired Question on 31 August, thanking all for their positive engagement.

Project updates by exception

2. The meeting heard short updates on the projects on the Shared Outcomes Framework ('the SOF projects').

The only amber RAG rating relates to the Foundation Apprenticeships: & Graduate Apprenticeships: SDS and SFC updated the Minister that this amber risk rating relates to work that is still underway on the development of reporting systems. Education and Skills Impact Framework: 3 contextual reports (college, universities and MA pathways) have now been produced, intended to accompany the publication of the ESIF technical report. Finalised reports will be shared with the Collaborative Working Group and SOAG members. A plan for publication is being developed.

CESAP (WP1 Net Zero) (WP2) Commercial and Domestic heating in buildings: The project is on track and the first reporting outputs have taken place. CESAP WP 2 went live in July 2022 with pilot work taking place in City of Glasgow and Shetland Islands.

Upskilling/Reskilling: Discussions are to take place in advance of the next SOAG meeting on the scope of Project 8 on SOF – Upskilling and Reskilling.

3. The Minister noted that he welcomed the project updates. He thanked SDS and SFC for organising the recent summer SOF project workshops which provided the opportunity for a more detailed exposition of and discussion of the projects.

Deep Dive: Regional Pathfinders

4. SFC provided an update on the Regional Pathfinders projects which they lead, with SDS as a key partner. The aim of these projects is to further explore what needs to be done to make the education and skills system responsive, integrated and supportive of economic recovery and inclusive growth in each region. The Regional Pathfinders are focused in the North East (N.E) and (South of Scotland SoS) regions of Scotland.

5. The SRO provided an outline of the projects, noting that there are four work packages to be delivered by March 2023. In terms of progress, there has been successful collaboration and partnership working between SDS and SFC. They have taken a pragmatic approach to the changing economic environment and recognised the strong supportive sectoral responses from both North East and South of Scotland partners.

6. The Regional Pathfinders will provide a coherent framework for institutions to support provision planning decisions. Further work may include cross-fertilisation of outcome data across other SOAG pathfinder projects.

7. There was discussion around the opportunities for ensuring that the learning from the Regional Pathfinders will be used to inform approaches across those institutions and partners involved. This would also apply to those working elsewhere in Scotland that aren't part of the formal pathfinder projects but are nonetheless engaged in activity designed to best reflect local social and economic priorities and planning.

8. The Minister thanked SFC for the presentation and acknowledged the positive and collaborative progress on the Regional Pathfinders which was taking place.

9. The Minister suggested it would be helpful to update the Public Audit Committee on progress on the SOF at an appropriate juncture later this year.

Action: SG Reform division to arrange a meeting in advance of the next SOAG with SFC and SDS to discuss how to apply the learning from the pathfinder work.

10. There was no AOB

11. The Minister closed the meeting, thanking participants, encouraging all to continue to press forward and commenting that he had been happy to hear the examples of positive collaboration, both directly between the NDPBs and via SOAG.

Scottish Government
September 2022

Email 1

Hi [REDACTED],

I never actually received a response to this email outlining proposed topics for the next few Ministerial liaisons.

Would you be able to ask [REDACTED] (if you are meeting this morning) if she spoke with Karen about these and if so can we press ahead (at least with the proposed topic for October – prep needs to start for that on Tuesday!)

Many thanks

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 12 August 2022 14:43
To: Martin Boyle
Cc: [REDACTED]; SFC Sponsorship@gov.scot;
Subject: Ministerial Liaison Meetings - Proposed Topics

Hi Martin,

Following discussion between [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], as well as with ALS colleagues internally, the topics below have been proposed for the next four Ministerial liaison meetings.

September: Funding model/Priorities following RSR and Purpose and Principles since this ties in with the distribution methodology (funding model) based on outcomes.

October: new Tertiary Quality Enhancement Framework and SFC Review implementation

November: ESOL and College local partnerships

December: Widening Access

I think [REDACTED] may have already asked for Karen's views on this, but we have not yet heard anything back. Would you be able to advise if Karen is content with the proposal below? Once we have confirmation, I will reach out to the Minister's office to check he is content too.

Many thanks

Email 2

From: [REDACTED]

Sent on: Thursday, September 1, 2022 11:38:15 AM

To: [REDACTED]

CC: SFC Sponsorship <SFC Sponsorship@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: Ministerial Liaison Meetings - Proposed Topics

Hi [REDACTED]

I'm joining our Senior Leadership Group meeting this afternoon to discuss and will have confirmation from that. It will be Karen and Mike and then I'm waiting to hear if both Richard and Martin will attend. I think they will but I'll confirm 100% following the meeting.

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 01 September 2022 09:07

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: SFC Sponsorship@gov.scot; [REDACTED]

Subject: FW: Ministerial Liaison Meetings - Proposed Topics

Good morning [REDACTED],

The agenda for next week's SFC Ministerial Liaison meeting has been confirmed as:

Funding model

Priorities following RSR

Purpose and Principles

Would you be able to confirm who from SFC will be attending the meeting, based on this agenda?

Many thanks
[REDACTED]
From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 22 August 2022 10:58
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: Martin Boyle [REDACTED] SFC Sponsorship <SFC Sponsorship@gov.scot>;
Subject: RE: Ministerial Liaison Meetings - Proposed Topics

Good morning [REDACTED],

I hope you enjoyed your time off

I was wondering if there was any update on Karen's views re the proposed topics for upcoming Ministerial liaison meetings?

I would be grateful if you could let me know by Wednesday, I will be offline for a week from Thursday morning and would like to contact the Minister's office about this before I finish up.

Proposed topics:

September: Funding model/Priorities following RSR and Purpose and Principles since this ties in with the distribution methodology (funding model) based on outcomes.

October: new Tertiary Quality Enhancement Framework and SFC Review implementation

November: ESOL and College local partnerships

December: Widening Access

Many thanks
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 12 August 2022 15:17
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: Martin Boyle [REDACTED] SFC Sponsorship <SFC Sponsorship@gov.scot>
Subject: RE: Ministerial Liaison Meetings - Proposed Topics

Hello [REDACTED]

I am following up your email to say that [REDACTED] had been in touch and shared these topics with Karen before she went off on leave. I am not sure if they actually had a discussion, but Lynne had said she would pick up with Karen on her return. [REDACTED] is back on Wednesday, so we hope to be able to feedback then.

Hope this is helpful.

Many thanks
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 12 August 2022 14:57
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Ministerial Liaison Meetings - Proposed Topics

Good Afternoon, [REDACTED],

Martin is out of the office today, but we will come back to you on Monday with regards to this.

Many thanks,

Best regards
[REDACTED]

Email 3

From: [REDACTED]
Sent on: Thursday, September 1, 2022 1:51:58 PM
To: [REDACTED]
CC: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: SFC advice on FY 23-24 level 3/4 budget: NEXT MINISTERIAL LIAISON MEETING COMMISSION
Urgent: High

Attachments: SFC Ministerial Liaison Meeting - request for briefing - by noon, 2 September 2022.msg (90.5 KB)

Hi all

Can we be clear on who is contributing to this brief so [REDACTED] can finalise on Monday morning at latest. I think [REDACTED] so we'll need an input from [REDACTED]? [REDACTED] will need to clear brief since Linda and [REDACTED] on leave.

Specifically looking at Review priorities post RSR and specifically I think we wanted to raise funding methodology and timeline related to 116 target and revising outcomes as part of NIF and accountability and assurance framework.

No need to pick up in detail on pathfinders, since covered in joint meeting and SOAG.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 30 August 2022 16:59
To: [REDACTED]; Director of Advanced Learning and Science
Cc: Macdonald R (Roddy); Pooley L (Linda) Dr; Webster H (Helen); [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: SFC advice on FY 23-24 level 3/4 budget: NEXT MINISTERIAL LIAISON MEETING COMMISSION

My understanding is that this was to be wrapped into wider advice being developed by Helen/[REDACTED] on the P&P etc, with the recommendation that the Minister write to SFC to confirm that 116 should not be used as a driver for allocations this year but that the existing splits to institutions should be preserved as far as possible to allow for stability.

I can help with drafting appropriate lines into that wider advice of course.

Thanks

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 30 August 2022 15:30
To: [REDACTED] Director of Advanced Learning and Science
Cc: Macdonald R (Roddy); Pooley L (Linda) Dr; Webster H (Helen); [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: SFC advice on FY 23-24 level 3/4 budget: NEXT MINISTERIAL LIAISON MEETING COMMISSION
Importance: High

Afternoon

Just to flag that the forthcoming Ministerial Liaison meeting will discuss funding methodology/ models alongside P&P.

In this respect, can I check what our intentions are in terms of issuing a letter on the 116 target which is still being referenced by SFC and the sector? It will be important to know the status of this in order to prepare briefing (commission to be circulated today).

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 30 August 2022 13:38
To: [REDACTED] Director of Advanced Learning and Science
Cc: Macdonald R (Roddy); Pooley L (Linda) Dr; Webster H (Helen); [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: SFC advice on FY 23-24 level 3/4 budget

Thanks for sharing [REDACTED], and agree, useful (stark!) papers.

[REDACTED]

Thanks

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 30 August 2022 12:24
To: Director of Advanced Learning and Science
Cc: Macdonald R (Roddy); Pooley L (Linda) Dr; Webster H (Helen); [REDACTED]
Subject: SFC advice on FY 23-24 level 3/4 budget

Stephen,
[Redacted]

Helen,

Happy to discuss how you want to take this information forward for any advice you want to put up to Ministers.

Best wishes,

[REDACTED]

From: Tiffany Ritchie
Sent: 26 August 2022 14:30
To: [REDACTED]; Pooley L (Linda) Dr; Macdonald R (Roddy)
Cc: Karen Watt; Richard Maconachie; Gordon Craig; Webster H (Helen); [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: SFC advice on FY 23-24 level 3/4 budget

Dear all,

Please find attached the requested advice regarding FY 2023-24, with thanks again for the extension to today from the original deadline.

Please let us know if any further information is helpful and we'd be happy to discuss,

Kind regards,

Tiff

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 15 August 2022 11:44
To: Tiffany Ritchie; Richard Maconachie; Gordon McBride
Cc: Pooley L (Linda) Dr; Macdonald R (Roddy); Webster H (Helen); [REDACTED]
Subject: SFC advice on FY 23-24 level 3/4 budget

SENSITIVE – Please restrict

[Redacted]

Thanks

[REDACTED]

Email 4

From: [REDACTED]
Sent on: Tuesday, September 6, 2022 3:38:08 PM
To: Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training
CC: [REDACTED]; Director of Advanced Learning and Science ; Webster H (Helen) ;
Subject: Ministerial Liaison meeting briefing tomorrow 7th September

Attachments: SFC - 2022 - Ministerial Liaison Meeting - briefing - 07
September.docx (60.06 KB)

Good afternoon

I attach the briefing for your meeting with the Scottish Funding Council at 2.00 p.m tomorrow afternoon.

Stephen Pathirana has requested a pre-meet on the agenda and this is now scheduled to happen as part of the joint liaison meeting pre-meet at 10.30 – 10.45 tomorrow.

Please let me know if you require any further information ahead of the meeting.

With many thanks

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED] On Behalf Of Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training

Sent: 06 September 2022 16:00

To: [REDACTED]; Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training

Cc: [REDACTED] Director of Advanced Learning and Science

Subject: RE: Pre- Ministerial Liaison meeting briefing tomorrow 7th September.

PLEASE RESPOND

That's you guys included!

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 06 September 2022 15:49

To: Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training

Cc: [REDACTED]; Director of Advanced Learning and Science

Subject: RE: Pre- Ministerial Liaison meeting briefing tomorrow 7th September.

PLEASE RESPOND

Thanks [REDACTED]

Yes, that would be perfect. Hopefully Stephen can be available for that –I've messaged his BMU. Can you add me and [REDACTED] to the pre-meet invite?

From: [REDACTED] On Behalf Of Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training

Sent: 06 September 2022 14:55

To: [REDACTED] Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: Pre- Ministerial Liaison meeting briefing tomorrow 7th September.

PLEASE RESPOND

[REDACTED]

Not much space. Wonder if we could quickly speak about it in the premeet before the joint premeet?

Thanks
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 06 September 2022 11:37
To: Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Pre- Ministerial Liaison meeting briefing tomorrow 7th September. PLEASE RESPOND
Importance: High

Hi [REDACTED]
Stephen our director has asked if we can arrange a pre-meet with the Minister ahead of his monthly liaison meeting with SFC at 2.00 p.m. We really need to brief him ahead of discussing the agenda items with Karen and Mike, since there is so much changing daily in the savings exercise space that we are keen to confirm approach with SFC ahead of the call. Is this possible for 10-15 minutes before the 2 pm call?

Many thanks

Email 5

From: [REDACTED] on behalf of Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training
Sent on: Monday, September 5, 2022 3:15:44 PM
To: [REDACTED]; Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training
CC: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Ministerial Liaison Meetings with SFC

Hi [REDACTED],

That's no bother, thanks for letting me know.

Happy for this to be send over by 1200 tomorrow, but if you need a little more time all good to have it across by 1600.

Thanks,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 05 September 2022 16:03
To: Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Ministerial Liaison Meetings with SFC

Good afternoon,

Apologies for this late request, but due to delays in getting the brief for this meeting cleared, please could you confirm if it would be ok for us to send you the brief for this meeting by noon tomorrow?

Many thanks
[REDACTED]

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

From: Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training

Sent: 14 July 2022 15:08

To: Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training;

'Jamie.Hepburn.msp@parliament.scot'; [REDACTED] Director of Advanced Learning and Science [REDACTED]; Pooley L (Linda) Dr; [REDACTED]; Webster H (Helen); Macdonald R (Roddy); [REDACTED]

Subject: Ministerial Liaison Meetings with SFC

When: 07 September 2022 14:00-14:45 (UTC+00:00) Dublin, Edinburgh, Lisbon, London.

Where:

Hello,

I would be grateful if you would prepare briefing (using the appropriate templates and guidance from Saltire) and send to Private Office by COP on 05/09/22.

Official support is expected at all meetings and engagements unless otherwise agreed with Private Office. Please note that there is a requirement for an official note of all meetings to be produced – this should be done by the most appropriate official supporting the Minister in line with published guidance.

If diary timings do not match the event times you are providing in briefing then please flag this to Private Office immediately.

If there will be external stakeholders attending a Scottish Government building (not Parliament), please submit visitor forms as appropriate.

Please do not forward on this invite - if you require anyone else to be invited please let Private Office know.

Please call to discuss if you have any queries or are likely to miss the deadline.

Thank you very much
[REDACTED]

Email 6

From: [REDACTED] on behalf of Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training

Sent on: Monday, September 5, 2022 10:52:40 AM

To: [REDACTED]; Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training

Subject: RE: Ministerial Liaison Meetings with SFC

Hi [REDACTED],

No problem, that should be it updated now.

Thanks,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 05 September 2022 11:39

To: Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training

Subject: RE: Ministerial Liaison Meetings with SFC

Hi [REDACTED],

Please could [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] be removed from this meeting invitation? They attended a previous meeting as a 'one off'.

Please could [REDACTED] be added to this meeting on Wednesday, as a one-off.

Many thanks

[REDACTED]

Email 7

From: [REDACTED] on behalf of Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training

Sent on: Tuesday, September 6, 2022 3:00:08 PM

To: [REDACTED]; Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training

CC: [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; Director of Advanced Learning and Science

Subject: RE: Pre- Ministerial Liaison meeting briefing tomorrow 7th September.
PLEASE RESPOND

That's you guys included!

[REDACTED]

Email 8

From: [REDACTED]

Sent on: Thursday, September 1, 2022 4:56:45 PM

To: [REDACTED];

CC: [REDACTED];

Subject: RE: SFC advice on FY 23-24 level 3/4 budget: NEXT MINISTERIAL LIAISON MEETING COMMISSION

[REDACTED],

On the 116k target, SFC's finance director wanted to have a chat. He was proposing we don't scrap it since it is the key lever they have to manage college sector funding, but I told them this was pretty much decided and we should catch on this with SFC at official level with you in the meeting. Seems they are not all equally aware yet that this decision is now agreed at the Ministerial level, so good to clarify that and then follow up in writing as you suggest.

On the flexibilities, even for the current FY the same approach was adopted i.e. no claw back within a tolerance level of 2%. I'm sure we'll need to extend that in some form to next year.

Best wishes,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 01 September 2022 17:24

To: [REDACTED];

Cc: [REDACTED];

Subject: RE: SFC advice on FY 23-24 level 3/4 budget: NEXT MINISTERIAL LIAISON MEETING COMMISSION

hello,

Not totally up to speed on developments but bringing in Harriet as well to this (and [REDACTED] you might want to involve [REDACTED]).

On 116, Minister is clear it's no longer a target and shouldn't be the driver for funding distribution. If SFC need this, we can write accordingly

> our current suggestion is that SFC distribute according to the existing split between institutions but that there is no claw back if FTE or credit targets (as there previously were) are not met - perhaps within a tolerance threshold of X%. Also recommend that max possible flexibility is shown so colleges can utilise funding in the ways that best suit needs.

Thanks

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 1 Sep 2022 16:52

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: SFC advice on FY 23-24 level 3/4 budget: NEXT MINISTERIAL LIAISON MEETING COMMISSION

Thanks [REDACTED]

We will provide briefing on development of the P&P, connection to NIF and high level outcomes and assurance. We are also meeting the Minister on Tuesday along with the Cab Sec for a discussion on P&P so he will be well briefed on all of that. Separately, Stephen is also looking for a meeting on Monday to discuss the questions that we all feel we need answers to in order to be able to provide adequate advice to Ministers on all of this, which is why we don't yet have a submission that sets all of this out clearly, this is more in [REDACTED] space than mine.

[REDACTED] is due to meet Richard (SFC) on Tuesday morning which will also inform advice to the Minister on the handling for this meeting around funding models and 116.

I will be happy to provide official support at the meeting on 7th ([REDACTED])

I think we will just have to provide you with the lines and briefing that we have on all of this but lunchtime tomorrow with a cover note/caveat to Ministers that discussions amongst officials are still ongoing and the lines may be further updated before Wednesday's meeting.

Best regards
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 01 September 2022 15:52
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: SFC advice on FY 23-24 level 3/4 budget: NEXT MINISTERIAL LIAISON MEETING COMMISSION

Thanks, [REDACTED] .

I think this is for [REDACTED] to lead on for us as this is more in the P&P space than SOAG and from a chat with her earlier I think she thinks so too (and she can tell me if not!). That said, I'm around on Friday morning if helpful.

From the SOAG point of view, the main thing to note is that the bilateral with SFC and SDS is also happening on the 7th though I'm not sure about the sequencing. The joint meeting is at 11am.

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Email 9

From: [REDACTED]
Sent on: Monday, September 5, 2022 11:04:53 AM
To: [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]
CC: [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: SFC advice on FY 23-24 level 3/4 budget: NEXT MINISTERIAL LIAISON MEETING COMMISSION

Attachments: SFC - 2022 - Ministerial Liaison Meeting - briefing - 07 September (vA59804279) KD.docx (387.09 KB)

Hi [REDACTED] , [REDACTED] ,

Couldn't get to this on Friday or the weekend so stepped out of class to quickly send you something.

The file is locked on erdm so attached is an offline version with my inputs on the prioritisation agenda item as requested. Please would you test this with Helen and Roddy, in case you are not sending the briefing up for clearance to Stephen. If Stephen will clear then you can go directly to him with the draft.

On the first agenda item, as discussed, I think this should focus on the 116k target and what it will be replaced with – so good to state this as the agenda item rather than funding models. This is one of the flexibilities we are considering for the college sector, besides a range of others, and I feel we should not conflate them all into one basket. The funding model will follow the policy decision on targets so it is a closely related but secondary issue. In-year financial flexibilities is a separate stream of flexibilities which can be considered in either case – whether we have a quantitative target or not. Then there are others like ONS classification etc.

Best wishes,

[REDACTED]

Email 10

From: [REDACTED]

Sent on: Monday, September 5, 2022 11:15:32 AM

To: [REDACTED];

CC: [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: SFC Ministerial Liaison Meeting - request for briefing - by noon, 2 September 2022

[REDACTED] and I have added and reviewed.

[REDACTED] , we are happy to assist following your meeting with SFC tomorrow morning.

Thanks,
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 05 September 2022 11:05

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: SFC Ministerial Liaison Meeting - request for briefing - by noon, 2 September 2022

Good morning all,

I am preparing the brief for Wednesday's Ministerial liaison meeting which is due with PO later today.

With apologies for the short notice, I would be grateful if you could add contributions as follows:

[REDACTED] (in [REDACTED] absence) – priorities following RSR
[REDACTED] – Funding Model ([REDACTED] has added some content already and indicated where it would be helpful for your input)

Many thanks
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 01 September 2022 08:58
To: [REDACTED] Webster H (Helen); [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED] Pooley L (Linda) Dr; Macdonald R (Roddy);
Subject: RE: SFC Ministerial Liaison Meeting - request for briefing - by noon, 2 September 2022

Good morning all,

A gentle reminder that the deadline for briefing contributions is midday tomorrow.

I have made some minor edits to this to clarify who should provide (or make arrangements to provide) the specific contributions required:

- Funding Model – [REDACTED]
- Priorities following RSR – [REDACTED]
- Purpose and Principles – [REDACTED] /Helen

Please could you also confirm that you (or someone from your team) will be available to attend this meeting?

Many thanks
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 30 August 2022 14:18
To: [REDACTED] Webster H (Helen); [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED] Pooley L (Linda) Dr; Macdonald R (Roddy)
Subject: SFC Ministerial Liaison Meeting - request for briefing - by noon, 2 September 2022

All,

The next SFC Ministerial Liaison meeting will be on Wednesday, 7 September at 1400-1445.

The primary focus of this meeting will be the Funding model/Priorities following RSR and Purpose and Principles, so please could you update the briefing contribution by the deadline indicated in the subject line.

The Sponsorship Team is responsible for liaising with the Private Office and ALS Directors/ DDs, scheduling meetings and setting timelines, pulling together inputs received from policy leads and seeking clarification where these are not clear or sufficiently focused. We also clear the final brief with DD prior to forwarding to PO and minute the meetings.

We are not experts on specific policy areas and are looking to your judgement as to what should be included; we also expect that you will have cleared any sensitive messaging with the relevant divisional lead.

Briefing inputs should provide the following:

- A short contextual paragraph *updating Minister on progress towards key outcomes for the policy/funding topic*;
- An *update and explanation of current* key issues and risks in short bullets and
- Some key questions which you wish the Minister to put to SFC to:
 - Enable SFC to clearly articulate their position and therefore progress the relevant agenda.
 - Facilitate a clear Ministerial understanding of *risks and pressures* and bring to his attention areas requiring action.
 - Relay clear *Ministerial expectations on SFC direction* and actions.
 - Provide challenge where necessary.

Just a reminder to avoid copy and paste of standard lines from your core brief, since they will already be familiar to the Minister.

I would be grateful if you could provide this by 12 noon, Friday 2 September. Please let Althea know if you are unsure about what is required, or if you think we should approach another colleague to provide this.

Many thanks for your contribution.

[REDACTED]

Email 11

From: [REDACTED]

Sent on: Tuesday, September 6, 2022 9:55:38 AM

To: [REDACTED]

CC: [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: SFC Ministerial Liaison Meeting - request for briefing - by noon, 2 September 2022

Hi [REDACTED]

My advice is to remove Annexes A & B. It all seems a bit out of date given very recent developments. The real terms deflators in the table do not reflect inflation at c. 10%. The RSR is out of date: we're going to have an emergency budget and Mr Swinney is going to make a statement tomorrow. I think less is more for this briefing. Hope that helps.

Many thanks, [REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 05 September 2022 16:17

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: SFC Ministerial Liaison Meeting - request for briefing - by noon, 2 September 2022

Hi All,

PO have now confirmed that they are happy to extend the deadline to 4pm tomorrow, so we have a little more breathing space.

Many thanks again
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 05 September 2022 16:08

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: SFC Ministerial Liaison Meeting - request for briefing - by noon, 2 September 2022

Hi [REDACTED] ,

Apologies, I spoke too soon. [REDACTED] has asked that you review the section on RSR. I would also appreciate your guidance on whether or not to include annexes A and B.

I have requested an extended deadline to send this to PO of noon tomorrow (they are usually quite flexible with this).

[REDACTED]

I would be grateful if you could review this this afternoon/tomorrow morning.

[REDACTED] would either of you have time to give this brief final clearance tomorrow before noon, once [REDACTED] has reviewed?

Many thanks
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 05 September 2022 12:51
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: SFC Ministerial Liaison Meeting - request for briefing - by noon, 2 September 2022

Phew – thank you! [REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 05 September 2022 12:09
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: SFC Ministerial Liaison Meeting - request for briefing - by noon, 2 September 2022

Hi [REDACTED] ,

[REDACTED] has now provided some content in relation to RSR so you no longer need to do anything for this.

Many thanks
[REDACTED]

Email 12

From: Webster H (Helen)
Sent on: Sunday, September 4, 2022 3:28:41 PM
To: [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]
CC: [REDACTED];
Subject: RE: SFC Ministerial Liaison Meeting - request for briefing - by noon, 2 September 2022

Hi all

Just confirming I can make this meeting on Weds

H

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 02 September 2022 11:00
To: [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]; Webster H (Helen)
Subject: RE: SFC Ministerial Liaison Meeting - request for briefing - by noon, 2 September 2022

Thank you [REDACTED] !

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 02 September 2022 10:22
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED] Webster H (Helen)
Subject: FW: SFC Ministerial Liaison Meeting - request for briefing - by noon, 2 September 2022

Hi [REDACTED]

Please see attached the P&P briefing to feed in to the Minister's briefing for the liaison meeting with Karen on Wednesday. Helen has the meeting in her diary however depending on whether she is back in action next week I could make myself available to support. It might take a bit of tweaking to tie the three brief's together to give the Minister the headlines that he needs so happy to help look at that on Monday if that is helpful.

[REDACTED]

Let me know if you need anything else.

Best regards

[REDACTED]

Email 13

From: [REDACTED]
Sent on: Tuesday, September 20, 2022 1:20:35 PM
To: [REDACTED]
CC: [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]
Subject: DRAFT OF LIAISON MEETING WITH MINISTER AND SFC - SFC PROPOSED CHANGES
Attachments: SFC - 2022 - Ministerial Liaison Meeting - note of meeting - 07 Sept - draft .1 (003).docx (42.1 KB)

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Any steer/ advice appreciated!
[REDACTED]

Email 14

From: [REDACTED]
Sent on: Wednesday, September 14, 2022 8:45:23 AM

To: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Director clearance of SFC/ Ministerial Liaison Minutes - Wed 7 Sep

From: Director of Advanced Learning and Science
Sent: 13 September 2022 16:17
To: Director of Advanced Learning and Science
Cc: [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Director clearance of SFC/ Ministerial Liaison Minutes - Wed 7 Sep

[REDACTED]
Thank you just a couple of tweaks on my part

S

From: [REDACTED] On Behalf Of Director of Advanced Learning and Science
Sent: 13 September 2022 10:36
To: Director of Advanced Learning and Science
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Director clearance of SFC/ Ministerial Liaison Minutes - Wed 7 Sep
Importance: High

Stephen for action

Please see draft minute of Wednesday 7 September SFC Ministerial Liaison meeting here.

[REDACTED]& [REDACTED] will have cleared the minutes, and added any changes by 1530 today (Tuesday 13 September) to allow you to clear at diary slot 1600.

Thanks,

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 13 September 2022 10:24
To: [REDACTED]of Advanced Learning and Science
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Please respond by 11am Tuesday 13 Sept - Ministerial Liaison Minutes

Thanks [REDACTED],

Good, clear note. I've added a couple of minor thoughts as tracks.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 13 September 2022 08:40

To: Director of Advanced Learning and Science >; [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Please respond by 11am Tuesday 13 Sept - Ministerial Liaison Minutes

Good morning both,

Just a gentle reminder that it would be helpful if you could review these minutes this morning.

If this isn't possible, please could you let me know when you are likely to have time to do this?

Many thanks
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 09 September 2022 12:33
To: Director of Advanced Learning and Science ; [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Please respond by 11am Tuesday 13 Sept - Ministerial Liaison Minutes

Hi both,

Please see draft minute of Wednesday's SFC Ministerial Liaison meeting here. I would be grateful for any comments/amendments by 11am on Tuesday if possible, to allow these to be shared with SFC, and final version signed off by Minister in a timely manner.

Many thanks
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 09 September 2022 08:49
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Ministerial Liaison Minutes

Yes – probably a good idea. Stephen will definitely want to review given that Karen and Minister are meeting again on 21st.
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 09 September 2022 08:09
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Ministerial Liaison Minutes

Thanks [REDACTED], mindful that neither [REDACTED]nor Stephen are working today – do you think it would be worth me sending to them both today to consider on Monday?

Apologies, I should have included [REDACTED] in the original email to you.

Many thanks
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 08 September 2022 18:22
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Ministerial Liaison Minutes

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Given the urgency of this, I would run past [REDACTED] before Stephen since she was there before sending to SFC. Also, can we share internally once they've looked at to Helen, [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and Roddy so they have a quick heads up on what went on. There's a number of meetings being scheduled with SFC so important they are aware – even if not the final minute approved by JH.
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 07 September 2022 17:09
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Ministerial Liaison Minutes

Hi [REDACTED],

Please see linked below draft minutes of this afternoon's meeting.

Please let me know if you have any suggested comments/amendments.

I would also appreciate a steer on if you think I should then send to SFC for comments before sending to Stephen or vice versa.

[REDACTED]
Many thanks
[REDACTED]

Email 15

From: [REDACTED]
Sent on: Tuesday, September 20, 2022 11:13:24 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Response required by close of play Friday 16 Sept - Ministerial Liaison Minutes
Attachments: SFC - 2022 - Ministerial Liaison Meeting - note of meeting - 07 Sept - draft .1.docx (51.81 KB)

Hi [REDACTED],

A lot of changes suggested, most of which don't change the meaning of anything so think would be ok to accept.

[REDACTED]

Grateful for your thoughts – I can then send to Stephen for clearance if appropriate (as there are so many changes) before sending to Minister to final approval.

Many thanks

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 20 September 2022 11:54

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: Response required by close of play Friday 16 Sept - Ministerial Liaison Minutes

Hi [REDACTED],

I hope this finds you well. Please find attached a version with some tracked changes and do let me know if you have any queries.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 14 September 2022 10:02

To: Karen Watt ; Chair ; Richard Maconachie ; Martin Boyle ; Claire McPherson

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: Response required by close of play Friday 16 Sept - Ministerial Liaison Minutes

Good morning,

I attach a draft record of the Ministerial Liaison Meeting that was held on 7 September 2022.

I would be grateful for any proposed amendments, in tracked changes, to be sent back by close of play Friday 16 September

Please note that any suggested amendments to the minutes will be reviewed, and where these are not all accepted, a final version will be circulated ahead of the next meeting.

Many thanks

Email 16

From: [REDACTED]

Sent on: Thursday, September 29, 2022 9:19:12 AM
To: Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training
CC: Director of Advanced Learning and Science ; Pooley L (Linda) Dr ; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]
Subject: Ministerial liaison 7 September 2022 - Draft Minutes for approval
Attachments: SFC - 2022 - Ministerial Liaison Meeting - note of meeting - 07 Sept - draft.docx (39.89 KB)

Good morning,

I attach a draft record of the SFC Ministerial Liaison Meeting that was held on 7 September which takes into account comments from both SG and SFC attendees. Please could you advise if Mr Hepburn would like any amendments to be made prior to these being finalised?

To ensure these are concluded promptly, I would be grateful if you could advise by cop Monday 3 October.

Many thanks
[REDACTED]

Email 17

From: [REDACTED]
Sent on: Friday, September 30, 2022 3:18:53 PM
To: kwatt@sfc.ac.uk; chair@sfc.ac.uk; RMaconachie@sfc.ac.uk; Claire McPherson ; martinboyle@sfc.ac.uk; [REDACTED] Director of Advanced Learning and Science ; [REDACTED]
CC: Pooley L (Linda) Dr ; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED] SFC Sponsorship <SFCsponsorship@gov.scot>
Subject: Ministerial Liaison Meeting with SFC 7 September 2022 - Minutes
Attachments: SFC - 2022 - Ministerial Liaison Meeting - note of meeting - 07 Sept.docx (39.88 KB)

Good afternoon,

Please see attached final version of the minutes of September's SFC Ministerial Liaison meeting.

Many thanks

Email 18

From: [REDACTED]
Sent on: Friday, September 9, 2022 11:32:55 AM

To: Director of Advanced Learning and Science ; [REDACTED]
CC: [REDACTED]
Subject: Please respond by 11am Tuesday 13 Sept - Ministerial Liaison Minutes

Hi both,

Please see draft minute of Wednesday's SFC Ministerial Liaison meeting here. I would be grateful for any comments/amendments by 11am on Tuesday if possible, to allow these to be shared with SFC, and final version signed off by Minister in a timely manner.

Many thanks
[REDACTED]

Email 19

From: Director of Advanced Learning and Science
Sent on: Tuesday, September 27, 2022 12:22:47 PM
To: [REDACTED]; Director of Advanced Learning and Science
CC: Pooley L (Linda) Dr ; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Director clearance of SFC/ Ministerial Liaison Minutes - Wed 7 Sep

Cheers [REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 27 September 2022 12:05
To: Director of Advanced Learning and Science
Cc: Pooley L (Linda) Dr ; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Director clearance of SFC/ Ministerial Liaison Minutes - Wed 7 Sep

Thanks **Stephen to see**

[REDACTED]and I have previously discussed level of detail and I've raised with Linda in the past but we've been aware that others have been content with a more verbatim approach with high level of attribution (since we sometimes need to revert to a detailed account to recall exactly what was said! I wasn't quite sure whether, because of this, a more detailed account was more the SG/SFC 'house style', rather than the approach I'd have taken as a previous board clerk (in a former life!).

Now very happy to review in the light of your steer on this and will pick up with [REDACTED].
Linda – very happy to do this unless you have objections.

[REDACTED]

From: Director of Advanced Learning and Science
Sent: 27 September 2022 11:00
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]Pooley L (Linda) Dr
Subject: RE: Director clearance of SFC/ Ministerial Liaison Minutes - Wed 7 Sep

[REDACTED]

Sorry for being slow in coming back to you on these. My sense is the minutes themselves are accurate, however there is a skill to be learned in framing minutes, so that they capture key points without going into attribution, and therefore are less of a hostage to fortune in the long-term. I have had a chat with Linda and she will help you and [REDACTED]develop this skill.

Thanks

Stephen

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 20 September 2022 16:02
To: Director of Advanced Learning and Science
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Director clearance of SFC/ Ministerial Liaison Minutes - Wed 7 Sep

Hi Stephen,

SFC suggested some amendments to these minutes.

Having liaised with [REDACTED]and [REDACTED], I have accepted almost all of these, but would appreciate your advice in relation to [REDACTED]
I would be grateful if you could provide a steer on handling this point, before a final version of the minutes is sent to the Ministers office for approval (ideally by the end of this week).

Many thanks
[REDACTED]

Email 20

From: [REDACTED]
Sent on: Tuesday, September 20, 2022 1:28:08 PM
To: [REDACTED]
CC: [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: DRAFT OF LIAISON MEETING WITH MINISTER AND SFC - SFC PROPOSED CHANGES

Hiya,

[REDACTED]

On the previous point, [REDACTED]

My suggestion would be to [REDACTED] which is helpful for S to be aware of.

[REDACTED]

Email 21

From: [REDACTED]
Sent on: Friday, September 9, 2022 7:49:21 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Ministerial Liaison Minutes

Yes – probably a good idea. Stephen will definitely want to review given that Karen and Minister are meeting again on 21st.

[REDACTED]

Email 22

From: [REDACTED]
Sent on: Tuesday, September 13, 2022 9:24:10 AM
To: [REDACTED]; Director of Advanced Learning and Science
CC: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Please respond by 11am Tuesday 13 Sept - Ministerial Liaison Minutes

Thanks [REDACTED],

Good, clear note. I've added a couple of minor thoughts as tracks.

[REDACTED]

Email 23

From: [REDACTED]
Sent on: Tuesday, September 20, 2022 12:59:42 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Response required by close of play Friday 16 Sept - Ministerial Liaison Minutes

Thanks [REDACTED]– I will accept changes and send back to you with any other comments.

Thanks for looking at so speedily.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 20 September 2022 12:13
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Response required by close of play Friday 16 Sept - Ministerial Liaison Minutes

Hi [REDACTED],

A lot of changes suggested, most of which don't change the meaning of anything so think would be ok to accept.

[REDACTED]

Grateful for your thoughts – I can then send to Stephen for clearance if appropriate (as there are so many changes) before sending to Minister to final approval.

Many thanks
[REDACTED]

Email 24

From: Richard Maconachie
Sent on: Wednesday, September 14, 2022 9:33:11 AM
To: [REDACTED]; Karen Watt ; Chair ; Martin Boyle ; Claire McPherson
CC: [REDACTED];
Subject: RE: Response required by close of play Friday 16 Sept - Ministerial Liaison Minutes
Attachments: SFC - 2022 - Ministerial Liaison Meeting - note of meeting - 07 Sept - draft.docx (44.24 KB)

[REDACTED],

Thank you for sight of the draft which covers the points raised.

[REDACTED]

R

Email 25

From: [REDACTED]
Sent on: Tuesday, September 20, 2022 12:59:42 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Response required by close of play Friday 16 Sept - Ministerial Liaison Minutes

Thanks [REDACTED]– I will accept changes and send back to you with any other comments.

Thanks for looking at so speedily.

[REDACTED]

Email 26

From: [REDACTED]

Sent on: Friday, November 4, 2022 7:16:22 AM

To: [REDACTED]

CC: SFC Sponsorship <SFCSponsorship@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: Ministerial Liaison Meeting - 26 October - draft minutes - response required by 4 November

Morning [REDACTED],

Ok no problem, and thank you for understanding.

Many thanks
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 03 November 2022 16:26

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: SFC Sponsorship <SFCSponsorship@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: Ministerial Liaison Meeting - 26 October - draft minutes - response required by 4 November

Hi [REDACTED],

Many thanks for your reply and for the background information which is very helpful – I completely understand that and happy to continue with the current process.

Kind regards,
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 03 November 2022 16:07

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: SFCSponsorship@gov.scot; [REDACTED]

Subject: FW: Ministerial Liaison Meeting - 26 October - draft minutes - response required by 4 November

Hi [REDACTED],

[REDACTED]has forwarded your query to me.

Concern has previously been expressed in the time taken between these meetings taking place and us sending them to Mr Hepburn's office, so we are not able to extend SFC's requested turnaround time if following the same sequence of activity. However, what we could do is send the draft minutes to Mr Hepburn, before sending these to SFC. Would this be helpful?

Many thanks

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 03 November 2022 10:35

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: Ministerial Liaison Meeting - 26 October - draft minutes - response required by 4 November

Hi [REDACTED],

Many thanks for these minutes, I'll get these reviewed and, due to staff availability, will come back to you early next week. I wonder if it might be possible to provide a bit more time for us to turnaround of these notes in future – would 5 working days be possible?

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 02 November 2022 13:32

To: Karen Watt ; Chair ; Richard Maconachie ; Martin Boyle ; [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: Ministerial Liaison Meeting - 26 October - draft minutes - response required by 4 November

Good afternoon

I attach a draft record of the Ministerial Liaison Meeting that was held on Wednesday, 26 October.

I would be grateful for any proposed amendments, in tracked changes, to be sent back by cop on Friday, 4 November.

Please note that any suggested amendments to the minutes will be reviewed, and where these are not all accepted, a final version will be circulated ahead of the next meeting.

Best regards

[REDACTED]

Email 27

From: [REDACTED]

Sent on: Tuesday, October 25, 2022 8:34:50 AM
To: [REDACTED]; Pooley L (Linda) Dr ; [REDACTED]
CC: [REDACTED]
Subject: Deadline 4pm Today RE: MINISTERIAL LIAISON BRIEFING URGENT:
LINDA AND [REDACTED]TO SEE

Hi All,

PO have just confirmed an extended deadline of 4pm today.

I have added a line as advised by Linda, along with some lines from the Committee briefing that went to PO yesterday afternoon, which [REDACTED] had populated/reviewed.

I couldn't think of any questions for the Minister to ask SFC at the moment, given that they are really waiting for information from SG re EBR.

[REDACTED]is double checking attendance to finalise the first page.

[REDACTED]will you have capacity to clear this ahead of the 4pm deadline?

Many thanks
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 October 2022 09:21
To: Pooley L (Linda) Dr ; [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: MINISTERIAL LIAISON BRIEFING URGENT: LINDA AND
[REDACTED] TO SEE

brilliant - thanks Linda

Sent with BlackBerry Work
(www.blackberry.com)

From: Pooley L (Linda) Dr
Date: Tuesday, 25 Oct 2022 at 9:08 am
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: MINISTERIAL LIAISON BRIEFING URGENT: LINDA AND
[REDACTED] TO SEE

As far as I know. EBR will publish on Thursday subject to todays Cabinet discussion on it .

We just need a line to that effect – [REDACTED] please can you draft in

None of us have seen Cab paper or detail of EBR

L

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 October 2022 09:05
To: Pooley L (Linda) Dr ; [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: MINISTERIAL LIAISON BRIEFING URGENT: LINDA AND [REDACTED]
TO SEE
Importance: High

Apologies both to hassle you – conscious that you are both in the skills review delivery meeting this morning. I am attending accreditation board and strategy day so unable to support team on urgent request. Can one of you add some key holding lines re EBR (having been on leave I am not clear if its conclusion delayed this week; if we have any steer on outcome) re Ministerial Liaison Brief which is now overdue for tomorrow's meeting.

If not possible, please text me and I will have to withdraw from the board to work on this.

Many thanks
[REDACTED]

Email 28

From: [REDACTED]
Sent on: Tuesday, October 25, 2022 8:00:52 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Response required by Thursday 29 September - SFC/Ministerial Liaison meeting Thursday 6 October

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 October 2022 08:12
To: [REDACTED];
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Response required by Thursday 29 September - SFC/Ministerial Liaison meeting Thursday 6 October

Good morning both,

It looks like we have missed the deadline of cop yesterday to get this brief to PO.

[REDACTED], please could you message [REDACTED] to apologies and say we will endeavour to get this to them asap today?

Further to [REDACTED] email at 5:23 yesterday, I have added the details of all the SFC attendees. [REDACTED], please could you:
Check whether Stephen, Linda and [REDACTED] are attending from our end (comments to follow up on are in the brief)
Ask PO to include all the SFC attendees in the MS Teams invitation
Please could you also confirm that you can give [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] access to share their screens?

[REDACTED], could you please confirm that you can add some content re EBR and provide final clearance on this today?

Many thanks
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 19 October 2022 11:32
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Response required by Thursday 29 September - SFC/Ministerial Liaison meeting Thursday 6 October

Hi [REDACTED]

We are aiming to submit the briefing for next week's ministerial liaison meeting to PO on Monday, 24 October.

Could you confirm if you would be happy to clear the briefing on Monday? ([REDACTED] is on leave from tomorrow until Tuesday so wouldn't be able to clear by the proposed deadline).

Also please could you add some lines on the emergency budget to the briefing.

Many thanks

[REDACTED]
From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 13 October 2022 15:27
To: Director of Advanced Learning and Science ; Webster H (Helen) ; Macdonald R (Roddy) ; [REDACTED]
Cc: Pooley L (Linda) Dr ; [REDACTED] SFC Sponsorship <SFCSponsorship@gov.scot>
Subject: FW: Response required by Thursday 29 September - SFC/Ministerial Liaison meeting Thursday 6 October

Hi All,

This meeting has now been rescheduled to Wednesday 26 October 1145 – 1230.

We are now working to a deadline of Thursday 20 October for additional briefing contributions.

Thank you to [REDACTED] who has provided briefing regarding the first item (New Tertiary Quality Enhancement Framework).

[REDACTED], I appreciate it probably won't be possible to add relevant lines on the second item until closer to the time due to EBR announcement.

This meeting will now be virtual, as usual.

Please could you confirm attendance by response to this email? [REDACTED] can then make sure it is in everyone's diary.

Many thanks again
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 22 September 2022 11:55

To: Director of Advanced Learning and Science ; Webster H (Helen) ; Macdonald R (Roddy) ; [REDACTED]

Cc: Pooley L (Linda) Dr ; [REDACTED]

Subject: Response required by Thursday 29 September - SFC/Ministerial Liaison meeting Thursday 6 October

Good afternoon,

The next SFC Ministerial Liaison meeting will be on Thursday 6 October 1500 – 1545.

Briefing Contributions

Agenda (with lead names for briefing contributions) is as follows. Please let me know if I should approach anyone else to provide this:

New Tertiary Quality Enhancement Framework (SFC to present on this)

- [REDACTED]

General discussion on emergency budget savings exercise and how this may impact delivery of SFC Review priorities (briefing required on latest position on savings exercise) - [REDACTED]

Any other routine updates

Any comments on the agenda are welcome but this working agenda has been agreed with the Minister's office and SFC.

Attendance

Attendance from the following (or a nominee) is requested:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Helen and Roddy – would either you like to attend too?

[REDACTED]and I will be attending in person (joining Minister in his office), as we are visiting parliament that day. If any other participants would like to attend in person, please let me know so I can ensure the room has enough space.

Link to provide briefing contributions is [here](#).

I would be grateful for contributions as well as confirmation of attendance by close of play on Thursday 29 September.

Many thanks

Email 29

From: [REDACTED]

Sent on: Thursday, September 29, 2022 9:51:53 AM

To: [REDACTED];

CC: [REDACTED];

Subject: RE: MINISTERIAL LIAISON MEETING 6 OCTOBER

Morning [REDACTED]

In looking at the revised dates for Oct and Nov, confirming they work for diaries here.

Many thanks
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 28 September 2022 14:34

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: MINISTERIAL LIAISON MEETING 6 OCTOBER

Hi [REDACTED]

Unfortunately w/c 10 October is the start of parliament recess so the Minister is unavailable that week.

The minister's office have advised the next availability would be Wednesday, 26th October at 1145-1230. Do diaries have availability for this date?

If so, given that November's meeting is scheduled for 8 November, we suggest pushing this back to Wednesday, 16th November at 1600-1645 if suitable?

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 28 September 2022 08:59
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: MINISTERIAL LIAISON MEETING 6 OCTOBER

Good morning [REDACTED]

Unfortunately we have not been able to make this revised time on Tue 4th work with diaries here.

Karen has another Parliamentary Committee appearance on 5th so with that and other commitments the early part of the week is very difficult.

The week of the 10th is looking easier for both Karen and Mike, not sure if it will be possible to push into that week.

Many thanks
[REDACTED]

Email 30

From: [REDACTED]
Sent on: Friday, September 9, 2022 1:04:57 PM
To: [REDACTED]
CC: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: MINISTERIAL LIAISON MEETING 6 OCTOBER

Thank you [REDACTED],

I don't have permission to amend the [REDACTED] event (which SFC colleagues have in calendars). Would you be able to secure the 1500 – 15:45 timeslot in diaries, and [REDACTED] can update the event when she is back from leave?

Many thanks
[REDACTED]

Email 31

From: [REDACTED]
Sent on: Wednesday, September 28, 2022 6:56:57 AM
To: [REDACTED]
CC: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: MINISTERIAL LIAISON MEETING 6 OCTOBER

Thanks [REDACTED],

It would be good to get this finalised today. I will be offline from midday so please include [REDACTED] in any updates on this.

Many thanks again
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 27 September 2022 10:31
To: [REDACTED];
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: MINISTERIAL LIAISON MEETING 6 OCTOBER

Morning [REDACTED], thanks for your email, we are checking this out with Karen and Mike. Will get back to you.

Many thanks
[REDACTED]

Email 32

From: [REDACTED] on behalf of Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training
Sent on: Friday, September 9, 2022 12:19:32 PM
To: [REDACTED]; Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training
CC: [REDACTED];
Subject: RE: Ministerial Liaison Meetings with SFC

Perfect, thanks [REDACTED]! That's it changed now.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 09 September 2022 11:54
To: Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training
Cc: [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Ministerial Liaison Meetings with SFC

Hi [REDACTED],

This time works for both SFC and ALS Director, so please go ahead and amend the invitation.

Many thanks
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED] On Behalf Of Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training
Sent: 08 September 2022 15:47
To: [REDACTED] Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training

Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Ministerial Liaison Meetings with SFC

Hi [REDACTED],

Can confirm Mr Hepburn is now required in the Chamber for Portfolio questions and question prep at the time of this meeting unfortunately.

There is space later that afternoon from 1500-1545 if that works?

Thanks,
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 08 September 2022 15:31
To: Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Ministerial Liaison Meetings with SFC

Good afternoon,

I understand that Mr Hepburn may be required to be in the chamber at this time
If this is the case, would you be able to provide some alternative dates/times? I can then follow up with SFC representatives for their availability.

Many thanks
[REDACTED]

Email 33

From: [REDACTED]
Sent on: Friday, September 30, 2022 6:55:28 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Ministerial Liaison Meetings with SFC

Brilliant, thank you!

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 29 September 2022 14:18
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Ministerial Liaison Meetings with SFC

Hi [REDACTED]

I'm able to attend the meeting and have put a note in my diary to update the tasks for both meetings, next week.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 29 September 2022 13:50
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Ministerial Liaison Meetings with SFC

Hi [REDACTED],

Thank you for sorting these out.

Unfortunately I am now confirmed on an interview panel for the 26 October so won't be available to take a note of the meeting. Could you confirm you are able to attend this one? I will still lead on briefing etc. and we can chat about the minuting style following some feedback Stephen provided on the September meeting minutes.

It would also be really helpful if at some point next week you could update the deadlines on the tasks by planner on the Ministerial liaison teams channel to reflect the new meeting dates.

Thanks again
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 29 September 2022 11:43
To: Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Ministerial Liaison Meetings with SFC

Hi [REDACTED]

I've heard back from SFC and they are happy to go with 26th October at 1145-1230 and on 16th November at 1600-1645.

Grateful if you could send out updated meeting requests, many thanks for your help.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]On Behalf Of Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training
Sent: 28 September 2022 13:35
To: [REDACTED] Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Ministerial Liaison Meetings with SFC

Hi [REDACTED],

Thanks for flagging this, probably best to push back. There's availability 1600-1645 on 16th November if that works?

Thanks,
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 28 September 2022 13:30
To: Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Ministerial Liaison Meetings with SFC

Hi [REDACTED]

I can check that date out and let you know.

If suitable, would the Minister still wish to meet with SFC on 8 November which is in the diary and would fall only two weeks after 26 October? Or do you think we should push that back a week?

Best regards

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]On Behalf Of Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training
Sent: 28 September 2022 12:39
To: [REDACTED]Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training
Cc: [REDACTED]Subject: RE: Ministerial Liaison Meetings with SFC

Hi [REDACTED],

That's no problem thanks for checking.

Unfortunately wc 10th is the first week of October Recess and we are trying to withhold these dates for constituency business via his MSP Office in addition to Ministerial visits which can't take place during the parliamentary term.

The next closest availability would be 26th October 1145-1230 if that works?

Thanks,
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 28 September 2022 09:43
To: Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Ministerial Liaison Meetings with SFC

Hi [REDACTED]

Unfortunately the 4th October doesn't work with SFC diaries.

They have asked if there is any availability for w/c 10 October?

Best regards

From: [REDACTED] On Behalf Of Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training

Sent: 26 September 2022 12:03

To: Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training ; [REDACTED] Director of Advanced Learning and Science ; Pooley L (Linda) Dr ; Webster H (Helen) ; Macdonald R (Roddy) ; Subject: RE: Ministerial Liaison Meetings with SFC

Apologies, I meant Tuesday 4th October 1600-1645

Thanks,
[REDACTED]

Hi Everyone,

Unfortunately the SFC meeting currently scheduled for Thursday 6th October at 1500 now clashes with a stage three Bill so Mr Hepburn will be required in the chamber at this time.

There is availability for this on Monday 4th October 1600-1645, grateful if you can take this forward with SFC.

Thanks,
[REDACTED]

Email 34

From: [REDACTED]

Sent on: Tuesday, October 18, 2022 1:06:32 PM

To: Webster H (Helen) ; Director of Advanced Learning and Science ; Macdonald R (Roddy) ; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]

CC: Pooley L (Linda) Dr ; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]SFC Sponsorship <SFCsponsorship@gov.scot>

Subject: RE: Response required by Thursday 29 September - SFC/Ministerial Liaison meeting Thursday 6 October

Hi Helen,

No problem. I don't think its critical that anyone from reform division attends this. [REDACTED]and [REDACTED]– could you both please confirm that you will can attend this meeting on Wednesday 26 October 1145 – 1230?

Many thanks
[REDACTED]

From: Webster H (Helen)
Sent: 18 October 2022 13:52
To: [REDACTED]; Director of Advanced Learning and Science ; Macdonald R (Roddy) ; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]
Cc: Pooley L (Linda) Dr ; [REDACTED]; SFC Sponsorship <SFCsponsorship@gov.scot>
Subject: RE: Response required by Thursday 29 September - SFC/Ministerial Liaison meeting Thursday 6 October

Thanks [REDACTED]

I'm afraid [REDACTED]and I are unable to join this as we have a meeting clash. [REDACTED]looks like she might be able to attend but will let her confirm when she is back next week. Is it critical someone from here is in attendance?

Many thanks
Helen

Email 35

From: [REDACTED]
Sent on: Wednesday, September 28, 2022 11:21:15 AM
To: Director of Advanced Learning and Science ; Webster H (Helen) ; Macdonald R (Roddy) ; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED];
CC: Pooley L (Linda) Dr ; [REDACTED];
Subject: RE: Response required by Thursday 29 September - SFC/Ministerial Liaison meeting Thursday 6 October

Hi All,

You will have just seen that I have cancelled the hold on diaries for 4 October as this date does not work for Karen and Mike.

[REDACTED] is working to secure an alternative slot, likely to be on week commencing 10 October. We will be in touch with a revised deadline for briefing contributions once this is confirmed.

Many thanks again

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 28 September 2022 12:14
To: [REDACTED]; Director of Advanced Learning and Science ; Webster H (Helen) ; Macdonald R (Roddy) ; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]
Cc: Pooley L (Linda) Dr ; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Response required by Thursday 29 September - SFC/Ministerial Liaison meeting Thursday 6 October

Hi [REDACTED]

Apologies, I've clearly missed your previous email of 22 Sept below.
I will be unable to attend the meeting due to the cost of living bill work which will peak next week.
[REDACTED] will attend in my place. [REDACTED] will also add to your briefing (thanks [REDACTED])

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 28 September 2022 08:08
To: Director of Advanced Learning and Science ; Webster H (Helen) ; Macdonald R (Roddy) ; [REDACTED][REDACTED]
Cc: Pooley L (Linda) Dr ; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Response required by Thursday 29 September - SFC/Ministerial Liaison meeting Thursday 6 October

Good morning All,

This meeting is going to be rescheduled as Mr Hepburn is required in the Chamber at the time below.

His PO have requested this be moved to 4pm on Tuesday 4 October which would mean we have an earlier deadline to submit the brief.

We are waiting on confirmation of whether this will suit Karen and Mike. In the meantime I will put a hold in diaries for awareness and we can confirm attendance once the timeslot is agreed.

Please let me know of any concerns with this approach.

Many thanks
[REDACTED]

Email 36

From: [REDACTED]
Sent on: Tuesday, October 25, 2022 12:50:59 PM
To: [REDACTED]
CC: [REDACTED]; SFC Sponsorship <SFCsponsorship@gov.scot>;

Subject: RE: Response required Thursday 20 October - SFC/Ministerial Liaison Meeting 26 October

Hi [REDACTED],

Thank you for confirming and sending this across.
[REDACTED] is arranging for you to have access to present screens in tomorrow's meeting.

Many thanks
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 24 October 2022 17:23
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED] [REDACTED]; SFC Sponsorship <SFC Sponsorship@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Response required Thursday 20 October - SFC/Ministerial Liaison Meeting 26 October

Hi [REDACTED],

I hope this finds you well today. I'm writing to confirm that [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and I will join Mike and Karen for this meeting. With my apologies for missing the deadline outlined below, please find attached a short PowerPoint for item 1. I'd be grateful if permissions can be provided so that myself, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] can share our screens.

Many thanks for your help.

Kind regards,
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 13 October 2022 15:13
To: [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED] SFC Sponsorship@gov.scot
Subject: FW: Response required Thursday 20 October - SFC/Ministerial Liaison Meeting 26 October

Good afternoon,

This meeting has now been rescheduled to Wednesday 26 October 1145 - 1230
If there are any papers or PowerPoint slides SFC would like circulated in advance of this meeting, or any information that may be helpful to include in Mr Hepburn's briefing pack, please could you send these to me by 12 noon Thursday 20 October.

Please could you also confirm who will be attending from SFC, based on the agenda?

Many thanks
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 22 September 2022 11:55
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]
Subject: Response required Friday 30 September SFC/Ministerial Liaison Meeting 6 October

Good afternoon,

The next SFC Ministerial Liaison meeting will be on Thursday 6 October 1500 – 1545.

The focus of the upcoming meeting will be:
New Tertiary Quality Enhancement Framework (SFC to present on this)
General discussion on emergency budget savings exercise and how this may impact delivery of SFC Review priorities
Any other routine updates

If there are any papers or PowerPoint slides SFC would like circulated in advance of this meeting, or any information that may be helpful to include in Mr Hepburn's briefing pack, please could you send these to me by 12 noon Friday 30 September.

Please could you also confirm who will be attending from SFC, based on the agenda?

Many thanks
[REDACTED]

Email 37

From: [REDACTED] on behalf of Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training
Sent on: Wednesday, September 21, 2022 12:01:59 PM
To: [REDACTED]; Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training
CC: Director of Advanced Learning and Science ; [REDACTED]; Pooley L (Linda) Dr ; Macdonald R (Roddy) ; Webster H (Helen) ; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: SFC/SG Ministerial Liaison Thursday 6 October

Hi [REDACTED],

Mr Hepburn has said beyond any routine updates what you've set out is grand.

Also happy to have this meeting hybrid with Officials attending in Parliament as discussed on Teams, making a room booking now.

Thanks,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 16 September 2022 12:22

To: Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training

Cc: Director of Advanced Learning and Science ; [REDACTED]; Pooley L (Linda) Dr ; Macdonald R (Roddy) ; Webster H (Helen) ; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]

Subject: SFC/SG Ministerial Liaison Thursday 6 October

Good afternoon,

The next SFC Ministerial Liaison meeting will be on Thursday 6 October at 3pm.

It has been proposed that this meeting be used to allow SFC to present their work on the new Tertiary Quality Enhancement Framework, as well as a general discussion on emergency budget savings exercise and how this may impact delivery of SFC Review priorities.

I would be grateful if you could provide details of any additions or amendments Mr Hepburn would like to make to this agenda by close of play on Wednesday 21 September.

Many thanks

[REDACTED]

Email 38

From: [REDACTED]

Sent on: Thursday, September 22, 2022 10:54:33 AM

To: [REDACTED]

CC: [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED];

Subject: Response required Friday 30 September SFC/Ministerial Liaison Meeting 6 October

Good afternoon,

The next SFC Ministerial Liaison meeting will be on Thursday 6 October 1500 – 1545.

The focus of the upcoming meeting will be:

- New Tertiary Quality Enhancement Framework (SFC to present on this)
- General discussion on emergency budget savings exercise and how this may impact delivery of SFC Review priorities
- Any other routine updates

If there are any papers or PowerPoint slides SFC would like circulated in advance of this meeting, or any information that may be helpful to include in Mr Hepburn's briefing pack, please could you send these to me by 12 noon Friday 30 September.

Please could you also confirm who will be attending from SFC, based on the agenda?

Many thanks
[REDACTED]

Jamie Hepburn's meeting with Universities Scotland on September 21, 2022

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| <i>What</i> | Quarterly meeting with Universities Scotland (US) Agenda: Cost of living crisis Impact on students Impact on universities Ongoing Scottish Government work Spending review Defining a purpose for tertiary education and research International Education Strategy |
| <i>Where</i> | Virtual meeting: MS Teams: Click here to join the meeting |
| <i>When</i> | 21 September 2022, 13:00-13:45 |
| <i>Who</i> | Professor Dame Sally Mapstone (Convener, US) Duncan McKay (US Senior Public Affairs and Communications Officer) |
| <i>Why</i> | During a 10 June 2021 meeting, US suggested reintroducing quarterly Ministerial calls to discuss a range of issues affecting the sector. The last meeting took place on 26 May 2022. |
| <i>Supporting official(s)</i> | Roddy Macdonald (Deputy Director, Advanced Learning and Science;) |
| <i>Media Handling</i> | Private meeting. |
| <i>Briefing contents</i> | Annex A: Cost of living crisis – Impact on students Annex B: Cost of living crisis – Impact on universities Annex C: Defining purpose for tertiary education and research Annex D: International Education Strategy Annex E: Other key messages Annex F: Universities Scotland – Overview Annex G: US biographies |

ANNEX A

COST OF LIVING CRISIS – IMPACT ON STUDENTS

Student Financial Support

1. NUS Scotland's *Broke* report, published in February 2022, reported that 54 per cent of students find it hard to cope financially over the summer months, with essential bills and the cost of living among the major financial pressures facing students during the holiday period.
2. An August 2022 NUS survey found that 92 per cent of UK students said the cost-of-living crisis was impacting their mental health, 96 per cent of students are cutting back, 68 per cent can no longer afford course materials, and more than one in ten are using food banks.
3. An NUS news release from September 2022 noted the following: "As Scotland's students return to college and university for the new academic term, NUS Scotland is highlighting the significant impact of the summer's spiralling cost of living crisis on Scotland's student population and reiterating its call to the Scottish Government to urgently introduce a Student Summer Payment."
4. In February 2022 SG announced a £350 loan uplift for 2022/23 for higher education students. This means that the most disadvantaged students can access £8,100 per year through bursary and loan and is the first step in our commitment to provide student support in line with the living wage.
5. SG has also announced the introduction of a new 12 monthly payment option in 2022/23 for HE students receiving the Care Experienced Bursary, to provide an opportunity for support to be made available over the summer months.
6. SG has committed to the following:
 - That the total student support package reaches the equivalent of the Living Wage over the next three years, including for estranged students;
 - The introduction of a special support payment so that students on benefits do not lose out because they are in receipt of, or entitled to, student support.
 - To undertake a review of postgraduate funding and take measures to halt student loan interest during maternity leave.
 - Students in Further or Higher Education currently experiencing financial hardship should apply to their college or university for support from Discretionary Funds.

Student financial support - Lines to take:

Clearly this is a challenging time for many students. Those facing financial hardship are able to apply to their college or university for assistance through their Discretionary Funds.

I previously wrote to college and university Principals urging them to continue to prioritise the allocation of hardship funds to those students most in need, and to take account of the impact of rising energy bills.

In our Programme for Government, we committed to start work to introduce a range of substantial reforms to student support, and work is underway on these.

It is imperative that we deliver a long-term sustainable solution for supporting students over the summer. We remain committed to delivering this for 2024/25 Academic Year.

Student Accommodation – Lines to take:

The Scottish Government has no direct role in the provision of student residential accommodation but is working with partner organisations to deliver a Student Accommodation Strategy for Scotland, informed by the review of Purpose Built Student Accommodation.

The Purpose Built Student Accommodation Review is being taken forward in parallel with the New Deal for Tenants which will address rent affordability and improving standards across the private rented sector.

All students who are renting in the private rented sector will benefit from the protections we are putting in place through the Emergency Cost of Living Bill. For those students in University and College Halls of Residence or Purpose Built Student Accommodation, the structure of contracts is different and often includes energy costs. We will, therefore, work to ensure parity of protection for those students.

[Not for sharing – at time of writing, officials working to include PBSAs and university accommodation in Emergency Cost of Living Bill]

Student Mental Health and Wellbeing – Lines to take:

We are committed to the development of an evidence and research-informed Student Mental Health Action Plan, which will be published in Spring 2023.

As this work progresses, we will continue to consult with Universities Scotland via the Student Mental Health and Wellbeing Working Group.

Aware that US have been invited to a roundtable on mental health referral pathways on 27 September, and officials are working to ensure that US are represented at that meeting, given unavoidable diary clashes. There will be other opportunities to discuss the issue with SG.

The latest data from the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) confirms that, with 89 FTE counsellors recruited over the past three years, we have met our commitment to deliver more than 80 additional counsellors in colleges and universities.

ANNEX B

COST OF LIVING CRISIS – IMPACT ON UNIVERSITIES

1. In its submission for the RSR, Universities Scotland (US) had set out an additional resource investment position of £62.2m for 2023/24, with an uplift for inflation up to 2026/27, and an additional capital increase of £43.8 for 2023/24, with inflationary increases to 2026/27.

2. In June this year, following publication of the RSR, US said:

“It’s hard to feel anything other than disappointment and deep concern for the medium-term future based on today’s resource spending review allocations. The real terms cuts to higher education make it incredibly difficult to continue to deliver for Scotland, our students, staff and the communities we serve.”

“The outlook is bleak for the next few years. We lack clarity on detailed, multi-year funding for universities that allow them to plan to manage the financial storm.”

“Universities are integral to the realisation of the national economic transformation strategy and the Government’s ambitions on skills, innovation and enterprise. They also are key to public sector reform – already doing so much to operate efficiently through procurement and reform of their estates.”

“With such close alignment to the Scottish Government’s agendas and stated priorities in this spending review, it is incredibly disheartening to read that the financial situation facing university students, staff and institutions is forecast to get worse, year on year.”

3. Key arguments made by US:

Continued real-terms cuts in SG funding for university teaching and research, over consecutive years from 2014-15, are putting the breadth of universities’ contributions at risk and they are facing severe challenges meeting students’ increased needs while facing year-on-year real terms reductions in funding.

The Teaching Grant has been eroded by 14.6% in real terms between 2014-15 and 2022-23 meaning £996 less is spent on the education of every Scottish-domiciled undergraduate student on an annual basis. To maintain quality and avoid an impact on outputs, universities have to generate average cross-subsidies of 20% to address Government under-funding.

Universities are alone in experiencing a pattern of sustained real-terms decline.

For every £1 million drop in higher education spending power, at least a further £1.8 million is lost to the Scottish economy and £2.5 million to the UK economy as a whole.

For every 100 students who don’t reach higher education and don’t get the support they need to achieve their learning goals, the Scottish Government loses £2.2m in net present value through the additional income tax contributions of their high-skill human capital.

5. The outcome of the RSR is a flat cash resource funding settlement for the tertiary education sector, translating to expected real terms cuts in funding across four years:

Table – Final Level 2 allocations (£m)

| | 2022-23 (Baseline) | 2023- 24 | 2024- 25 | 2025-26 | 2026- 27 |
|---|---------------------------|-------------|-------------|---------|-------------|
| Higher education and student support | | | | | |
| <i>cash terms</i> | 348.7 | 349.0 | 349.0 | 349.0 | 349.0 |
| <i>real terms (2020-21 prices)</i> | 338.6 | 330.9 | 324.9 | 318.6 | 312.4 |
| <i>real terms % change to 22-23 cash</i> | -2.9% | -5.1% | -6.8% | -8.6% | -10.4% |
| Scottish Funding Council | | | | | |
| <i>cash terms</i> | 1501.8 | 1501.0 | 1501.0 | 1501.0 | 1501.0 |
| <i>real terms (2020-21 prices)</i> | 1458.2 | 1423.1 | 1397.2 | 1370.4 | 1343.5 |
| <i>real terms % change to 22-23 cash</i> | -2.9% | -5.2% | -7.0% | -8.7% | -10.5% |
| Advanced Learning and Science | | | | | |
| <i>cash terms *</i> | 21.0 | 21.0 | 21.0 | 21.0 | 35.0 |
| <i>real terms (2020-21 prices)</i> | 20.4 | 19.9 | 19.5 | 19.2 | 31.3 |
| <i>real terms % change to 22-23 cash</i> | -2.9% | -5.2% | -6.9% | -8.7% | 49.2% |

Sources: Scottish Government Budget and HM Treasury's GDP Deflators at market prices, and money GDP March 2022 (Quarterly National Accounts)

Notes:

Real Terms Conversions are in 2020-21 prices

Real terms % change is estimated by taking the difference between the real terms value compared with the 2022-23 cash terms value, and then dividing the difference by the 2022-23 cash terms value.

** Excludes central running cost of £1.8 million. The L2s to be published in the RSR include the CRCs (so will be £22.9 for ALS in 22/23 - the same as the published budget), but the 'cash managed by portfolio' amount is £21m, which is flat from 22-23 over the RSR period.*

5. Preliminary work on options around the proportion of resource funding to the college and university sectors for FY 2023-24 is being carried out, to consider whether the current level should be maintained or adjusted to account rising inflationary pressures.
6. Initial inputs will be solicited from Ministers in September 2022 and final decisions due to take place by mid-November 2022 when the central finance commission will become due, which will determine level 3 and 4 budgets for SFC.
7. After the budget is announced in December 2022, SG will engage with SFC on institution level allocations between January - March 2023 ahead of final announcement of allocations by SFC before May 2023, in time for AY 23/24.
8. [REDACTED].

Resource Spending Review (RSR) and financial sustainability of universities – Lines to take:

The four-year Resource Spending Review covers the period from 2023/24 to 2026/27. Together with the 2022/23 budget announced last December, we have set out the Scottish Government's spend trajectory for the next five years providing greater certainty for planning.

Over the RSR period, we will continue to invest nearly £2 billion per year in Scotland's colleges and universities, enabling them to continue to deliver high-quality education and training. We will ensure our education and skills system is aligned to our economic needs and ambitions.

We are maintaining resource spend at £1,501 million for colleges and universities. In addition, we will continue to invest £349 million per annum in Higher Education student support, which covers free tuition fees, and bursaries for the poorest students and groups such as care experienced students.

Combined with our £354 million capital allocation in Higher Education and almost £74 million investment in college sector capital, we are providing an investment of over £1.9 billion in the tertiary sector in financial year 2023-24. This remains a significant investment in Scotland's tertiary education system which delivers impressive results for our learners.

We will continue to deliver the tertiary education programme for this Government, recognising that some aspects will need to be delivered differently when we take

account of real-terms pressures. We will make considered decisions about our options in close consultation with the sectors over the coming months.

ANNEX C

DEFINING PURPOSE & PRINCIPLES FOR TERTIARY EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

Background

1. The Purpose and Principles for Post School Education, Research and Skills Development is currently being developed with input from a wide range of people across Scotland from learners to employers.
2. This will fulfil the Scottish Government's commitment to publish a statement of strategic intent (now referred to as 'Purpose and Principles') following the SFC's recommendation in its review "Coherence and Sustainability: A Review of Tertiary Education and Research".
3. This work will complement ongoing work including:
delivery of the Adult Learning Strategy published in 2022 which sets out our actions to improve life chances for adult learners across Scotland. It outlines how we will ensure that there are accessible opportunities for adults to learn throughout their lives.
Support successful delivery of the "Skilled Workforce" programme of the National Strategy for Economic Transformation
Building on the commitment to "respond to the SFC's review of university and college provision shortly and start work on implementation to ensure that colleges and universities are enabled to support future learners and the economy." This recognises the interdependencies between the systems and their collective impact on Scotland's economy, society and environment.

Lines to take

General:

On publication, the Purpose and Principles will represent the start of a period of wider change to ensure that our post school education, research and skills system is fit for the future.

This is an opportunity to stimulate debate and discussion on all aspects of our post school education, skills and research system and to start to shift cultural expectations and challenge perceptions of what the system can deliver.

The project presents a bold and exciting opportunity to align a whole ecosystem behind a shared purpose and set of principles, articulating clearly defined roles and responsibilities which provides a clear strategic framework for decision making based on the outcomes we want to see.

The Purpose and Principles provides the vehicle to articulate clearly what the ecosystem is and the role that we expect everyone, including institutions, employers and the third sector, to play in it.

It also provides an opportunity to articulate how this could work at its best and showcase existing positive examples.

Alignment with wider education reform:

Given the scope of what we are planning, it is important to do this properly and in a way that brings all partners with us to provide the foundations for future decision making.

We will align with the implementation of recommendations arising from the OECD review, Ken Muir's report and Louise Hayward's review of qualifications as part of wider Education Reform that is underway.

Why this is being developed now:

The time is right to consider the purpose of the post school education and skills ecosystem, rooted in our National Performance Framework and values.

The ecosystem needs to be resilient and adaptable in the face of extreme challenges like the current cost crisis, climate emergency and the shifting shape of the world of work and lifelong learning as well as capitalising on existing strengths like the internationally renowned research that supports our global competitiveness.

As well as being central to the success of our economy, our education and skills ecosystem also plays a role in addressing key challenges facing our society such as poverty and climate change.

We must ensure its purpose and principles are aligned to tackling these challenges and support us in making the right choices for the future.

Timelines for development in scope and approach:

Education, skills development and research are the fundamental underpinnings of Scotland's economy and society.

This work goes beyond the critical impacts of our colleges and universities and into the role of the third sector in community learning and development, supporting those with complex needs or who are furthest from the labour market to access opportunities.

It is also about making the fundamental connection to the needs of our economy and society into the future, acknowledging that employers in both the public and private sector have a role to play in developing the skills of our workforce.

Given the breadth of scope it is right that the Purpose and Principles is developed in discussion with all of those who have a stake in it and that Government takes the time to do that.

ANNEX D

INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION STRATEGY

The 2021/22 Programme for Government committed to developing a **new strategy for international education**, to promote Scotland's education offer globally, increase the number of international students, and maintain our links with the EU.

Development of the strategy links to the PfG commitment to develop a Scottish Education Exchange Programme to support the international mobility of staff and learners, and work to re-secure Scotland's access to the Erasmus+ Programme and also to our efforts to promote Scotland as a science nation and home of innovative research.

Officials have engaged with a range of stakeholders to gather evidence for the strategy, including holding several listening exercises with Global Scots, and have conducted desk research on other countries' international education strategies.

We have sought initial feedback from key stakeholders across the FE/HE sectors who are engaged in this space. We have had several invaluable sessions with GlobalScots for an international perspective. We have engaged with other key policy areas within Scottish Government to ensure the strategy aligns to other key SG policies and priorities.

[REDACTED].

SG International Education Strategy – Lines to take:

We are developing a new strategy for international education, to promote Scotland's education offer globally, increase the number of international students, and maintain our links with the EU.

While we remain committed to Erasmus+, in the interim, we are creating a Scottish Education Exchange Programme to support participants from across Scotland's education system.

ANNEX E

OTHER KEY MESSAGES

Research Excellence Framework (REF21) results and Research Excellence Grant (REG) allocations:

The REF2021 results highlight the excellent research being carried out in our institutions and confirm Scotland's position as a world-leading research nation. They also demonstrate the impact of Scottish research across all disciplines, which is something we should be rightly proud of.

It is particularly encouraging to see high quality research extend right across all of our institutions in Scotland, and we continue to invest our research funding in excellence wherever it is found.

The REF2021 results have informed SFC's Research Excellence Grant (REG) allocations from August 2022, announced on 26 May.

Following our response to the SFC Review, the SFC has consulted with the sector on changes to the REG formula which have informed the allocation for 2022-23.

[DEFENSIVE LINES, IF REQUIRED]:

The REG allocations are based on a funding model which has been shaped in consultation with the sector.

In a tight public sector environment, we are investing in excellence wherever it is found. The recent REF results have shown there is excellence in every one of our universities in Scotland and our funding is distributed accordingly.

While we recognise that this redistribution does impact on some institutions, we are supporting them to manage this transition to minimise any disruption and to ensure the ongoing financial sustainability of the sector.

SFC will provide institutions which face significant reductions time to plan for full implementation of the changes, and has ensured that for AY2022-23 reductions from AY2021-22 should be limited to -10%.

With regard to the potential for additional capital resource for research when it becomes available, it is too early in the financial year for underspends to be available

to assist with this but we will keep this under review should capital become available later in the year.

[REDACTED].

We are also working closely with industry and our key stakeholders, including Universities Scotland, in developing Scotland's new Innovation Strategy, ensuring we capture a diverse range of opinions and insights into the barriers, opportunities and supporting assets available to strengthen Scotland's innovation ecosystem.

HE Research:

Scotland's world class university research, and its key outputs of new knowledge and insights, are fundamental to green economic recovery and growth.

Universities and innovation centres play an important role in attracting investment to Scotland together with businesses, and are an integral element of the National Strategy for Economic Transformation (NSET), as well as SG's new Innovation Strategy which is due to be published later this year.

The baseline grants for university research and innovation from SG via SFC for 2022-23 was increased to £299 million to maintain and strengthen Scotland's excellent research base.

[REDACTED].

Other sources of research funding for Scottish HEIs include charities and industry.

We provide the core university research grants, via SFC, as Capital and they are therefore included in the SG Capital Spending Review 2021-2022 to 2025-2026.

This has provided Scottish universities with a multi-year commitment from SG to continue to invest in core SFC research and knowledge exchange grants to a total of £1,582 million, with an increase each year.

FE/HE, Skills and Economic Recovery:

As we move towards recovery and renewal it is important to reframe the ask around skills planning, and both the National Strategy for Economic Transformation and the Purpose and Principles project will inform our approach to define the outcomes we seek.

These will provide the framework for a systems level response, requiring leadership at all levels across our agency partners, by employers and by our further and higher education institutions and other training providers.

Our further and higher education institutions are key strategic assets in our economic and social recovery.

As anchor institutions we recognize the breadth of the sector's contribution to a skills led recovery:

through their support to community cohesion;

in enabling and responding to the demand for skills locally, regionally, nationally and internationally; and

our universities, in particular, in providing world leading teaching, research and knowledge exchange.

We will invest an additional £500 million across this Parliament to support the new, good and green jobs of the future.

Over the next five years we will invest £200 million specifically in adult upskilling and retraining opportunities.

We allocated £3.5m in 2021/22 for a Graduate Talent Internship Programme to support new and recent graduates, with a further £3m committed to the programme in 2022/23.

We have provided almost £7 million for a university Upskilling Fund for 2022-23, to allow universities to offer short, flexible provision to allow people to upskill or reskill; and is focused on facilitating economic recovery.

We have established the Colleges and Universities Strategic Group, and work has commenced to provide oversight to the sectors input to the key policy objectives of the Young Person's Guarantee.

Although we recognise the importance of meeting the demands of employers, and the value of qualifications for adult upskilling and retraining, we are keen to work with the SFC to ensure the Graduate Apprenticeship programme is targeting those most in need of government support and delivering best value for public funding.

National Strategy for Economic Transformation:

The NSET recognises the opportunities and the challenges facing Scotland, setting out how, over the next ten years, we aim to deliver economic growth that significantly outperforms the last decade, so that the Scottish economy is more prosperous, more productive and more internationally competitive.

We have identified five key transformational programmes of action that can drive improvements in Scotland's economy: stimulating entrepreneurship; opening new markets; increasing productivity; developing the skills we need for the decade ahead; and ensuring fairer and more equal economic opportunities.

A skilled population is fundamental to business productivity and economic prosperity. We will focus our activity on the transition to net zero, the digital revolution, and lifelong training making sure employers have the supply of skills they need. Karen Watt, CEO of SFC is represented on the NSET Portfolio Board and James Dunphy, Director of Access, Learning and Outcomes at SFC will be represented on the Skilled Workforce Programme Board.

Successful delivery will be determined by a focus on a 'culture of delivery' and accountability; in which objectives are shared and responsibilities are clearly allocated and accepted across the public, private and third sector.

This will require all partners working together in a 'Team Scotland' approach to meet our ambitions for the Scottish economy. Delivery plans for each of the new programmes of action will be published in September 2022 following sign off from the NSET Delivery Board.

The NSET Delivery Board will support the development of a common accountability framework to establish key milestones and agree metrics of success. Key metrics of success will be discussed at the September NSET Delivery Board.

Shortly a Scottish Government Economic Leadership Group chaired by the First Minister will be set up to ensure public sector accountability and cross-government working.

An annual progress report will be published from the NSET Delivery Board in order to enhance public accountability, and this report will include equalities monitoring.

ANNEX F

UNIVERSITIES SCOTLAND - OVERVIEW

Founded in 1992, Universities Scotland (US) is an autonomous national council of Universities UK. It is financed by the subscription of its member institutions, and

works on behalf of the Principals and Directors of all 19 Scottish higher education institutions.

US covers almost all aspects of higher education activity in Scotland from teaching and employability to research and knowledge exchange, from widening access to issues of internationalisation, funding, efficiency and governance. More recently US has taken on a policy role in aspects of student and staff wellbeing such as mental health and prevention of gender based violence, where it can add value to the work of its members.

US also works closely with Universities UK on matters that are reserved to Westminster but directly affect universities in Scotland. The UK Research Councils and immigration policy are two key areas that are reserved to Westminster but have a cross-UK impact.

Executive Group:

Convener: Professor Dame Sally Mapstone

Vice Convener: Sir Paul Grice

Director: Alastair Sim

Deputy Director: David Lott

Lead Members:

Health: Professor Peter Mathieson

Mental Health: Professor Pamela Gillies

Committees:

Learning and Teaching Committee (Convener: Prof. Steve Olivier, Principal of Robert Gordon University)

Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee (Prof. Iain Gillespie, Principal of Dundee University)

International Committee (Prof. Andrea Nolan, Principal of Edinburgh Napier University)

Funding Policy Group (Prof. George Boyne, Principal of Aberdeen University)

Efficiency and Climate Emergency Committee (Prof. Dame Sally Mapstone)

Admissions Policy Group (Prof. Nazira Karodia, Vice-Principal of Edinburgh Napier University)

Secretaries Group (Dr Jim McGeorge, University Secretary of Dundee University)

The key relationship with US is managed by Roddy Macdonald (Deputy Director of Higher Education and Science Division).

ANNEX G

US BIOGRAPHIES

Professor Dame Sally Mapstone (Principal and Vice-Chancellor St Andrews University, Convener of US)

Professor Sally Mapstone has been Principal and Vice-Chancellor of the University of St Andrews since September 2016. Before taking up the role at St Andrews, Professor Mapstone's academic career was spent at the University of Oxford where she was latterly Professor of Older Scots Literature.

Professor Mapstone is Convener of Universities Scotland since August 2022; Convener of the Universities Scotland Efficiency and Climate Emergency Committee; member of the boards of Universities UK and UCAS; member of the Higher Education Policy Institute advisory board; Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, and President of the Saltire Society.

Sir Paul Grice (Principal and Vice-Chancellor of Queen Margaret University, Vice-Convener of US)

Sir Paul Grice joined QMU as Principal and Vice-Chancellor on 1 October 2019. Formerly Clerk and Chief Executive of the Scottish Parliament, Sir Paul Grice has an outstanding record in governance and leadership at a national level, including high level experience in academic research policy and university finance.

He was knighted in the New Year Honours List 2016 for services to the Scottish Parliament and voluntary services to higher education and the community in Scotland.

Sir Paul also has a deep understanding of the higher education sector and its challenges. He served as a member of the University Court of Stirling from 2006-2013 – chairing the University's Finance and Resources Committee from 2008-2012 – and as a member of the Economic and Social Research Council from 2009-2015. A fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, he is also a Policy Leaders Fellow at the Centre for Science and Policy at the University of Cambridge and is a board member of Policy Scotland at the University of Glasgow. He champions both the importance of research in universities and of the student experience.

Alastair Sim (Director, US)

US Director since July 2009, joining from the Scottish Government.

As a senior civil servant, Alastair developed new Scottish legislation on protection of the natural environment and on constitutional reform and was most latterly Director of Policy and Strategy at the Scottish Courts before joining Universities Scotland. Among other roles he served as Private Secretary to Ministers in the Commons and the Lords.

[REDACTED]

Note of meeting yesterday to go in Joe's briefing pack for his St Andrews visit

Roddy

Quarterly Meeting between Mr Hepburn and Universities Scotland - Professor Dame Sally Mapstone (Convener) and Sir Paul Grice (Vice Convener) 21/9/22

Key issues raised by US leadership were:

Universities trying to support students and staff through cost of living crisis, including enhanced hardship support through own funds, warm places to go, mental health support. Support NUS in their efforts to promote the issues. Keeping people in jobs also key. As charities they are expecting to benefit from UK energy support. Mr Hepburn said he was reassured and pointed to the challenges outlined in the recent DFM statement.

They are concerned that UK research investment is outstripping Scottish investment as part of UK focus on “science super-power” [REDACTED], Scotland also does well in competitive funding). They are also keen to stress the part research in particular plays in delivering NSET.

They are concerned generally about funding from the SG, flat cash as in the RSR, very difficult in time of inflation and pay rises. They stress universities should be seen as national asset to be supported well (see recent paper to Cab Sec with £171m funding bid attached). Mr Hepburn stressed the challenges of the budget and that all sectors were having to deal with cost of living.

They want to work with us on the Purpose and Principles but keen that this is at a high level and we trust them to deliver on the detail. Mr Hepburn said his ambitions related to supporting the future economy, colleges and universities as part of social fabric and ensuring equality of access for learners. They supported these aims but stressed also need to ensure international nature of universities is recognised.

They are keen to work with us on the International Education Strategy, which is being delivered for Spring 23, with stakeholder workshops in progress.

Dr Roddy Macdonald

Email 39

Hi [REDACTED]

Officials are preparing advice to Cab Sec on the invitation to meet with Sally Mapstone (likely to recommend accept). The letter seeks to discuss with Cab Sec the US budget case paper, how the sector can support the National Strategy for Economic Transformation and remain competitive; the need for a multi-year plan for sustainable funding; and SG’s ‘reform’ agenda for FE/HE.

I have attached a brief summary of the US emergency budget case.

Thanks,

[REDACTED]

From: Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training
Sent: 21 September 2022 10:08
To: Macdonald R (Roddy)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Universities Scotland Budget case

Roddy

Mr Hepburn won't get the chance to consider all of this, can he get a quick synopsis.

I take it since it came yesterday cab sec hasn't had the chance to consider to meet?

Sent with BlackBerry Work (www.blackberry.com)

From: "Macdonald R (Roddy)"

Sent: 21 Sep 2022 09:08

To: "Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training"

Cc: "[REDACTED]"

Subject: FW: Universities Scotland Budget case

[REDACTED] could you make sure Mr Hepburn seen this letter to Cab Sec before the 1pm meeting with US, it gives info on the funding request of US (£171m) and suggesting meeting in St Andrews to discuss.

Thanks Roddy

From: Alastair Sim

Sent: 20 September 2022 14:56

To: Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills

Cc: Minister for Further Education, Higher Education and Science; DG Education & Justice ; Director of Advanced Learning and Science ; Principal; Macdonald R (Roddy) ; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]

Subject: Universities Scotland Budget case

Dear Cabinet Secretary,

I attach a letter from Universities Scotland Convener Dame Sally Mapstone together with Universities Scotland's Budget case, for consideration in advance of the imminent Emergency Scottish Budget.

The letter proposes a meeting, either at St Andrews or digitally. Could your office please liaise with [REDACTED] at Universities Scotland (copied in) to co-ordinate dates?

Many thanks,

Alastair

Alastair Sim

Director, Universities Scotland

University Scotland Letter

Central ask

Investment of £171.7m to sustain universities' contribution through a continuing period of emergency in the economy and society.

Universities urgently need SG and SFC to develop a multi-year plan for sustainable funding for the sector's contribution – it is Universities Scotland's view that the scale of the financial challenge facing the sector means it cannot continue to engage on an annual basis.

US concerned about real-terms cuts in funding per learner since 2014/15; impact of sustained inflation; projections of core university funding cuts for teaching and research by 37-41% in real terms over ten years, compounding cut in funding per student of £2,325 since 2014/15.

Research and Innovation

US are seeking £45 million to boost research competitiveness:

“The Scottish Government has the opportunity to support this through the Barnett consequential of ambitious investment in the research competitiveness of English universities, which is increasing by 35% over 3 years and is a major threat to Scotland’s competitive position.”

“A £45m investment can translate into c£360m of economic activity”.

US are seeking at least £7.7m to increase business-facing innovation:

“A direct investment in delivering the innovation ambitions of the National Strategy for Economic Transformation”.

This will enable institutions to enhance leverage of resources from sources such as Innovate UK; pay for business incubation services; pay for staff to work with businesses to help them benefit from co-creation of ideas and products with universities; support universities to provide consultancy for SMEs to help them grow as innovative businesses.

Teaching and supporting students

US are seeking an additional £400 in teaching and supporting each student, particularly to address students’ increased post-pandemic learning and welfare needs, requiring an estimated additional £55.2m.

This would help to pay for increased teaching that students require as a result of lost learning throughout the pandemic, as well as supporting the wider range of study support, study facilities and welfare services that are facing sharply increased post-pandemic demand from students.

Specific support for the costs of the mental health counsellors is required to be funded on a year-by-year basis by the Scottish Government (£3.8m), to address underfunding beyond 2022/23.

Green and modern facilities

US are seeking a capital transformation fund of £60m that institutions could use flexibly to help attain net zero; invest in high-quality digital innovation; enable institutions which currently have very restricted capacity to raise capital to make progress towards the environmental sustainability of their estates; invest in the high-quality blended digital and in-person learning.

Jamie Hepburn's meetings with the NUS on September 21 and 28.

Minister for Higher Education and Further Education, Youth Employment and Training

Introductory meeting with new NUS Scotland President, Ellie Gomersall

| | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| <i>Date and Time of Engagement</i> | <p>Wednesday 21 September 2022 14:00 – 14:30 MS Teams: Click here to join the meeting</p> |
| <i>Who</i> | <p>Ellie Gomersall - President NUS Scotland [REDACTED] - Director NUS Scotland</p> |
| <i>Key Purpose</i> | <p>This meeting was originally scheduled for 06 September but PO asked to rearrange due to parliamentary business.</p> <p>An introductory meeting with the new NUS Scotland President Ellie Gomersall. NUS Scotland have proposed the following agenda items:</p> <p>Introductions Ellie's priorities for the next two years, including NUS Scotland's Priority Campaign plan and independent NUS Scotland The Minister's priorities for next two years (in context of significant commitments for students and economic crisis)</p> |
| <i>Official Support</i> | <p>[REDACTED]</p> |
| <i>Top Lines</i> | <p>It has been an extremely challenging budget process this year, which has displayed significant funding challenges for 2022-23, a position exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic.</p> <p>Cost of Living: Clearly this is a challenging time for many students. Those facing financial hardship are able to apply to their college or university for assistance through their Discretionary Funds. I previously wrote to college and university Principals urging them to continue to prioritise the allocation of hardship funds to those students most in need, and to take account of the impact of rising energy bills.</p> <p>Student Support: In our Programme for Government, we committed to start work to introduce a range of substantial reforms to student support.</p> <p>Student Accommodation:</p> |

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| | <p>The Scottish Government has no direct role in the provision of student residential accommodation but is working with partner organisations to deliver a Student Accommodation Strategy for Scotland, informed by the review of Purpose Built Student Accommodation.</p> <p>All students who are renting in the private rented sector will benefit from the protections we are putting in place. For those students in University and College Halls of Residence or Purpose Built Student Accommodation the structure of contracts is different and often includes energy costs. We will, therefore, work to ensure parity of protection for those students.</p> <p>Cost of Learning / Travel: There are currently no plans to extend the Young Persons' Free Bus Travel Scheme to a wider age group. Those facing financial hardship are able to apply to their college or university for assistance through their Discretionary Funds.</p> <p>Student Mental Health and Wellbeing: We are very aware of the importance of student mental health and wellbeing, especially in light of the cost crisis. Over the last three academic years we have invested more than £11.5 million to support our commitment to introduce more than 80 additional counsellors in colleges and universities. The latest data from the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) confirms that we have achieved that target.</p> |
| <i>Additional Briefing</i> | <p>Annex A: Agenda Annex B: Ellie Gomersall Bio Annex C: NUS Scotland Letter - Priorities for Action on the Cost of Living Crisis Annex D: Recent NUS Engagement Annex E: Priorities for Next Two Years</p> |

ANNEX A

Agenda

Introductions

Ellie's priorities for the next two years, including NUS Scotland's Priority Campaign plan and independent NUS Scotland

The Minister's priorities for next two years (in context of significant commitments for students and economic crisis)

Closing remarks

ANNEX B

Ellie Gomersall Bio

An experienced campaigner, I have taken on leadership roles in political activism within both student politics and the wider political landscape.

In 2021 I was elected President of UWS Students' Union, where I lead a hugely successful sabbatical team by encouraging and embracing healthy, effective communication and embedding this approach throughout the organisation. This role also improved my emotional intelligence, my leadership skills and my understanding of political strategy.

I sit on the National Executive Committee of a major political party as Co-convenor of its youth wing, which is one of the largest and most successful youth wings of any Scottish political party. I also serve as Internal Elections Officer of the party, and as a lead campaign organiser for my local ward.

In May 2021 I was the youngest MSP candidate in Scotland, and after supporting the party to a record election result, I sat on the working group which successfully negotiated a transformational political cooperation deal with the Scottish Government.

I am also experienced in governance and trusteeship. I have served as a trustee of three Scottish charities and as a non-executive director of the two of these which are also companies limited by guarantee. I am particularly experienced in working with constitutional matters, and with matters surrounding equality, diversity and inclusion.

Manifesto Commitments

Free, Accessible, Lifelong Education for All

Everyone should be supported to attend college or university, regardless of background. We must fight against marketisation and push for the Scottish Government to scrap fees for postgraduate, international and rUK students. We need fully publicly-funded colleges and universities.

An End to Student Poverty

With 12% of all students having experienced homelessness, 35% having considered dropping out due to finances and 31% of students having relied on credit cards and payday loans to survive, we must demand better. Student support must reflect the cost of living and must be brought up to the real living wage, and the additional inequalities faced by students from marginalised backgrounds needs to be addressed.

We must also work to fight for fair housing, working with tenants' unions such as Living Rent to tackle dodgy landlords and purpose built student accommodation (PBSA) providers. The Scottish Government must accelerate the implementation of rent controls to prevent further exploitation of student tenants.

Addressing the Mental Health Crisis

We are in a severe student mental health crisis, which has been exacerbated by both the pandemic and poverty. Services need to be redesigned to account for the changing needs of students and further research is needed to tackle the causes at their roots.

Vision for our Movement

I believe in an NUS Scotland which is democratic, supportive, radical and fair.

A Democratic Union

I believe that the current structure under which NUS Scotland sits is no longer suitable for the needs of Scotland's student movement, and that an autonomous, independent NUS Scotland would better serve our movement. If elected, I would seek to consult widely with our movement as to the viability and suitability of an independent National Union of Students in Scotland, and would listen to the diverse voices.

A Supportive Union

NUS exists not just as a campaigning organisation, but as an organisation which supports Student Union Development within member student associations, supporting officers, activists and staff to be effective at creating change. We must ensure this support is directed to all student associations, but especially those most in need - in particular colleges and FE officers who are often not given the support they need.

A Radical Union

NUS has been proudly radical for 100 years, and this must continue. In 2022, our education is being hit by cuts after cuts, our academics are being treated with indifference by our institutions, and as students we are struggling to survive. We must take direct action where appropriate, we must stand in solidarity with staff and trade unions, and we must retain our roots as an organisation which will take radical action.

A Fair Union

Education is inaccessible for so many - our movement must stand firmly as an inclusive, accessible national union. We must address the needs of marginalised groups in society and amplify their voices within our movement.

ANNEX C

NUS Scotland Letter - Priorities for Action on the Cost of Living Crisis (05 September)

Letter separate attachment.

Top lines to take:

Cost of Living

Clearly this is a challenging time for many students. Those facing financial hardship are able to apply to their college or university for assistance through their Discretionary Funds.

I previously wrote to college and university Principals urging them to continue to prioritise the allocation of hardship funds to those students most in need, and to take account of the impact of rising energy bills.

In our Programme for Government, we committed to start work to introduce a range of substantial reforms to student support.

Student Support

In our Programme for Government, we committed to start work to introduce a range of substantial reforms to student support.

Student Accommodation

The Scottish Government has no direct role in the provision of student residential accommodation but is working with partner organisations to deliver a Student Accommodation Strategy for Scotland, informed by the review of Purpose Built Student Accommodation.

All students who are renting in the private rented sector will benefit from the protections we are putting in place. For those students in University and College Halls of Residence or Purpose Built Student Accommodation the structure of contracts is different and often includes energy costs. We will, therefore, work to ensure parity of protection for those students.

Cost of Learning / Travel

There are currently no plans to extend the Young Persons' Free Bus Travel Scheme to a wider age group.

Those facing financial hardship are able to apply to their college or university for assistance through their Discretionary Funds.

Student Mental Health and Wellbeing

We are very aware of the importance of student mental health and wellbeing, especially in light of the cost crisis.

Over the last three academic years we have invested more than £11.5 million to support our commitment to introduce more than 80 additional counsellors in colleges and universities. The latest data from the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) confirms that we have achieved that target.

We are also committed to the development of an evidence and research informed Student Mental Health Action Plan, which we intend to publish in Spring 2023.

As this work progresses, we will continue to consult with NUS Scotland, and other key stakeholders, via the Student Mental Health and Wellbeing Working Group.

Summer Support Review (This wasn't mentioned in NUS Scotland's letter but they plan to discuss it at your quarterly meeting on 28 September)

It is imperative that we deliver a long-term sustainable solution for supporting students over the summer. We remain committed to delivering this for 2024/25 Academic Year.

Due to the current financial position and operational delivery timescales, there is limited scope as to what can be achieved in the short to medium term. We look forward to receiving your written feedback on the outputs and recommendations from the review in the coming weeks.

ANNEX D

Recent NUS Engagement

05 September - NUS Scotland news release:

LACK OF SUMMER SUPPORT INTENSIFYING STUDENT HARDSHIP

NUS SCOTLAND HIGHLIGHTS DOUBLE-WHAMMY OF STUDENT BREAK AND COST OF LIVING CRISIS ON SCOTLAND'S STUDENTS

As Scotland's students return to college and university for the new academic term, NUS Scotland is highlighting the significant impact of the summer's spiralling cost of living crisis on Scotland's student population and reiterating its call to the Scottish Government to urgently introduce a Student Summer Payment.

NUS Scotland's *Broke* report, published in February this year, reported that 54 per cent of students find it hard to cope financially over the summer months, with essential bills and the cost of living among the major financial pressures facing students during the holiday period.

Additional research conducted by the Scottish Government in June reported that 63% of respondents experienced financial hardship over the summer, rising to 77% for higher education students in Scotland's colleges.

As the cost of living crisis has tightened its grip over the summer months, in a series of new case studies published by NUS Scotland students have been speaking out about the toll the cost of living crisis is having on their wellbeing and their ability to stay in education.

Speaking about her experience this summer, Glasgow University joint honours student Sophie Swan says:

"In theory the summer is meant to be time off, but my personal experience is that the summer is always more stressful than term-time because of stretched finances. This summer has definitely been tougher financially than previous years - I am scrimping and saving just to be able to cover my bills and I don't have any disposable income left over at the end of it.

"The only summer employment options are generally zero-hours and minimum wage. The uncertainty has definitely contributed to me feeling burnt out this summer. "If student payments had continued over the summer it would have made such a difference to me. Just because it's the 'holiday period' it doesn't mean we are no longer students. Student payments are a safety blanket for some, but they are a

lifeline for others and maintaining the payments over the summer would stop people from falling through the cracks.”

2

This summer’s double-whammy of the rising cost of living with the break in student payments has led some students to consider their ability to stay in education in the longer term.

Vicky Ward, a student at Fife College who will shortly begin a HND in social sciences said:

“I am a single parent of two children, and when student funding finished up in June this year I went on Universal Credit. I’ve been in education for two years and I would absolutely say that my finances have been stretched far further this summer than they were last year.

“I’m already feeling the strain with rising gas prices, electricity prices, and food prices - everything seems to have gone up by roughly a third. At points I have wondered if it is worth continuing in my studies as I worry that if I continue, debts are just going to accumulate because what I do have to live on is just not enough and the cost of living crisis is only going to get worse.

“Being totally honest, it felt as though I was being judged for opting to stay in education as opposed to employment. I want to prioritise my studies, especially because I am a Mum, and I am doing this in order to get better-paid employment in the future.

“If student payments had continued over the summer, it would have been a definite help. It would have prevented that changeover period when student support ended in June, allowed me to manage my budget over the summer months, and prevented me having to go to the job centre.”

To bridge the gap in student maintenance payments over June, July and August, NUS Scotland has campaigned for a Student Summer Payment that will ensure a Living Wage for all students over the summer months that is based on grants, rather than loans or hardship payments. The Scottish Government is currently undertaking a review of summer support arrangements.

But as the real-time impact of this summer’s spiralling cost of living crisis on Scotland’s students becomes increasingly clear, NUS Scotland is appealing to the Scottish Government to fast-track its review and prioritise the rollout of a Student Summer Payment option for all students.

NUS Scotland President, Ellie Gomersall, said:

"The unsustainable rise in the cost of living is an issue which is impacting every household, and students across Scotland are no exception. It is shocking to hear from students across the country about the very real impact that soaring energy bills, rents and other living costs have had over the summer months.

“Students’ experiences tell us that Scotland’s system of student support is broken and is perpetuating hardship at a time when cost of living pressures are only set to increase. “In launching its review of student summer support, the Scottish Government has recognised that there is a problem with the system of student support. However, we need to take action much more urgently and ensure that a summer bridge payment is an option for all students moving forward, to avoid any more falling into hardship.

“Supporting students through the cost of living crisis is the top priority for NUS Scotland and in the coming months I look forward to working with members and policy-makers on how these real impacts can be mitigated.”

Top lines to take

We are listening to the concerns of NUS and recognise that this is clearly a challenging time for many students.

Clearly this is a challenging time for many students. Those facing financial hardship are able to apply to their college or university for assistance through their Discretionary Funds.

I previously wrote to college and university Principals urging them to continue to prioritise the allocation of hardship funds to those students most in need, and to take account of the impact of rising energy bills.

In our Programme for Government, we committed to start work to introduce a range of substantial reforms to student support, and work is underway on these.

It is imperative that we deliver a long-term sustainable solution for supporting students over the summer. We remain committed to delivering this for 2024/25 Academic Year.

August 18 - NUS news release:

The Scotsman reports that recent NUS survey found that 92 per cent of UK students said the cost-of-living crisis was impacting their mental health, 96 per cent of students are cutting back, 68 per cent can no longer afford course materials, and more than one in ten are using food banks.

www.scotsman.com/news/opinion/columnists/supporting-students-to-achieve-full-potential-through-cost-of-living-crisis-viki-soper-3809519

May 18 - NUS Scotland news release:

SUMMER SUPPORT URGENTLY NEEDED TO TACKLE STUDENT POVERTY

NUS Scotland President Matt Crilly has today called on the Scottish Government to “address the summer support gap” as students face a summer of unprecedented hardship with the rising cost of living.

In June 2021 the Scottish Government pledged to review summer support for students but it is unlikely that the review will conclude this academic year.

While £20 million of additional discretionary support was made available to students by the Scottish Government last summer, no new funds have been provided this year and, despite a clear need, discretionary funds remain underspent.

54 per cent of students find coping financially over the summer months difficult according to NUS Scotland research carried out earlier this year.

When asked what students find most difficult to afford over the summer months, essential bills and costs of living came out on top – with 17 per cent saying the cost of rent followed by food at 16 per cent, utilities at 15 per cent and essential travel at 14 per cent.

NUS Scotland President Matt Crilly commented:

“Many students across Scotland have now received their last student support of the year and face yet another long summer without any upfront financial support. Coupled with the rising cost of living, the poorest students will be hit hard unless the Scottish Government takes action.

“During the Scottish Parliament elections, the First Minister pledged to look at the introduction of summer grants but progress on the government’s summer support review has been painfully slow.

“Our survey of over 3,500 students found that over half found coping financially during the summer difficult and 12 per cent had experienced homelessness since starting their studies – Scotland will continue to fail its students if we don’t address the summer support gap.

“The Scottish Government has shown that where there is a will they will find a way to provide cost-of-living support to households – they should do so now by issuing a Student Summer Payment to ensure no student falls into poverty this summer.”

12 May – NUS Scotland Student Mental Health Action Plan letter

Colleges Scotland, NUS Scotland and Universities Scotland wrote to Mr Hepburn setting out their expectations on the forthcoming Student Mental Health Action Plan and funding for counsellors in AY 22/23.

06 May - NUS Scotland college letter / news release

NUS Scotland wrote to the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills and the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and the Economy to express their concern that college students face a ‘perfect storm’ of cuts, strikes and cost of living pressures.

NUS SCOTLAND WARNS OF ‘PERFECT STORM’ FACING COLLEGE STUDENTS

NUS Scotland President Matt Crilly has today warned that college students in Scotland face a “perfect storm” as a result of government cuts, industrial action and the rising cost-of-living.

In a letter to the Scottish Government, co-signed by student officers from colleges across Scotland, Matt Crilly calls for “investment to ensure that students, staff or our colleges do not bear the brunt of the cost-of-living crisis we face.”

Industrial action in the dispute between EIS-FELA and college employers will enter its fourth week on Tuesday, with other unions in the sector considering action on fair pay.

As a result of the Scottish Government’s budget for 2022-23, the college sector faces a total reduction in their budget for 2022/23 of £51.9 million. This includes a real-terms cut of £23.9 million in their core budget and a loss of £28 million that was provided in 2021-22 to support them through the pandemic.

Even before the current cost-of-living crisis, an NUS Scotland survey of over 3,500 students in November 2021 found that over 60% of students worry about money, with a third considering dropping out for financial reasons.

Commenting, NUS Scotland President Matt Crilly said:

“There is no doubt that college students in Scotland face a perfect storm of cuts, strikes and cost-of-living rises that are having an impact on the learning and welfare of students.

“Scottish Government cuts to college budgets are putting vital student services and effective local student representation at risk on several campuses. The Government has also failed to adequately support students through the cost-of-living crisis, and many students face yet another summer without financial support.

“College staff should also not bear the brunt of the cost-of-living crisis – the government must act to ensure fair pay and prevent further disruption for students. To do nothing is to risk causing significant impact on students on the final leg of their achievement.

“We need to the government to prioritise student welfare, reverse their cuts to our education and ensure staff are supported.”

Top lines to take

We are listening to the concerns of NUS and recognise that this is clearly a challenging time for many students.

Over the last three academic years we have invested more than £11.5 million to support our commitment to introduce more than 80 additional counsellors in colleges and universities. The latest data from the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) confirms that we have achieved that target.

It is imperative that we deliver a long-term sustainable solution for supporting students over the summer. We remain committed to delivering this for 2024/25 Academic Year.

Clearly this is a challenging time for many students. Those facing financial hardship are able to apply to their college or university for assistance through their Discretionary Funds.

I previously wrote to college and university Principals urging them to continue to prioritise the allocation of hardship funds to those students most in need, and to take account of the impact of rising energy bills.

The support provided to students over the course of the pandemic has been substantial with now over £96m provided via hardship funding, digital access, mental health support and for student associations.

In our Programme for Government, we committed to start work to introduce a range of substantial reforms to student support, and work is underway on these.

ANNEX E

Priorities for Next Two Years

Student Support

In our Programme for Government, we committed to start work to introduce a range of substantial reforms to student support. These include:

Expanding our total student support package to reach the equivalent of the living wage over the next three years.

Introducing a special support payment so that students who are in receipt of benefits do not lose out because they are in receipt of, or entitled to, student support.

Halting the interest on student loans during maternity leave.

Undertaking a review into the funding provision for postgraduate students.

Improving the support available to estranged students with a package of support equivalent to the Living Wage.

Exploring whether a programme of guarantorship for estranged students, who are disproportionately vulnerable to exploitation within the housing market, can be created in partnership with colleges and universities.

So far we have:

Commenced a review of the future of summer student support and recently published the results from a small scale Student Summer Support Survey, which provides baseline evidence for the First 100 Days commitment to review summer support for students.

Established a new stakeholder group to inform work being undertaken to deliver the Student Support Programme for Government commitments

Delivered the first 100 days commitment to provide an additional £20 million in summer hardship support for the 2020/21 Academic Year (AY) via college and university Discretionary Funds.

In February I announced a £350 loan uplift for 2022/23 AY for higher education students. This means that the most disadvantaged students can access £8,100 per year through bursary and loan and is the first step in our commitment to provide student support in line with the living wage over the next three years.

Began a 2 year programme, giving students in receipt of the Care Experienced Bursary the option to receive their current funding in 12-monthly payments. We will use the findings of this to determine whether it should be extended to the undergraduate package from 2024/25 AY.

ScotCen were appointed to take forward the independent research on the experiences of estranged students in Scotland. The research concluded on the 12th August 2022 and the findings will be published within 12 weeks of this date. We will use the findings from the research to inform any future changes to the support offered to estranged students, in order to meet our commitment to offer a package of support equivalent to the Living Wage. Details on our proposed response to the key findings of the research will be provided shortly. This will cover a response to five key areas: educational transitions, mental health, accommodation, institutional support and financial support.

Commenced work to introduce a special support payment so that students on benefits do not lose out because they are in receipt of, or entitled to, student support. We are committed to delivering this within this.

Scottish Student Exchange Programme

The Scottish Government recognises the importance of educational mobility. While we remain committed to Erasmus+, in the interim, we are creating a Scottish Education Exchange Programme to support participants from across Scotland's education system.

We are engaging with stakeholders from across the education spectrum, including higher and further education, schools (including early years and care), vocational education and training, youth work, adult education and sports.

We are listening to the sectors and the needs of their learners and staff in order to ensure we create a programme fit for Scotland.

Top lines to take:

In our Programme for Government, we committed to start work to introduce a range of substantial reforms to student support.

The Scottish Government recognises the importance of educational mobility.

Minister for Higher Education and Further Education, Youth Employment and Training

Quarterly meeting with NUS Scotland

| | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| <i>Date and Time of Engagement</i> | Wednesday 28 September 15:15 – 16:00 Parliament TG.45 |
| <i>Who</i> | Ellie Gomersall - President NUS Scotland [REDACTED] (dialling in) - Director NUS Scotland [REDACTED] - Campaigns & Influencing Manager NUS Scotland |
| <i>Key Purpose</i> | This meeting was originally scheduled for 07 September but PO asked to move due to parliamentary business. This is the third quarterly meeting between the Minister and NUS Scotland. The Minister requested a series of quarterly meetings with each of the unions within his portfolio. NUS Scotland have proposed the following agenda items: |

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| | <p>Cost-of-living crisis and support for students Summer Support Review conclusions and recommendations Housing costs and shortages Mental health funding (counsellors) Budget – priorities for delivery this year and progress towards long-term commitments (including on student support and Scottish Student Exchange Programme)</p> |
| <i>Official Support</i> | [REDACTED] |
| <i>Top Lines</i> | <p>It has been an extremely challenging budget process this year, which has displayed significant funding challenges for 2022-23, a position exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic.</p> <p>Cost of Living: Clearly this is a challenging time for many students. Those facing financial hardship are able to apply to their college or university for assistance through their Discretionary Funds. I previously wrote to college and university Principals urging them to continue to prioritise the allocation of hardship funds to those students most in need, and to take account of the impact of rising energy bills. I am aware of Universities Scotland’s letter to the Cab Sec for Education and we acknowledge the work their members are doing to support students with the cost of living crisis. SG welcomes the opportunity to engage with the views of the sector and we will consider the position of students carefully during the forthcoming emergency budget discussions.</p> <p>Summer Support Review: It is imperative that we deliver a long-term sustainable solution for supporting students over the summer. Thank you for providing written feedback on the outputs and recommendations from the review. We will consider these points as part of this work.</p> <p>Student Accommodation: The Scottish Government has no direct role in the provision of student residential accommodation, whether that is managed by universities, colleges or private sector organisations, but we are determined to improve accessibility, affordability and standards across the rented sector. Future work will be informed by our current review of Purpose Built Student Accommodation, which is examining affordability issues as well as supply of housing.</p> <p>Student Mental Health and Wellbeing: We are very aware of the importance of student mental health and wellbeing, especially in light of the cost of living crisis.</p> |

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| | <p>Over the last three academic years, the Scottish Government has invested more than £11.5 million to deliver our commitment for an additional 80 additional counsellors in colleges and universities and we have exceeded that.</p> <p>Budget / Priorities for Delivery: This year we will investing almost £350 million in student support, including free tuition and cost-of-living support for students across Scotland. In our Programme for Government, we committed to start work to introduce a range of substantial reforms to student support.</p> |
| <i>Additional Briefing</i> | <p>Annex A: Agenda Annex B: Recent NUS Engagement Annex C: Cost of Living Annex D: Summer Support Review Annex E: Student Accommodation Annex F: Student Mental Health and Wellbeing Annex G: Budget / Priorities for Delivery</p> |

ANNEX A

Agenda

Welcome (Mr Hepburn)

Introductions

Cost-of-living crisis and support for students

Summer Support Review conclusions and recommendations

Housing costs and shortages

Mental health funding (counsellors)

Budget – priorities for delivery this year and progress towards long-term commitments (including on student support and Scottish Student Exchange Programme)

Closing remarks

ANNEX B

Recent NUS Engagement

28 September - NUS Scotland News Release - Mental Health Counsellors for Students:

SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT MUST LIVE UP TO STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH FUNDING PLEDGE - NUS SCOTLAND

NUS Scotland warns of student mental health crisis risk if support for counsellors is curtailed, as 7 in 10 report mental ill health

NUS Scotland is calling upon the Scottish Government to deliver on its promise to provide every student across Scotland access to mental health counsellors, regardless of where they study.

The call comes after a survey of 3,500 students reported heightened anxiety and stress due to money worries - with 69% of survey respondents for NUS Scotland's *Broke* report stating that money worries have impacted their mental health.

The Scottish Government has made no funding commitments for mental health counsellors beyond April 2023, despite a November 2019 pledge to deliver £20 million of support to recruit an additional 80 mental health counsellors in Scottish colleges and universities. The 2019 pledge came in response to a specific ask of NUS Scotland's 2018 'Budget for Better' campaign.

The April 2023 funding cliff-edge throws doubt on whether colleges and universities will be able to recruit and retain counsellors for the remainder of this, and into future, academic years. Without further funding the persistent inequity in provision between colleges and universities will also remain unaddressed, meaning the Scottish Government ambition of Equity of Access for learners will not have been achieved.

NUS Scotland has welcomed the Scottish Government's commitment to publishing a Student Mental Health Action Plan and is a member of the government-convened working group that will develop the Plan. However, with Scotland's students under increasing pressure, it is clear that action is needed in the shorter term to retain mental health support within colleges and universities and avoid a student mental health crisis.

NUS Scotland President, Ellie Gomersall, said:

"Earlier this year, over two-thirds of respondents to a NUS Scotland survey told us that money worries impacted their mental health. This is an unacceptable figure - and there can be no doubt that as the cost of living crisis deepens, so too will the risk of a serious student mental health crisis.

"Through its representation on the Scottish Government's Student Mental Health and Wellbeing Working Group, NUS Scotland will work constructively on the development of an Action Plan that provides early intervention and clear pathways of support for students.

"But this is a long-term solution to what is an increasingly urgent problem. Without a funding commitment from the Scottish Government beyond April 2023, universities and colleges will struggle to retain and recruit mental health counsellors at the worst possible moment.

"The Scottish Government must live up to its 2019 promise to NUS Scotland that £20 million of funding will be provided to support mental health counsellors in colleges and universities, so that every student has access to vital support, regardless of where they study."

05 September - NUS Scotland Letter - Priorities for Action on the Cost of Living Crisis:

Sent as separate attachment along with your response.

Top lines to take:

Cost of Living

Clearly this is a challenging time for many students. Those facing financial hardship are able to apply to their college or university for assistance through their Discretionary Funds.

I previously wrote to college and university Principals urging them to continue to prioritise the allocation of hardship funds to those students most in need, and to take account of the impact of rising energy bills.

I am aware of Universities Scotland's letter to the Cab Sec for Education and we acknowledge the work their members are doing to support students with the cost of living crisis.

SG welcomes the opportunity to engage with the views of the sector and we will consider the position of students carefully during the forthcoming emergency budget discussions.

Student Support

This year we will be investing almost £350 million in student support, including free tuition and cost-of-living support for students across Scotland.

In our Programme for Government, we committed to start work to introduce a range of substantial reforms to student support.

Student Accommodation

The Scottish Government has no direct role in the provision of student residential accommodation, whether that is managed by universities, colleges or private sector organisations, but we are determined to improve accessibility, affordability and standards across the rented sector.

Future work will be informed by our current review of Purpose Built Student Accommodation, which is examining affordability issues as well as supply of housing.

We're also committed to a fairer, more affordable private rented sector through our New Deal for Tenants, including a robust national system of rent controls to be delivered within this Parliament.

We are also aware that some students are experiencing difficulty in accessing private rented accommodation. In terms of provision, over the last 20 years, there have been a range of necessary changes to the private rented sector aimed at improving quality and accountability and yet, the sector has more than doubled over that time from 130,000 to 340,000 properties.

Cost of Learning / Travel

There are currently no plans to extend the Young Persons' Free Bus Travel Scheme to a wider age group.

Those facing financial hardship are able to apply to their college or university for assistance through their Discretionary Funds.

Student Mental Health and Wellbeing

We are very aware of the importance of student mental health and wellbeing, especially in light of the cost of living crisis.

Over the last three academic years, the Scottish Government has invested more than £11.5 million to deliver our commitment for an additional 80 additional counsellors in colleges and universities and we have exceeded that.

We are also committed to the development of an evidence and research informed Student Mental Health Action Plan, which we intend to publish in Spring 2023.

As this work progresses, we will continue to consult with NUS Scotland, and other key stakeholders, via the Student Mental Health and Wellbeing Working Group.

05 September - NUS Scotland news release:

LACK OF SUMMER SUPPORT INTENSIFYING STUDENT HARDSHIP

NUS SCOTLAND HIGHLIGHTS DOUBLE-WHAMMY OF STUDENT BREAK AND COST OF LIVING CRISIS ON SCOTLAND'S STUDENTS

As Scotland's students return to college and university for the new academic term, NUS Scotland is highlighting the significant impact of the summer's spiralling cost of living crisis on Scotland's student population and reiterating its call to the Scottish Government to urgently introduce a Student Summer Payment.

NUS Scotland's *Broke* report, published in February this year, reported that 54 per cent of students find it hard to cope financially over the summer months, with essential bills and the cost of living among the major financial pressures facing students during the holiday period.

Additional research conducted by the Scottish Government in June reported that 63% of respondents experienced financial hardship over the summer, rising to 77% for higher education students in Scotland's colleges.

As the cost of living crisis has tightened its grip over the summer months, in a series of new case studies published by NUS Scotland students have been speaking out about the toll the cost of living crisis is having on their wellbeing and their ability to stay in education.

Speaking about her experience this summer, Glasgow University joint honours student Sophie Swan says:

"In theory the summer is meant to be time off, but my personal experience is that the summer is always more stressful than term-time because of stretched finances. This

summer has definitely been tougher financially than previous years - I am scrimping and saving just to be able to cover my bills and I don't have any disposable income left over at the end of it.

"The only summer employment options are generally zero-hours and minimum wage. The uncertainty has definitely contributed to me feeling burnt out this summer. "If student payments had continued over the summer it would have made such a difference to me. Just because it's the 'holiday period' it doesn't mean we are no longer students. Student payments are a safety blanket for some, but they are a lifeline for others and maintaining the payments over the summer would stop people from falling through the cracks."

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This summer's double-whammy of the rising cost of living with the break in student payments has led some students to consider their ability to stay in education in the longer term.

Vicky Ward, a student at Fife College who will shortly begin a HND in social sciences said:

"I am a single parent of two children, and when student funding finished up in June this year I went on Universal Credit. I've been in education for two years and I would absolutely say that my finances have been stretched far further this summer than they were last year.

"I'm already feeling the strain with rising gas prices, electricity prices, and food prices - everything seems to have gone up by roughly a third. At points I have wondered if it is worth continuing in my studies as I worry that if I continue, debts are just going to accumulate because what I do have to live on is just not enough and the cost of living crisis is only going to get worse.

"Being totally honest, it felt as though I was being judged for opting to stay in education as opposed to employment. I want to prioritise my studies, especially because I am a Mum, and I am doing this in order to get better-paid employment in the future.

"If student payments had continued over the summer, it would have been a definite help. It would have prevented that changeover period when student support ended in June, allowed me to manage my budget over the summer months, and prevented me having to go to the job centre."

To bridge the gap in student maintenance payments over June, July and August, NUS Scotland has campaigned for a Student Summer Payment that will ensure a Living Wage for all students over the summer months that is based on grants, rather than loans or hardship payments. The Scottish Government is currently undertaking a review of summer support arrangements.

But as the real-time impact of this summer's spiralling cost of living crisis on Scotland's students becomes increasingly clear, NUS Scotland is appealing to the

Scottish Government to fast-track its review and prioritise the rollout of a Student Summer Payment option for all students.

NUS Scotland President, Ellie Gomersall, said:

"The unsustainable rise in the cost of living is an issue which is impacting every household, and students across Scotland are no exception. It is shocking to hear from students across the country about the very real impact that soaring energy bills, rents and other living costs have had over the summer months.

"Students' experiences tell us that Scotland's system of student support is broken and is perpetuating hardship at a time when cost of living pressures are only set to increase. "In launching its review of student summer support, the Scottish Government has recognised that there is a problem with the system of student support. However, we need to take action much more urgently and ensure that a summer bridge payment is an option for all students moving forward, to avoid any more falling into hardship.

"Supporting students through the cost of living crisis is the top priority for NUS Scotland and in the coming months I look forward to working with members and policy-makers on how these real impacts can be mitigated."

August 18: NUS news release:

The Scotsman reports that recent NUS survey found that 92 per cent of UK students said the cost-of-living crisis was impacting their mental health, 96 per cent of students are cutting back, 68 per cent can no longer afford course materials, and more than one in ten are using food banks.

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When asked what students find most difficult to afford over the summer months, essential bills and costs of living came out on top – with 17 per cent saying the cost of rent followed by food at 16 per cent, utilities at 15 per cent and essential travel at 14 per cent.

NUS Scotland President Matt Crilly commented:

“Many students across Scotland have now received their last student support of the year and face yet another long summer without any upfront financial support. Coupled with the rising cost of living, the poorest students will be hit hard unless the Scottish Government takes action.

“During the Scottish Parliament elections, the First Minister pledged to look at the introduction of summer grants but progress on the government’s summer support review has been painfully slow.

“Our survey of over 3,500 students found that over half found coping financially during the summer difficult and 12 per cent had experienced homelessness since starting their studies – Scotland will continue to fail its students if we don’t address the summer support gap.

“The Scottish Government has shown that where there is a will they will find a way to provide cost-of-living support to households – they should do so now by issuing a Student Summer Payment to ensure no student falls into poverty this summer.”

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NUS SCOTLAND WARNS OF ‘PERFECT STORM’ FACING COLLEGE STUDENTS

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Even before the current cost-of-living crisis, an NUS Scotland survey of over 3,500 students in November 2021 found that over 60% of students worry about money, with a third considering dropping out for financial reasons.

Commenting, NUS Scotland President Matt Crilly said:

"There is no doubt that college students in Scotland face a perfect storm of cuts, strikes and cost-of-living rises that are having an impact on the learning and welfare of students.

"Scottish Government cuts to college budgets are putting vital student services and effective local student representation at risk on several campuses. The Government has also failed to adequately support students through the cost-of-living crisis, and many students face yet another summer without financial support.

"College staff should also not bear the brunt of the cost-of-living crisis – the government must act to ensure fair pay and prevent further disruption for students. To do nothing is to risk causing significant impact on students on the final leg of their achievement.

"We need to the government to prioritise student welfare, reverse their cuts to our education and ensure staff are supported."

ANNEX C

Cost of Living

21 September – Universities Scotland writes to Cab Sec for Education outlining what universities are doing to support students in response to the cost of living crisis:

US calls for SG to ensure that student support and student hardship funds are sufficient to meet increased financial pressures and to use the forthcoming EBR to ensure that universities have core funding to enable them to meet the increased needs of students.

05 September - NUS Scotland news release:

LACK OF SUMMER SUPPORT INTENSIFYING STUDENT HARDSHIP

NUS SCOTLAND HIGHLIGHTS DOUBLE-WHAMMY OF STUDENT BREAK AND COST OF LIVING CRISIS ON SCOTLAND'S STUDENTS

As Scotland's students return to college and university for the new academic term, NUS Scotland is highlighting the significant impact of the summer's spiralling cost of

living crisis on Scotland's student population and reiterating its call to the Scottish Government to urgently introduce a Student Summer Payment.

NUS Scotland's *Broke* report, published in February this year, reported that 54 per cent of students find it hard to cope financially over the summer months, with essential bills and the cost of living among the major financial pressures facing students during the holiday period.

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I announced in February a £350 loan uplift for 2022/23 for higher education students. This means that the most disadvantaged students can access £8,100 per year through bursary and loan and is the first step in our commitment to provide student support in line with the living wage.

I also announced the introduction of a new 12 monthly payment option in 2022/23 for HE students receiving the Care Experienced Bursary, to provide an opportunity for support to be made available over the summer months.

We've committed that the total student support package reaches the equivalent of the Living Wage over the next three years, including for estranged students.

We will also introduce a special support payment so that students on benefits do not lose out because they are in receipt of, or entitled to, student support.

We will undertake a review of postgraduate funding and take measures to halt student loan interest during maternity leave.

Students in Further or Higher Education currently experiencing financial hardship should apply to their college or university for support from Discretionary Funds.

Top lines to take:

Clearly this is a challenging time for many students. Those facing financial hardship are able to apply to their college or university for assistance through their Discretionary Funds.

I previously wrote to college and university Principals urging them to continue to prioritise the allocation of hardship funds to those students most in need, and to take account of the impact of rising energy bills.

I am aware of Universities Scotland's letter to the Cab Sec for Education and we acknowledge the work their members are doing to support students with the cost of living crisis.

SG welcomes the opportunity to engage with the views of the sector and we will consider the position of students carefully during the forthcoming emergency budget discussions.

ANNEX D

Summer Support Review

Background

We have undertaken a review of summer support, informing the development of short, medium and long term recommendations.

We recommend that the Discretionary Fund model continues to be used as the mechanism for supporting students over the summer in the interim period.

We have developed Guiding Principles for administering discretionary funds to offer a level of consistency in approach whilst maintaining an appropriate level of flexibility for colleges and universities in administering this support.

Institutions have been invited to sign up to the principles via a Ministerial letter.

We recognise that the long term goal is to provide year round support for students at the level of the living wage.

Due to the current financial position and operational delivery timescales, there is limited scope as to what can be achieved in the short – medium term prior to the implementation of the 12 monthly payment option for all students in 2024/25.

At the most recent Student Support Stakeholder Engagement Group meeting (25th August), we presented the outputs and recommendations of the review.

NUS have recently provided written feedback in response to the recommendations from the review (20th September)

Key Points

NUS strongly support the long term recommendation to provide year round support for students equivalent to the living wage.

NUS raised concerns with the lack of an interim substantial solution out with the 12 monthly payment option being made available in 2024/25.

NUS would like to see movement towards delivering year round support sooner or delivery of their preferred solution – a Student Summer Payment.

NUS do not support solely relying on Discretionary Funding for two further years based on evidence gathered (from the Student Summer Support Survey and NUS research) that this is an ineffective means in preventing summer hardship.

NUS raised concerns that there are no long term outcomes on increasing financial support for FE students.

NUS remain committed to advocating for an upfront Student Summer Payment for both FE and HE students.

Outputs and NUS Feedback

Outputs

Short Term

College and University Discretionary Funds should be used to support students over the summer.

Introduction of Guiding Principles for institutions administering Discretionary Funds.

SAAS to update the Discretionary Fund Guidance for 2022/2023 AY to include a dedicated section on summer support.

Discretionary Fund allocations to be issued in a single instalment to institutions in August rather than split in two payments (August and February).

To request information from colleges and universities on any remaining/unspent funds within their Discretionary and/or Coronavirus Fund allocation to see if there are funds that can be repurposed in the 2022/2023AY to support students over summer 2023.

Launch of 12 monthly payment option for care experienced students from 2022/2023 AY where eligible students who select this option will receive SAAS student support payments over summer 2023.

To create a dedicated page on the Student Information Scotland website that provides guidance and links to helpful resources to support students over the summer.

Develop benefit guidance in conjunction with the Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG), which will be hosted on the SIS and SAAS website and issued out to colleges/universities, ensuring consistent and well informed advice is provided to students.

To promote the Student Information Scotland website on a larger scale to ensure students and institutions are maximising the resources and support available to them.

Medium Term

To conduct a review of the Care Experienced Accommodation Grant to ensure students are able to meet their first rent payment over the summer.

Introduce a link to the budget calculator on the students' Award Notice from SAAS to support them on managing their finances.

Long Term

Introduce the 12 monthly payment option to all undergraduate students for 2024/2025.

To consider the 12 monthly payment option in conjunction with the commitment to increase the student support package to reach the equivalent of the living wage.

To continue to work with Social Security Scotland on student entitlement to benefits as the benefit system becomes more devolved.

NUS Feedback

Overall Comments

We strongly support the long-term conclusion that the Scottish Government should 'provide year round support for students at the level of the living wage' but would like to see movement towards its delivery now. For example, by offering 12-month payments sooner or by the delivery of our preferred solution – a Student Summer Payment.

We do not support relying solely on Discretionary Funding for two further years – all of the evidence points to that being ineffective as the sole means to prevent summer hardship. We support an upfront Student Summer Payment, which would prevent hardship.

Short and Medium Term Outcomes

We are disappointed that discretionary funding is still being promoted as the short/medium term solution to summer poverty. Given the hardship identified by this survey and NUS Scotland's survey it is clear that discretionary funds are not the most effective way to ensure students have sufficient income during the summer months. We would prefer the introduction of a Student Summer Payment this year. We are also disappointed that despite finding financial hardship over the summer, neither the short term or medium term outcomes recommend increasing financial support. While we understand the financial pressures the Scottish Government faces, it should be the review's job to recommend the most effective solution to tackling summer poverty.

Given the inadequacy of the total package of student support (acknowledged by the Scottish Government in pledging an increase to the real Living Wage) we also believe it is reductive to view the medium-term solution as 'better budgeting'.

Long Term Outcomes

It is unclear why the introduction of a 12-month payment option must wait for a further year - what is the purpose of the pilot and how will its success be judged? To ensure that there is no repeat of the hardship shown by the Scottish Government and NUS research, the review should recommend 12-month financial support at the real Living Wage, rather than just a payment option.

The Scottish Government survey found that 55% of FE students experienced financial hardship over the summer but there are no long-term outcomes on increasing financial support for FE students. The review should recommend extending entitlement of benefits and the delivery of the Special Support Payment as a minimum. We also support a Student Summer Payment that ensures FE students don't fall into poverty over the summer.

Top lines to take

We are keen to deliver a long-term sustainable solution for supporting students over the summer.

Due to the current financial position and operational delivery timescales, there is limited scope as to what can be achieved in the short to medium term.

Thank you for providing written feedback on the outputs and recommendations from the review. We will consider these points as part of this work.

The 12 monthly payment option has initially been made available as a two year programme to higher education students in receipt of the Care Experienced Bursary (CEB) from 2022/23.

The two year programme will provide officials the opportunity to fully consider the viability of this option and resolve any associated operational issues, ahead of extending this across the remaining undergraduate financial support packages (including loans via SLC) from 2024/25.

This includes whether or not students opt to remain on their chosen payment option for a second year.

Currently, there are no changes required to the student support regulations in order to provide the CEB over 12 months. However, amendments will need to be made to

existing legislation which currently prevents loan payments being paid over the summer vacation period.

This project also ties in with the commitment to provide support equivalent to the living wage over the next three years, where increasing the total support package is fundamental to realising the intended benefits of offering a 12 monthly payment option to students.

We continue to explore possible options in supporting FE students.

ANNEX E

Student Accommodation

23 September - Inquiry from the Sunday National about a petition from St Andrews University students calling for publication of the PBSA review.

22 September - Glasgow University advises students without accommodation not to enrol unless they have secured accommodation:

[Glasgow students without flats told to consider quitting university - BBC News](#)
[Renting crisis: University of Glasgow students warned to not enrol amid lack of housing - HeraldScotland](#)

Aware that many students are struggling to secure accommodation, as highlighted recently by NUS. While we have no direct role in the provision of student residential accommodation, whether that is managed by universities, colleges or private sector organisations, we are determined to improve accessibility, affordability and standards across the rented sector.

We are working with our partner organisations to deliver a Student Accommodation Strategy for Scotland, informed by our review of Purpose Built Student Accommodation, which is examining affordability issues as well as supply of housing.

NUS are represented on the PBSA Review Group and have provided detailed comments on the final report which we have received and are reviewing.

Also seeking a fairer, more affordable private rented sector through our New Deal for Tenants, including a robust national system of rent controls to be delivered within this Parliament.

Aware of NUS specific concerns about removal of accommodation guarantee at University of Glasgow and of short term lets and their impact on available accommodation for students.

Glasgow now confirmed that all first year undergraduates who applied for accommodation by the deadline have now been offered accommodation.

While short-term lets bring benefits to hosts, visitors and the Scottish economy but need to be balanced with the needs of local communities, including students. Using powers provided by the Scottish Government, Edinburgh will soon become Scotland's first short-term lets control area, meaning planning permission will be required to turn residential homes into short-term lets, helping to maintain the availability of long-term residential housing in the city.

Top lines to take:

The Scottish Government has no direct role in the provision of student residential accommodation, whether that is managed by universities, colleges or private sector organisations, but we are determined to improve accessibility, affordability and standards across the rented sector.

Future work will be informed by our current review of Purpose Built Student Accommodation, which is examining affordability issues as well as supply of housing.

We're also committed to a fairer, more affordable private rented sector through our New Deal for Tenants, including a robust national system of rent controls to be delivered within this Parliament.

We are also aware that some students are experiencing difficulty in accessing private rented accommodation. In terms of provision, over the last 20 years, there have been a range of necessary changes to the private rented sector aimed at improving quality and accountability and yet, the sector has more than doubled over that time from 130,000 to 340,000 properties.

The PBSA review research report has now been received and will be considered by a review group, with recommendations being submitted to ministers later this year

ANNEX F

Student Mental Health and Wellbeing

Over the last three academic years, the Scottish Government has invested more than £11.5 million to deliver our commitment for an additional 80 additional counsellors in colleges and universities and we have exceeded that.

Our investment has resulted in a significant increase in the number of students accessing counselling services, reduced waiting lists and improved mental health and retention.

The Scottish Government has, subject to the conclusions of the ongoing Resource Spending Review, identified a provisional budget to support the final financial year of the commitment.

We are committed to the development of an evidence and research informed Student Mental Health Action Plan. A Student Mental Health and Well Being Working Group, chaired by the Minister, has been established to drive this forward.

Membership includes NUS Scotland, Think Positive, Universities Scotland and Colleges Scotland. The Group will meet again in mid-September.

We supported the NUS Think Positive initiative and welcomed the launch of the Think Positive Hub in Spring 2022.

During the pandemic (in 20/21) we supported Student Associations and NUS Scotland to continue the important work they were doing to support students at that time. This support came through Covid consequentials and was not repeated.

Ongoing Work on the Student Information Scotland (SIS) Website to Support Mental Health and Wellbeing

As an outcome of the independent Student Review in 2018 a significant investment was made by SG and SFC to develop a new one stop shop platform for all students both FE and HE. SAAS developed and maintain the website and it was launched into beta in March 2020 and into live in June 2021.

The website has evolved considerably and we have expanded the Health and Wellbeing pages. Work is already underway for a campaign to encourage students to register with a GP once settled in their new accommodation, to allow them direct access to the SG funded counsellors.

There will be continuous collaboration with SAAS and the wider sector via the Mental Health and Wellbeing group that Mr Hepburn chairs, which will allow stakeholders to feed directly into the expanding content on the SIS website

Top lines to take:

We are very aware of the importance of student mental health and wellbeing, especially in light of the cost crisis.

Over the last three academic years, the Scottish Government has invested more than £11.5 million to deliver our commitment for an additional 80 additional counsellors in colleges and universities and we have exceeded that.

We are also committed to the development of an evidence and research informed Student Mental Health Action Plan, which we intend to publish in Spring 2023.

As this work progresses, we will continue to consult with NUS Scotland, and other key stakeholders, via the Student Mental Health and Wellbeing Working Group.

ANNEX G

Budget / Priorities for Delivery

Student Support

This year we will be investing almost £350 million in student support, including free tuition and cost-of-living support for students across Scotland.

We will continue to make a significant investment in student support supporting tuition fees, bursaries for the poorest students and for groups such as care experienced students, supporting our principle of access to education being based on ability to learn, not pay. In 2022-23, this is expected to be £349 million.

In our Programme for Government, we committed to start work to introduce a range of substantial reforms to student support. These include:

Expanding our total student support package to reach the equivalent of the living wage over the next three years.

Introducing a special support payment so that students who are in receipt of benefits do not lose out because they are in receipt of, or entitled to, student support.

Halting the interest on student loans during maternity leave.

Undertaking a review into the funding provision for postgraduate students.

Improving the support available to estranged students with a package of support equivalent to the Living Wage.

Exploring whether a programme of guarantorship for estranged students, who are disproportionately vulnerable to exploitation within the housing market, can be created in partnership with colleges and universities.

So far we have:

Commenced a review of the future of summer student support and recently published the results from a small scale Student Summer Support Survey, which provides baseline evidence for the First 100 Days commitment to review summer support for students.

Established a new stakeholder group to inform work being undertaken to deliver the Student Support Programme for Government commitments

Delivered the first 100 days commitment to provide an additional £20 million in summer hardship support for the 2020/21 Academic Year (AY) via college and university Discretionary Funds.

In February I announced a £350 loan uplift for 2022/23 AY for higher education students. This means that the most disadvantaged students can access £8,100 per year through bursary and loan and is the first step in our commitment to provide student support in line with the living wage over the next three years.

Began a 2 year programme, giving students in receipt of the Care Experienced Bursary the option to receive their current funding in 12-monthly payments. We will use the findings of this to determine whether it should be extended to the undergraduate package from 2024/25 AY.

ScotCen were appointed to take forward the independent research on the experiences of estranged students in Scotland. The research concluded on the 12th August 2022 and the findings will be published within 12 weeks of this date. We will use the findings from the research to inform any future changes to the support offered to estranged students, in order to meet our commitment to offer a package of support equivalent to the Living Wage. Details on our proposed response to the key findings of the research will be provided shortly. This will cover a response to five key areas: educational transitions, mental health, accommodation, institutional support and financial support.

Commenced work to introduce a special support payment so that students on benefits do not lose out because they are in receipt of, or entitled to, student support. We are committed to delivering this within this.

Scottish Education Exchange Programme

The Scottish Government recognises the importance of educational mobility. While we remain committed to Erasmus+, in the interim, we are creating a Scottish Education Exchange Programme to support participants from across Scotland's education system.

We are engaging with stakeholders from across the education spectrum, including higher and further education, schools (including early years and care), vocational education and training, youth work, adult education and sports.

We are listening to the sectors and the needs of their learners and staff in order to ensure we create a programme fit for Scotland.

Top lines to take:

This year we will investing almost £350 million in student support, including free tuition and cost-of-living support for students across Scotland.

In our Programme for Government, we committed to start work to introduce a range of substantial reforms to student support.

The Scottish Government recognises the importance of educational mobility.

Ministers Quarterly Meeting with NUS – 28th September 2022:

Attendees:

Jamie Hepburn (JH) – Minister for HE & FE, Youth Employment & Training

Ellie Gomersall (EG) – NUS Scotland President

[REDACTED] – NUS Scotland Campaigns & Influencing Manager

[REDACTED] (Remote)– NUS Scotland Director

[REDACTED]– Scottish Government

[REDACTED]– Scottish Government

[REDACTED]– Scottish Government

JH welcomed the meeting and said he is keen to continue these engagements in a quarterly format. He said this was an excellent opportunity to flag issues and gather feedback from NUS directly.

Cost-of-living Crisis and Support for Students

EG raised concerns about the impact the rising cost of living is having on students. She said that students are in crisis and NUS are looking to see immediate interventions from SG e.g. improvements to the student finance packages and rent protections.

JH reassured NUS that SG is working to put in place measures to provide equity between PBSA and private rental market whilst accommodating for the differences between the two. He highlighted that the emergency bill is being brought forward and reviewed intensely. He also highlighted that measures such as this require careful consideration and legislation needs to be robust.

EG said that it is important that UK Govt. scheme providing £400 to each household is passed on to students in PBSA. She said that whilst rent is capped it is important to ensure energy prices are not inflated higher than they should, if at all.

JH highlighted that this is an extremely complex area and subject to UK Govt.

Summer Support Review conclusions and recommendations

EG stated that NUS remain committed to their campaign for year round student support. She asked how things are progressing in terms of delivering summer support for students.

JH said that SG are progressing work in this area. SG are currently trialling a 12 monthly payment option for CE students and the pilot will inform how this can be extended to other student groups. SG continues to look at summer support and will factor this into the other commitments we've made.

[REDACTED] asked if the pilot needed to be three years in duration or if this could be brought forward?

JH said that he wouldn't rule this out but various factors would need to be considered e.g. statutory or operational challenges

Mental Health Funding (counsellors)

EG raised concerns around the provision of mental health counsellors in the college sector and the parity gap with universities.

JH highlighted the SG commitment to a Mental Health strategy and further recommendations will be made in due course. SG is in dialogue with Universities

Scotland and Colleges Scotland and will make a determination of what we can realistically achieve.

EG commented that colleges are concerned about the ongoing availability of funding for counsellors.

JH said he is happy to discuss these concerns with Colleges Scotland directly He said that it is clear that investment is making a difference but it can't be felt that this is the entirety of our response.

[REDACTED] mentioned a round table event which took place on 27th September involving NHS clinicians and college and university representatives. Referral pathways were being considered and outcomes will be fed back at the next meeting (date still to be agreed). JH was pleased this has taken place already.

Budget – priorities for delivery this year and progress towards long-term commitments (including on student support and Scottish Student Exchange Programme)

EG asked JH what his main priorities were for supporting students.

JH said that amongst others, the widening access agenda is one of his primary focuses. SG is making good progress and is ahead of its 2030 target for SIMD20. JH acknowledged that widening access is not equal across all HEI's and he is keen to address this.

JH also mentioned the importance of maximising our skills/education system to suit our social and economic needs. He mentioned the wider skills review and encouraged NUS to contact those involved to lend their views.

Scottish Exchange programme:

EG asked for an update on the Scottish student exchange programme

JH said SG is still looking to do this but it is not as progressed as we would like. The project remains a priority and SG is still scoping. The ambition is to deliver a programme which looks and feels like Erasmus without the restriction of the Turning scheme

[REDACTED] asked if smaller/ pilot schemes could be considered for colleges students or apprentices?

JH said this was an interesting idea if industrial partners were interested and it was practical to do so.

General:

EG expressed frustration with the current budget position and asked if there are creative, no/low cost options SG can explore to tackle the wider problems. She exemplified breakfast clubs which are being trialled at some institutions.

JH said examples like this are positive and if there are no/low cost options SG can support he would be happy to consider. He highlighted that in times of constraint public finance, wider discussions need to take place if we are to support examples like this on a national level.

[REDACTED] asked for an update on the commitment to provide a specialist support payment for students who are on benefits.

JH said that work is progressing but we need to be careful in this space if it is predicated that any additional finance is met by DWP. SG needs to ensure that DWP are on board and we will continue to progress this work.

[REDACTED] asked if SG know whether hardship funds are getting out to students or whether some of it remains unspent. He asked if unspent funds could be made available for specific projects or targeted intervention to ensure support is getting through to more students. For example to support projects like breakfast clubs. JH said that SG tracks this expenditure and we know from last year's audit that there was money in the system. However, this was levered by covid consequentials. He said that SG could consider other ways to utilise these funds but we would need to do so with caution.

Actions:
N/A

Note of Ministers introductory meeting with new NUS Scotland President, Ellie Gomersall - 21 September 22:

Attendees:

Jamie Hepburn (JH) – Minister for HE & FE, Youth Employment & Training
Ellie Gomersall (EG) – NUS Scotland President
[REDACTED] – NUS Scotland Director
[REDACTED] – Scottish Government
[REDACTED] – Scottish Government

JH congratulated EG on her recent appointment as NUS Scotland President and expressed that he is looking forward to working with her on NUS priorities over the course of her presidency.

EG provided details of her priorities over the coming years including; putting an end to student poverty, addressing the mental health crisis and plans for NUS Scotland to break away from NUS UK.

EG took the opportunity to address the cost of living crisis and raised many of the issues impacting students at this time, particularly in relation to student accommodation.

EG stated that NUS are seeking assurances from SG that the rights of students in PBSA's will be protected and that students will be covered under recently amended Rent Control Legislation.

EG recognised the work SG are taking forward in respect of the various manifesto commitments and welcomed the SG's commitment to provide student support equivalent to the living wage. She also commented that whilst college/ university discretionary funds are positive, these to be more visible and easier to access for all students.

JH acknowledge EG's comments and stated that SG are continuing to work on various commitments and priorities to improve the position of students, especially in light of the cost of living crisis. Despite the challenging budget position, these commitments remain on the table and SG will continue to work with NUS to deliver these.

[REDACTED] referenced a news article from today's Daily Record which stated that student accommodation would be included in Scottish Government rent freeze plans. Whilst TG welcomed this news he commented that this had not been communicated to NUS previously and that this would have been their preference.

JH acknowledged [REDACTED]'s comments and said we would bear this in mind in future. He clarified that work was ongoing to ensure all students were protected from rent increases but noted that processes were still being worked out as rental costs in PBSA often included other elements, such as utility costs.

JH expressed that he looks forward to working with EG and welcomed further discussion on these topics at the next Quarterly Meeting which takes place on 28th September 2022.

Email 40

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 27 September 2022 16:06

To: Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training ; [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED] Macdonald R (Roddy)

Subject: RE: Briefing - Mr Hepburn quarterly meeting with NUS Scotland - 28 September 22

[REDACTED]/ [REDACTED]

Current position for students in university/college halls of residence and PBSA is that they are included within the Cost of Living (Protection of Tenants) (Sc) Bill. However, the legal argument for including this sector within the Bill is very finely balanced. We await the Law Officer's views on the Bill which we hope to receive later this week. Until we have that, we need to avoid public statements on what is going to be in the Bill. All we can say at this juncture is that we are working to ensure parity of protection for students in PBSA/halls.

We hope to be able to update further later this week/early next week.

Thanks

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]Behalf Of Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training

Sent: 27 September 2022 14:55

To: [REDACTED]; Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: Briefing - Mr Hepburn quarterly meeting with NUS Scotland - 28 September 22

Hi [REDACTED],

Mr Hepburn has asked for an update on what the latest on ensuring parity of protection for students is?

Grateful if you can advise.

Thanks,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 27 September 2022 12:26
To: Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Briefing - Mr Hepburn quarterly meeting with NUS Scotland - 28 September 22
Importance: High

Hi [REDACTED]/ [REDACTED],

Please see the below regarding the current position on PBSA and the Cost of Living Bill – you may want to flag this to the Minister ahead of tomorrow's meeting.

I can include this in the briefing if preferred.

Thanks,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 27 September 2022 11:38
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Briefing - Mr Hepburn quarterly meeting with NUS Scotland - 28 September 22
Importance: High

Hi [REDACTED],

We wanted to flag that the below (referenced in the Minister's attached response to NUS dated 16 Scotland) remains the position at present re PBSA and the Cost of Living Bill. The Minister needs to maintain the holding line for now as we are unable to comment further at present, so if you could please pass that on:

“In regards to the cost of living crisis, all students who are renting in the private rented sector will benefit from the protections we are putting in place. For those students in university and college halls of residence or purpose built student accommodation, the structure of contracts is different and often includes energy costs. We will, therefore, work to ensure parity of protection for those students.”

Let me know if any further questions.

Best wishes,
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 27 September 2022 09:35
To: Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training
Cc: Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills ; DG Education & Justice ; Director of Advanced Learning and Science ; Macdonald R (Roddy) ; Communications Education & Skills ; Livey D (David) ; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Briefing - Mr Hepburn quarterly meeting with NUS Scotland - 28 September 22

Good morning,

Please find a slightly amended briefing pack to reflect the new 15:15 start time of the meeting.

We've also included mention of Friday's inquiry from the Sunday National about a petition from St Andrews University students calling for publication of the PBSA review in the accommodation annex (key lines remain the same).

Many thanks,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 22 September 2022 16:07
To: Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training
Cc: Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills ; DG Education & Justice ; Director of Advanced Learning and Science ; Macdonald R (Roddy) ; Communications Education & Skills ; Livey D (David) ; [REDACTED]
Subject: Briefing - Mr Hepburn quarterly meeting with NUS Scotland - 28 September 22

PS / Minister,

With thanks to everyone for their contributions, please find attached the briefing pack for Mr Hepburn's quarterly meeting with NUS Scotland on 28 September at 15:00.

I've also attached NUS Scotland's letter from 5 September in which they outline their priorities for the future (ANNEX C), Mr Hepburn's response and Universities Scotland's letter from 21 September to the Cabinet Secretary for Education outlining what universities are doing to support students in response to the cost of living crisis (ANNEX C).

Officials will be available for a pre meet if the Minister wishes.

Please let me know if you require anything further.

Many thanks,

[REDACTED]

Email 41

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 27 September 2022 12:17
To: Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Meetings in Parliament arrangements

Brilliant thanks [REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]On Behalf Of Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training
Sent: 27 September 2022 12:16
To: [REDACTED]Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Meetings in Parliament arrangements

Hey!

Yeah exactly how it still works!

Thanks

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 27 September 2022 12:12
To: Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Meetings in Parliament arrangements

Hi [REDACTED], [REDACTED],

[REDACTED], [REDACTED]and [REDACTED]will be attending the meeting with NUS supporting the Minister tomorrow and they have asked about the arrangements for visiting Parliament. Is it still the same, turn up, go through the security scanners and then tell reception you are there for Jamie Hepburn, then one of you come down and get them?

[REDACTED]

Email 42

From: [REDACTED]On Behalf Of Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training
Sent: 27 September 2022 09:59
To: [REDACTED] Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training

Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: NUS Meeting on Wednesday

Perfect, thank you will change diary entry now

Thanks for sending over updated briefing as well

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 27 September 2022 08:12
To: Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: NUS Meeting on Wednesday

Hi [REDACTED],

NUS have confirmed that a 15:15 start is fine for them.

Would you like me to update and resend the briefing or are you okay to make the amendment?

Thanks,
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED] On Behalf Of Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training
Sent: 23 September 2022 13:30
To: [REDACTED]; Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: NUS Meeting on Wednesday

Thanks [REDACTED], have been given two times for the start of the event so if it's the earlier time won't need to change this meeting at all, but will let you know if this is the case.

Thanks,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 23 September 2022 11:52
To: Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: NUS Meeting on Wednesday

Hi [REDACTED], no problem at all.

I've emailed NUS Scotland and will let you know their response. Due to the Glasgow autumn holiday long weekend we may not find out until Tuesday.

Thanks,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]On Behalf Of Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training

Sent: 23 September 2022 11:32

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training

Subject: NUS Meeting on Wednesday

Hi [REDACTED],

Sorry to be a pest with this meeting again but would it be possible to push it back 15 minutes to 1515? Mr Hepburn is due to attend an event at Edinburgh Uni Old College, timing is as if yet TBC but it's looking like it will be from 1400-1445 so would be cutting it fine by the time he got back to Parliament.

Thanks,

[REDACTED]

Email 43

From: Macdonald R (Roddy)

Sent: 22 September 2022 15:36

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: FOR CLEARANCE - Briefing - Mr Hepburn quarterly meeting with NUS Scotland - 28 September 22

[REDACTED]I have tracked a few changes in thanks Roddy

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 22 September 2022 14:27

To: Macdonald R (Roddy)

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: FOR CLEARANCE - Briefing - Mr Hepburn quarterly meeting with NUS Scotland - 28 September 22

Importance: High

Hi Roddy,

Please see attached the briefing pack for Mr Hepburn's quarterly meeting with NUS Scotland on Wednesday 28 September.

I've also attached NUS Scotland's letter from 5 September in which they outline their priorities for the future (ANNEX C), Mr Hepburn's response and Universities Scotland's letter to the Cabinet Secretary for Education outlining what universities are doing to support students in response to the cost of living crisis (ANNEX C).

Grateful if you could review it at some point today if you get the opportunity please as I hope to issue it to PO by COP today ahead of the Glasgow autumn holiday long weekend.

Accommodation is fast moving at the moment so if there are any further developments we'll review / update the briefing pack accordingly on Tuesday.

Many thanks,

[REDACTED]

Email 44

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 22 September 2022 11:15

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: Briefing request - Mr Hepburn Quarterly meeting with NUS Scotland - 28 September 22

Thanks [REDACTED],

I aim to get this to PO by COP today before the Glasgow holiday long weekend. So if there's any updates over that time we'll have all Tuesday to review / make amendments.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 22 September 2022 10:53

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: Briefing request - Mr Hepburn Quarterly meeting with NUS Scotland - 28 September 22

Hi [REDACTED]

Very minor change but otherwise content. With the speed at which things are moving we may have more updates but I will keep an eye on this and let you know.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 22 September 2022 10:20

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: FW: Briefing request - Mr Hepburn Quarterly meeting with NUS Scotland - 28 September 22
Importance: High

Morning [REDACTED],

I've updated the accommodation lines that were provided this morning in light of the FMQ teams ask in response to these articles:

Glasgow students without flats told to consider quitting university - BBC News
Renting crisis: University of Glasgow students warned to not enrol amid lack of housing | HeraldScotland

Would you be able to check that they're the most accurate / up to date please? (Top lines (page 2), annex B (page 5), annex E (page 18)).

Many thanks,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 21 September 2022 12:07
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Briefing request - Mr Hepburn Quarterly meeting with NUS Scotland - 28 September 22
Importance: High

Hi all,

The Minister's quarterly meeting with NUS Scotland has been re arranged for 28 September.

I'd be grateful if you could please review the attached briefing pack for your respective areas and make any updates by 10:00 tomorrow to allow me to get DD clearance and send to PO ahead of the autumn holiday weekend – apologies for the quick turnaround.

Many thanks,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 01 September 2022 10:39
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Briefing request - Mr Hepburn Quarterly meeting with NUS Scotland - 07 September 22
Importance: High

Morning folks,

The Minister's office have just informed us that he can no longer make this date due to a ministerial engagement. We are working to firm up a new date.

However, he is due to have an introductory meeting with the new NUS Scotland President, Ellie Gomersall, on 06 September.

Can I ask that you please stick to today's deadline but just provide key lines on each area, which we will provide the Minister with for his introductory meeting with Ellie.

When we have firmed up a new date for the Minister's quarterly meeting with NUS, we'll get in touch with you and provide a separate deadline for full briefing.

I hope this makes sense and happy to discuss anything.

Many thanks,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 30 August 2022 16:37

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: Briefing request - Mr Hepburn Quarterly meeting with NUS Scotland - 07 September 22

Importance: High

Hi all (adding colleagues for completeness),

NUS Scotland have confirmed the following agenda for next week's meeting with Mr Hepburn:

Cost-of-living crisis and support for students

Summer Support Review conclusions and recommendations – [REDACTED]

Housing costs and shortages – [REDACTED]

Mental health funding (counsellors) – [REDACTED]

Budget – priorities for delivery this year and progress towards long-term commitments (including on student support and Scottish Student Exchange Programme – [REDACTED] / [REDACTED])

Grateful if you can review the attached briefing pack and include any relevant background information or lines by COP Thursday 01 September please.

Many thanks again,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 30 August 2022 12:54

To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Briefing request - Mr Hepburn Quarterly meeting with NUS Scotland - 07 September 22
Importance: High

Hi all,

The Minister is having his next quarterly meeting with NUS Scotland on 07 September.

Briefing is due with PO on Friday however I'm currently waiting for NUS to confirm agenda items.

In the meantime I'd be grateful if you could please review / update the following areas in the attached briefing pack which are likely to be discussed and I'll get back in touch if NUS suggest any additional items:

Cost of Living
Mental Health
Student Accommodation
Review of Summer Support

Many thanks,

[REDACTED]

Email 45

From: [REDACTED]On Behalf Of Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training
Sent: 21 September 2022 13:15
To: [REDACTED]Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training ; 'Jamie.Hepburn.msp@parliament.scot'; [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Quarterly Meeting with NUS

No problem, that should be everyone added now.

Thanks,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 21 September 2022 13:13
To: Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training ; 'Jamie.Hepburn.msp@parliament.scot'; [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Quarterly Meeting with NUS

Hi [REDACTED] can you also send to [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] as they will be official support.

[REDACTED]

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

From: [REDACTED] On Behalf Of Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training
Sent: 21 September 2022 12:17
To: 'Jamie.Hepburn.msp@parliament.scot'; [REDACTED]
Subject: Quarterly Meeting with NUS
When: 28 September 2022 15:00-15:45 (UTC+00:00) Dublin, Edinburgh, Lisbon, London.
Where: Room TG.45

Hi Both,

Rescheduling this as it now clashes with another engagement.

Thanks,
[REDACTED]

Hello,

I would be grateful if you would prepare briefing (using the appropriate templates and guidance from Saltire) and send to Private Office by COP on 01/09/22.

Official support is expected at all meetings and engagements unless otherwise agreed with Private Office. Please note that there is a requirement for an official note of all meetings to be produced – this should be done by the most appropriate official supporting the Minister in line with published guidance.

If diary timings do not match the event times you are providing in briefing then please flag this to Private Office immediately.

If there will be external stakeholders attending a Scottish Government building (not Parliament), please submit visitor forms as appropriate.

Please do not forward on this invite - if you require anyone else to be invited please let Private Office know.

Please call to discuss if you have any queries or are likely to miss the deadline.

Thank you very much

[REDACTED]

Email 46

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 21 September 2022 11:37
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Support for Mr Hepburn's Quarterly meeting with NUS Scotland - 28 September

That's great. I'll let PO know and will copy you into the briefing when it goes up.

I'll be sending it around shortly too to make sure it's all up to date.

Thanks,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 21 September 2022 11:31
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Support for Mr Hepburn's Quarterly meeting with NUS Scotland - 28 September

In that case I can go in person. Glasgow would have been a bit difficult.

Thanks again

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 21 September 2022 11:30
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Support for Mr Hepburn's Quarterly meeting with NUS Scotland - 28 September

It'll be in Edinburgh at the Parliament.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 21 September 2022 11:19
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Support for Mr Hepburn's Quarterly meeting with NUS Scotland - 28 September

Before I commit to in person – Glasgow or Edinburgh?

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 21 September 2022 11:16
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: Support for Mr Hepburn's Quarterly meeting with NUS Scotland - 28 September

I think they both plan to attend in person along with 2 members of NUS.

2 other members of NUS are dialling in remotely.

Like I said whatever option suits you best.

Thanks,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 21 September 2022 10:59

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: Support for Mr Hepburn's Quarterly meeting with NUS Scotland - 28 September

Great. I'll check whether [REDACTED]and [REDACTED]are attending in person or via teams.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 21 September 2022 10:58

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]Subject: RE: Support for Mr Hepburn's Quarterly meeting with NUS Scotland - 28 September

Thanks [REDACTED], that's great.

[REDACTED]and [REDACTED]will be attending from our side also.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 21 September 2022 10:27

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: Support for Mr Hepburn's Quarterly meeting with NUS Scotland - 28 September

Hi [REDACTED]

I can do that. Would I be the only support?

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 21 September 2022 10:21
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Support for Mr Hepburn's Quarterly meeting with NUS Scotland - 28 September

Hi [REDACTED]and [REDACTED],

Thanks again for providing support for the Minister at this afternoon's introductory meeting with Ellie.

Would one of you also be able to provide support at next week's quarterly meeting please? It's on 28 September at 15:00 and you'd have the option of attending in person in Parliament, or dialling in remotely via MS Teams - Whatever suits you best.

Thanks,

[REDACTED]

Email 47

From: [REDACTED]On Behalf Of Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training
Sent: 28 September 2022 15:02
To: [REDACTED]; Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training
Subject: RE: Mr Hepburn quarterly meetings with NUS Scotland

Hi [REDACTED],

Sounds good going to meet them now, [REDACTED] is away to collect supporting officials

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 28 September 2022 15:00
To: Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training
Subject: FW: Mr Hepburn quarterly meetings with NUS Scotland
Importance: High

FYI

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 28 September 2022 14:59
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: Mr Hepburn quarterly meetings with NUS Scotland

Hi [REDACTED],

As we're in Parliament already, we could meet in the Garden Lobby if someone is able to show us up for the meeting?

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 23 September 2022 11:50
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED] Ellie Gomersall; [REDACTED] ; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Mr Hepburn quarterly meetings with NUS Scotland

Hi [REDACTED],

Apologies but would it be possible to push this meeting back 15 minutes to 15:15?

Mr Hepburn is due to attend an event at Edinburgh Uni Old College, timing is currently TBC but it's looking like it will be from 14:00 – 14:45 so would be cutting it fine by the time he got back to Parliament.

Many thanks,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 21 September 2022 09:23
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]; Ellie Gomersall ; [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: Mr Hepburn quarterly meetings with NUS Scotland

Hi [REDACTED],

Yes, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] will be joining virtually and I'll be with Ellie. We'll be in Parliament all day and we've arranged to be hosted by Maggie Chapman MSP's office between meetings.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, September 20, 2022 9:42:01 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]Ellie Gomersall ; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Mr Hepburn quarterly meetings with NUS Scotland

Morning [REDACTED],

Just wondering if you're able to provide an update on the below please?

Thanks,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 13 September 2022 15:18
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]Ellie Gomersall ; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Mr Hepburn quarterly meetings with NUS Scotland

Hi [REDACTED],

Mr Hepburn is happy for this to take place in person with Ellie in Parliament.

Will you, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] be dialling in remotely?

Thanks,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 13 September 2022 13:30
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]; Ellie Gomersall ; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Mr Hepburn quarterly meetings with NUS Scotland

Hi [REDACTED],

I'm getting in touch to ask about the meeting with the Minister on 28 September. Ellie will be in Parliament that day giving evidence to the Education Committee and will later be at the CPG for Colleges and Universities. With that in mind we wondered if the Minister would be in Parliament and if we could switch to the meeting being in person?

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 01 September 2022 10:20
To: [REDACTED] ; Ali McDade
Cc: [REDACTED]; Ellie Gomersall ; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Mr Hepburn quarterly meetings with NUS Scotland

Hi again,

The Minister's office have just offered 13 September 10:00-10:45 as a potential date.

Would this be suitable for you?

Many thanks,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED] Sent: 01 September 2022 10:09
To: [REDACTED] ; Ali McDade
Cc: [REDACTED]; Ellie Gomersall ; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Mr Hepburn quarterly meetings with NUS Scotland

Morning [REDACTED],

Thanks for providing the below agenda items.

Unfortunately the Minister's office have just informed me that he is unable to attend the quarterly meeting due to it clashing with a ministerial engagement.

They will come back to me with alternative dates shortly and I'll pass them onto you ASAP.

Apologies for any inconvenience caused.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 30 August 2022 13:22
To: [REDACTED]; Ali McDade
Cc: [REDACTED] Ellie Gomersall ; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Mr Hepburn quarterly meetings with NUS Scotland

Hi [REDACTED],

Here's a brief agenda for these two meetings.

Introductory meeting

- Introductions
- Ellie's priorities for the next two years, including our Priority Campaign plan and independent NUS Scotland
- Minister's priorities for next two years (in context of significant commitments for students and economic crisis)

Quarterly meeting

- Cost-of-living crisis and support for students
- Summer Support Review conclusions and recommendations
- Housing costs and shortages
- Mental health funding (counsellors)
- Budget – priorities for delivery this year and progress towards long-term commitments (including on student support and Scottish Student Exchange Programme)

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 30 August 2022 13:09
To: Ali McDade
Cc: [REDACTED], Ellie Gomersall ; [REDACTED] ; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Mr Hepburn quarterly meetings with NUS Scotland

Hi all,

If possible, would you be able to provide agenda items that you wish to discuss at the Minister's quarterly meeting and introductory meeting with Ellie by this evening please?

We hope to have the briefing with the Minister by Friday and we won't be in the office tomorrow.

Many thanks,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 29 August 2022 15:39
To: 'Ali McDade'
Cc: [REDACTED]; Ellie Gomersall ; [REDACTED] ; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Mr Hepburn quarterly meetings with NUS Scotland

Thanks Ali, much appreciated.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

[REDACTED]

From: Ali McDade
Sent: 24 August 2022 15:48
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]; Ellie Gomersall ; [REDACTED] ; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Mr Hepburn quarterly meetings with NUS Scotland

Hi [REDACTED], we'll get back to you about that ASAP.

[REDACTED]/Ellie/[REDACTED] – trust you will discuss and reply to Matt.

Cheers,
Ali

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 24 August 2022 15:44

To: Ali McDade
Cc: [REDACTED]; Ellie Gomersall ; [REDACTED] ; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Mr Hepburn quarterly meetings with NUS Scotland

Hi Ali,

Ahead of the Minister's quarterly meeting with you on 07 September, I was wondering if you had any agenda items that you'd like to be discussed?

Also, are there any topics that Ellie would like to discuss in her introductory meeting with the Minister on 06 September?

Many thanks,

[REDACTED]
From: Pringle M (Matthew) [REDACTED]
Sent: 06 July 2022 12:04
To: Ali McDade
Cc: [REDACTED]Ellie Gomersall ; [REDACTED] ; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Mr Hepburn quarterly meetings with NUS Scotland

Thanks Ali, much appreciated.

I've advised the Minister's office that those dates are suitable and they'll issue a MS Teams invite to your colleagues shortly.

[REDACTED] or I will also be in touch nearer the time to finalise an agenda.

Cheers,

[REDACTED]

From: Ali McDade
Sent: 04 July 2022 16:26
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]; Ellie Gomersall ; [REDACTED] ; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Mr Hepburn quarterly meetings with NUS Scotland

Hi [REDACTED], both those times are fine for NUS and I've confirmed them in diaries for [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and Ellie Gomersall (new NUS Scotland President).

Ellie's email is ellie.gomersall@nus-scotland.org.uk and I've copied her in for info.

I trust you'll be in touch nearer the time about agendas and VC links.

Cheers,
Ali

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 01 July 2022 12:25
To: Ali McDade ; [REDACTED] ; [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Mr Hepburn quarterly meetings with NUS Scotland

Afternoon all, I hope you're well.

The Minister's office has asked me to arrange the next couple of quarterly meetings with you and has suggested the following dates:

Tuesday 6th September 1115-1200
Tuesday 6th December 1530-1615

Would these dates be suitable for you?

Many thanks,

Email 48

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 21 September 2022 13:42
To: Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: URGENT: FOR MEETING AT 2PM WITH NUS
Importance: High

[REDACTED]

To see below for the meeting with NUS. Lines on this are in the briefing pack but wanted to make you aware.

<https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/politics/student-accommodation-included-scottish-government-28040628>

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 21 September 2022 13:38
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: PBSA and Cost of Living

[REDACTED]'s original email

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 21 September 2022 13:27
To: [REDACTED][REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: PBSA and Cost of Living

Good afternoon

A few moments ago I read in the Daily Record that student accommodation will be included in rent freeze plans.

I must say it is deeply disappointing to read this news through the press given the multiple attempts to arrange a meeting and request for updates in writing.

We're meeting the Minister within the hour where this will be discussed.

I'd be grateful if you could clarify the position in writing by close of play today. We will decide how to publicly react to this news thereafter.

Kind regards
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, September 20, 2022 4:33 pm
To: [REDACTED] ; [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: PBSA and Cost of Living

Hi [REDACTED],

Thanks for that and, again, apologies for the inconvenience.

If we can pencil in 11am on the 30th, we'll try to get a meeting in the diary earlier than that if possible. As it's a holiday weekend in Glasgow this weekend we'll update you as soon as we can.

Many thanks,
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 20 September 2022 16:06
To: [REDACTED][REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: PBSA and Cost of Living

Hi [REDACTED],

We're happy to reschedule at the earliest possible time but I am a bit concerned that this meeting will now take place over three weeks since the rent freeze was announced. As previously, it would be good to get an update via email ahead of this meeting on where work on this is at, given officials will be working at pace on plans to put the rent freeze in place generally.

We would be able to do 11am on the 30th if that works.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 20 September 2022 15:56
To: [REDACTED] ; [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: PBSA and Cost of Living

Good afternoon [REDACTED] and [REDACTED],

I'm part of [REDACTED] team and I'm getting in touch as, unfortunately, we will need to reschedule the meeting on the 22nd due to officer availability.

Could you please advise if you have any availability on the 30th? Apologies for the inconvenience.

Kind regards,
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 15 September 2022 11:32
To: '[REDACTED]' ; [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: PBSA and Cost of Living

Hi [REDACTED],

Thanks for your email. I will set up a meeting via teams.

Regards

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 15 September 2022 11:07
To: [REDACTED][REDACTED]
Subject: RE: PBSA and Cost of Living

Hi [REDACTED],

Yes, that works for us.

Thanks,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 12 September 2022 14:55
To: [REDACTED] ; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: PBSA and Cost of Living

Hi [REDACTED],

Thanks for your email. Can I please suggest Thursday, 22 September at 16:15 hours?

Regards
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 12 September 2022 10:58
To: [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: PBSA and Cost of Living

Hi [REDACTED],

Completely understand. Given the urgency of the situation, and that officials will be working at pace in the background on the rent freeze plans, we'd be happy to continue discussing via email until we can get another date. If you're able to share the government's initial thinking / plans as soon as possible, as well as any assurances that students will not be excluded from the plans.

We're free pretty much anytime Wednesday 21st or after 1500 on Thursday 22nd.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 12 September 2022 10:54
To: [REDACTED] ; [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: PBSA and Cost of Living

Dear [REDACTED],

Grateful if you could please advise on your availability towards the end of week commencing 19 September.

Regards

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 12 September 2022 10:46
To: [REDACTED] ; [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: PBSA and Cost of Living

Dear [REDACTED],

Following the very sad news about Her Majesty The Queen, and the period of National Mourning we are now in, the meeting planned for Thursday, 15 September will be postponed.

We will aim to reschedule the meeting for a date in the near future and will share the new date as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

Email 49

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 16 September 2022 13:58

To: Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training

Cc: Livey D (David) ; Macdonald R (Roddy) [REDACTED] Communications
Education & Skills ; Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills

Subject: Briefing - Mr Hepburn introductory meeting with new NUS Scotland
President, Ellie Gomersall - 21 September 22

PS / Minister,

With thanks to everyone for their contributions, please find attached the briefing pack for Mr Hepburn's introductory meeting with new NUS Scotland President, Ellie Gomersall, on 21 September at 14:00.

I've also attached NUS Scotland's letter from 05 September in which they outline their priorities for the future (ANNEX C). The Minister's response is currently with PO to issue.

Grateful if you could please forward the meeting invite onto the following officials who will be providing support:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Officials will be available for a pre meet if the Minister wishes.

Please let me know if you require anything further.

Many thanks,

[REDACTED]

Email 50

From: Macdonald R (Roddy)

Sent: 16 September 2022 11:31

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: FOR CLEARANCE - Briefing - Mr Hepburn introductory meeting with new NUS Scotland President, Ellie Gomersall - 21 September 22

[REDACTED]content thanks Roddy

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 16 September 2022 11:11

To: Macdonald R (Roddy)

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: FOR CLEARANCE - Briefing - Mr Hepburn introductory meeting with new NUS Scotland President, Ellie Gomersall - 21 September 22

Morning Roddy,

Please see the attached briefing for Mr Hepburn's introductory meeting with the new NUS Scotland President, Ellie Gomersall, on Wednesday 21 September (rearranged from 06 September).

It's mostly the same as the briefing that you cleared for the original meeting before it got rearranged. The main change is the addition of annex C which relates to the letter NUS Scotland sent to the Mr Hepburn on 05 September outlining their priorities for the future (attached).

Grateful if you could review it at some point today if you get the opportunity please as I hope to issue it to PO today due to the queen's funeral on Monday and Tuesday cutting it a bit fine.

Many thanks,

[REDACTED]

Email 51

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 16 September 2022 09:45

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: FOR ACTION - DUE 09:00 MONDAY 20 SEPTEMBER - ALS - FMQ - Student Support - 20 September

Thank you [redacted], that would be very helpful.

The Minister is well versed on mental health issues if this comes up, and I can brief you beforehand if you think it would be helpful.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 16 September 2022 09:23
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: FOR ACTION - DUE 09:00 MONDAY 20 SEPTEMBER - ALS - FMQ - Student Support - 20 September

Hi [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] has responded re the mental health stuff and we will update accommodation lines as required. You'll recall I asked about official support for this meeting before as [REDACTED] suggested I attend if support was required. I can do this, assuming that [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] are happy with that. Could you let me have the details please.

Thanks

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 16 September 2022 09:06
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: FOR ACTION - DUE 09:00 MONDAY 20 SEPTEMBER - ALS - FMQ - Student Support - 20 September

Also, as accommodation is a hot topic at the moment, would one of you mind providing support at the Minister's intro meeting with Ellie Gomersall (New NUS Scotland President) on the 21st please?

Russell will be providing support too and we anticipate it to be a relaxed meeting but just in case.

Thanks again,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 16 September 2022 08:49
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: FOR ACTION - DUE 09:00 MONDAY 20 SEPTEMBER - ALS - FMQ - Student Support - 20 September
Importance: High

Morning [REDACTED] and [REDACTED],

I've picked up the below article in this morning's press cuts which I'll add to our FMQ brief:

The Press and Journal (Inverness, Highlands & Islands) 20 Thousands of pupils seek help for issues including anxiety More than two thousand Highland pupils have sought help from a school counsellor since 2021, according to a new education report. Highland Council expanded its school counselling service last year in the wake of the pandemic. Counselling is now available at all mainstream Highland schools, for pupils aged 10 and over. Since January 2021, 2,378 pupils have seen a school counsellor. The service has found that girls are much more

Can I just check that the current mental health lines are up to date please. Would you also be able to check the accommodation lines too?

Many thanks,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 13 September 2022 12:03

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: FOR ACTION - DUE 09:00 MONDAY 20 SEPTEMBER - ALS - FMQ - Student Support - 20 September

Importance: High

Hi all,

****Please note the change of deadline to coincide with the Public Holiday****

Please see below the link to this week's student support FMQ briefing. Grateful if you can consider for your interests and update as appropriate by 09:00 on Tuesday 20 September. This will allow me enough time to amend and clear with Roddy prior to the FMQ team's 10:00 deadline.

ALS - FMQ - Student Financial Support - 20 September 2022 details - Objective ECM (scotland.gov.uk)

Many thanks,

[REDACTED]

Email 52

From: [REDACTED] On Behalf Of Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training

Sent: 08 September 2022 11:23

To: [REDACTED] Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: Briefing for Mr Hepburn's introductory meeting with Ellie Gomersall

Perfect thanks [REDACTED]! Have sent you over a diary invite, please see teams link below:

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 08 September 2022 10:26
To: Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Briefing for Mr Hepburn's introductory meeting with Ellie Gomersall

Great. NUS have confirmed that they can make that time.

Would you be able to provide me with the MS Teams link to send them please?

Thanks,

[REDACTED]
From: [REDACTED] On Behalf Of Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training
Sent: 07 September 2022 15:32
To: [REDACTED] Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Briefing for Mr Hepburn's introductory meeting with Ellie Gomersall

No worries! Could do 1400-1430 on 21st if that's all good?

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 07 September 2022 15:28
To: Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Briefing for Mr Hepburn's introductory meeting with Ellie Gomersall

Unfortunately again, they can't make the 14th.

However they can move something about to free up between 14:00 – 15:00 on the 21st. Could the Minister make half an hour during that time?

Thanks,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED] On Behalf Of Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training
Sent: 07 September 2022 12:12
To: [REDACTED] Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Briefing for Mr Hepburn's introductory meeting with Ellie Gomersall

Hi [REDACTED],

That's no bother, thanks for letting me know.

The next closest diary availability is 14th September 1345-1415 if that works?

If not, next suitable slot would be the afternoon of 21st September where there's reasonably wide availability at the moment.

Thanks,
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 05 September 2022 16:30
To: Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Briefing for Mr Hepburn's introductory meeting with Ellie Gomersall

Unfortunately Ellie can't make the 8th.

Would you be able to provide a few later dates that would suit the Minister please?

Thanks,
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]On Behalf Of Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training
Sent: 05 September 2022 15:46
To: [REDACTED]Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Briefing for Mr Hepburn's introductory meeting with Ellie Gomersall

Hi [REDACTED],

Thanks for letting me know.

Grateful if we can go ahead and cancel tomorrow's meeting as the diary is looking quite tight when accounting for partly business, and cars, etc so no need for briefing today.

Hopefully NUS are all good to go for 8th but if not I'll be able to find something the following week so no worries.

Thanks,
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 05 September 2022 15:00
To: Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Briefing for Mr Hepburn's introductory meeting with Ellie Gomersall

Hi [REDACTED]and [REDACTED],

I'm still waiting for NUS Scotland to confirm if they are able to reschedule Ellie's introductory meeting with the Minister to 08 September at 16:15 – 16:45.

In the meantime, would you like the briefing sent over now, or when the new date has been confirmed? (it's currently in the diary for 12:00 – 12:30 tomorrow).

Thanks,

[REDACTED]

Email 53

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 01 September 2022 16:50

To: Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: Quarterly Meeting with NUS

From our side we're still happy for the intro meeting to go ahead as planned on the 6th.

The briefing is currently awaiting DD clearance and we should have it with you tomorrow. It's fairly light touch and mainly covers Ellie's background and her / the Minister's future priorities. It also briefly includes some top lines on current issues in case they are brought up.

As we expect it to be a fairly relaxed meeting, the plan was to just have a colleague from student support join the Minister on the call.

I hope this okay, however just get in touch if the minister needs any more information.

Thanks,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]On Behalf Of Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training

Sent: 01 September 2022 16:18

To: [REDACTED]Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: Quarterly Meeting with NUS

All good! Thanks for letting me know.

Still all good for the intro meeting with the new NUS president to be on the 6th or would it be better for this to be closer to the new meeting time? There's room to reschedule if need be just let me know.

Thanks,
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 01 September 2022 13:11
To: Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Quarterly Meeting with NUS

In fact ignore my last email. I just realised that you didn't send them a calendar invite, you just provided the Teams link. No problem.

FYI NUS just advised that [REDACTED] will be joining the call (their new Campaigns and Public Affairs Co-ordinator – [REDACTED] successor).

Thanks,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 01 September 2022 12:40
To: Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Quarterly Meeting with NUS

Thanks [REDACTED],

I'll let them know now. Are you able to update NUS' calendar invitation too please?

Cheers,
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED] On Behalf Of Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training
Sent: 01 September 2022 12:35
To: [REDACTED] Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training
Cc: [REDACTED]; Macdonald R (Roddy) ; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Quarterly Meeting with NUS

Hi [REDACTED],

All good, thanks for checking.

28th September 1500-1600 works perfectly, have changed the diary invite to reflect this now, grateful if you can confirm with NUS.

For briefing deadline I usually ask for it around 4 days in advance just so there's a bit of wiggle room should there be any issues but usually all good for it to be sent over by morning of the day before the engagement if need be.

Thanks,
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 01 September 2022 11:22
To: Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training
Cc: [REDACTED]; Macdonald R (Roddy) ; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Quarterly Meeting with NUS

Hi [REDACTED],

Unfortunately NUS cannot make the 13th but have offered the following dates:

| | |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Tuesday 20 September | between 10.30 - 12.30 / 14:00 onwards |
| Thursday 28 September | 15:00 – 16:00 |

Would any of these suit the Minister?

Also, I was wondering if your office has a standard briefing deadline ahead of ministerial meetings? Or just to go by the date in the calendar invite.

Many thanks,

[REDACTED]
From: [REDACTED]On Behalf Of Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training
Sent: 31 August 2022 11:56
To: [REDACTED]Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training ; Macdonald R (Roddy) ; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Quarterly Meeting with NUS

Hi All,

Hope you're doing well.

Have just received the Parliamentary whip schedule for wc 5th September and unfortunately Mr Hepburn is required in the chamber for much of the afternoon of the 7th and so will no longer be available to attend this meeting. Apologies for any inconvenience.

The next closest availability is 13th September 1000-1045, grateful if you can let me know whether this works for yourselves and NUS.

Thanks,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 30 August 2022 15:37

To: Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training
Subject: RE: Quarterly Meeting with NUS

Hi can you please add Roddy Macdonald, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] to the attendee list? We will confirm who will be attending nearer the time.

Thanks,
[REDACTED]

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

From: Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training

Sent: 06 July 2022 15:02

To: Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training;

'Jamie.Hepburn.msp@parliament.scot'; [REDACTED]

Subject: Quarterly Meeting with NUS

When: 07 September 2022 15:00-15:45 (UTC+00:00) Dublin, Edinburgh, Lisbon, London.

Where:

Hi Both,

Rescheduling this as it now clashes with another engagement.

Thanks,
[REDACTED]

Hello,

I would be grateful if you would prepare briefing (using the appropriate templates and guidance from Saltire) and send to Private Office by COP on 01/09/22.

Official support is expected at all meetings and engagements unless otherwise agreed with Private Office. Please note that there is a requirement for an official note of all meetings to be produced – this should be done by the most appropriate official supporting the Minister in line with published guidance.

If diary timings do not match the event times you are providing in briefing then please flag this to Private Office immediately.

If there will be external stakeholders attending a Scottish Government building (not Parliament), please submit visitor forms as appropriate.

Please do not forward on this invite - if you require anyone else to be invited please let Private Office know.

Please call to discuss if you have any queries or are likely to miss the deadline.

Thank you very much

[REDACTED]

Jamie Hepburn's meetings with the EIS on September 28

ENGAGEMENT TITLE: QUARTERLY TRADE UNION ENGAGEMENT MEETING: EIS-FELA

| | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| <i>Date and Time of Engagement</i> | Wednesday 28 September – 16:15 – 17:00 |
| <i>Where</i> | Microsoft Teams Click here to join the meeting |
| <i>Who</i> | You are meeting with EIS-FELA Representatives: [Redacted] |
| <i>Key Purpose</i> | Scheduled Quarterly meeting |
| <i>Sensitivities</i> | None |
| <i>Media Handling</i> | None |
| <i>Official Support</i> | [REDACTED] |

Briefing Contents

| | |
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| Annex A | Agenda |
| Annex B | Agenda Item 1: Progress on the SFC Review |
| Annex C | Agenda Item 2: Further Education EIS-FELA Pay Claim Public Sector Pay Funding and Costs |
| Annex D | Agenda item 3: Higher Education Pay negotiations and current statutory ballot Impact of digitisation in the HE sector SRUC capital investment |

ANNEX A

AGENDA

Item 1: SFC Review Progress

Item 2: Further Education

Pay negotiations 22/23.
General NJNC update.

Item 3: Higher Education

Pay negotiations and current statutory ballot
SG facilitating some joint working between the employers and the unions on the impact of digitisation in the HE sector
SRUC capital investment issue (the employer is estimating 100 million over the next 10 years needed to maintain and replace decaying estate)

ANNEX B

AGENDA ITEM 1: SFC Review

Background to the SFC Review

The SFC Review of Coherent Provision and Sustainability was published on 29th June 2021 and looks at how SFC can best fulfil its mission of securing coherent, good quality, sustainable tertiary education and research.

The Review sets out 66 recommendations, making a compelling case for continued, evolutionary, whole-system change that builds on existing strengths, recognises Scotland's particular context and policy drivers, and signals opportunities to work towards a responsive, coherent education and skills system, while sustaining research and knowledge exchange for the future.

On 26 October 2021, the Scottish Government published a response to the SFC Review and following agreement with the SFC, six priority recommendations were identified. The delivery of those priority recommendations is now underway with lead responsibilities shared between Scottish Government and SFC.

SFC Review – key developments

1. Producing a statement of strategic intent

The development of the statement of strategic intent for the tertiary education and research system in Scotland is now described as the Purpose and Principles for Post School Education, Research and Skills in a piece of work that is currently underway led by the Scottish Government Reform Division, and is due to be published in Spring 2023.

Early engagement with external stakeholders has now taken place and the main output has been the publication of Post school education, research and skills development ecosystem - purpose and principles: scope and approach. Following on from this and alongside further engagement, the team will ensure that the Purpose

and Principles work is founded on a robust and shared evidence base which will be developed with partners and builds upon best practice.

2. Tertiary Pathfinders and Skills Alignment

As well as being a SFC Review priority recommendation, close and effective collaboration between SFC and SDS will be key to the successful delivery of the NSET programme. To this end, a Shared Outcomes Framework was published on 9 March 2022 and is the means by which SFC and SDS will monitor and report on collaborative projects that contribute to overarching skills outcomes, including those in the NSET.

The Shared Outcomes Assurance Group (SOAG) has been established to oversee the implementation of the Shared Outcomes Framework. The group comprises of representatives from Scottish Government, SFC and SDS, is chaired by senior civil servants and includes the Senior Responsible Officers for all collaborative skills projects that form part of the Shared Outcomes Framework. The SOAG reports directly to the Minister for Higher Education and Further Education, Youth Employment and Training who also meets regularly with the Chairs and Chief Executives of both agencies.

Work is currently being done on two Regional Pathfinder projects: North East and South of Scotland. The aim is to, through evidence, analysis and collaborative action, to explore what further needs to be done to make the education and skills system responsive, integrated and supportive of economic recovery and inclusive growth in each region. A Data and Analysis exercise is currently being carried out and is due for completion by October 2022.

The CESAP – Net Zero Pathfinders project has been established to create the necessary labour market intelligence evidence base that can support the transition to net zero as described in The Climate Emergency Skills Action Plan. The part of the project relating to skills demand analysis and the mapping out skills provision is now underway.

The Commercial and Domestic Heat in Buildings Pathfinder project has started and is designed to enable the implementation of a co-designed approach towards skills planning to support the decarbonisation of domestic and commercial heating in the Glasgow Region and Shetland.

ANNEX C

AGENDA ITEM 2: FURTHER EDUCATION

EIS FELA Pay Claim – 2022/23

TOP LINE

The Scottish Government remains firmly of the view that it is for the college unions and the employers to negotiate pay and terms and conditions voluntarily, in the spirit of collaboration and co-operation.

2022/23 Pay Ask

EIS-FELA have now submitted its pay claim for the 2022/23 year.

The ask is for a consolidated flat-rated pay rise of £5,000 on all national salary scale points for unpromoted and promoted lecturers, effective from 1st September 2022.

This is an increase of between 9% and 14% across the lecturer pay scale.

CES have indicated that the overall cost of this ask will add approximately £36m per year to college staffing budgets for lecturers alone.

Support Unions Ask

To date, no pay claim has been received from the Support Unions, however it is expected that it will be of a similar figure.

CES estimate this would bring the overall cost of the 2022/23 pay claims to approximately £72m per year.

2021/22 Pay Resolution - £1000 Fully Consolidated

The 2021/22 pay resolution for both lecturers and support staff created a £4.8m year on year cost

College Funding and Costs

Top Lines

The SG has committed to an Emergency Budget Review to assess all opportunities to tackle the challenges facing the public finance and help support those hardest hit by the cost crisis.

The Scottish Budget is at the absolute limits of affordability and as such, challenging choices around reprioritisation are now required.

DFM has committed to setting out the Emergency Budget Review within two weeks of the UK Budget Review, which is at the end of this week. As a result, we will be considering the impact of savings across the Education and Skills portfolio.

College Finances and implications of spending cuts announced by DFM on 7 September

From the SFC's budget of around £2 billion, we have announced that SFC will be expected to make savings of £20 million.

This level of saving is based on routine forecasts of underspends that SFC has assessed from across the broad range of SFC's budgets and programmes.

SFC will not be in a position to confirm where the £20m savings will come from until later in the year once they have a better idea about in-year underspends.

However, DFM's letter to the Finance and Public Administration Committee identified a number of potential programmes where funding may be cut – further education student support, ring fenced budgets such as National Transition Training Fund (NTTF) and additional European Structural Funds.

We have sought to minimise the impact of required savings on front line allocations for learning and teaching, and support for students, for this academic year.

The total FWDF budget has been reduced by £3m in FY 2022-23. SG and SFC are working on finalising the total amount available in AY 2022-23 and will announce allocations as soon as a decision has been reached.

None of the £53m employability saving nor the £16.7m resource/capital switch highlighted in DFM's letter to Finance and Public Administration Committee on 7th September will impact the SFC budget.

Additional lines to take

SFC will not be in a position to confirm where the £20m savings will come from until later in the year once they have a better idea about in-year underspends

However, this level of saving is based on routine forecasts of underspends that SFC has assessed from across the broad range of SFC's budgets and programmes

We have sought to minimise the impact of required savings on front line allocations for learning and teaching, and support for students, for this academic year.

The Scottish Government has a limited budget and it must therefore focus resources where they will make the biggest difference to people across Scotland

SFC have already extended budget flexibilities to colleges where possible, and provided greater planning certainty.

The Scottish Funding Council is working with colleges and universities to consider all options available to provide flexibilities within their budget allocation and across years.

The Scottish Funding Council continues to liaise with colleges in addressing challenges.

Public Sector Pay Policy

14 Sep: Inflation – CPI decreased 0.2pp to 9.9% for August.

5 Aug: SG permits enhanced flexibility beyond pay policy (i.e. beyond the 0.5% limit).

9 Dec: 2022-23 Public Sector Pay Policy published:

- Scottish Public Sector Wage floor of £10.50 an hour (10.5% increase on last year's real Living Wage of £9.50)
- £775 increase for those earning up to £25,000 (minimum 3.1% increase)
- £700 increase for those earning between £25,000 and £40,000
- £500 increase for those earning over £40,000

Our Public Sector Pay Policy for 2022-23 maintains a focus on sustainability, reducing inequalities and promoting wellbeing.

The UK Government has chosen not to act on public sector pay, meaning that our more progressive approach, with public sector wages on average 7% higher in Scotland than in the rest of the UK, is funded from within our severely limited budget. The Scottish Government is ensuring that existing budgets are being reprioritised to deliver fair and sustainable pay uplifts.

We acknowledge the challenge of inflation and continue to offer protection to the lowest paid, where cost of living impacts are felt the hardest.

We must ensure that pay rises are affordable now and in the future, and that they continue to be progressive and protect the lowest paid.

Given the change in the economic climate, we recognise it may be necessary for public bodies covered by Public Sector Pay Policy to go beyond the flexibility parameters set out in the 2022-23 pay policy.

Ministers expect that pay awards that exceed pay policy parameters remain sustainable and affordable.

The Scottish Budget is currently fully allocated, with the majority already legally committed; therefore public bodies need to assess affordability of pay awards from within their own budgets.

Our response to public sector pay is a key part of this government's response to the cost of living crisis.

The situation workers are finding themselves has clearly changed since last autumn when we set our Budget and Public Sector Pay Policy.

We are therefore adapting our approach to respond to the cost of living crisis and worsening position on inflation.

Given the financial restrictions of devolution, however, we are having to do so from within our fixed budget. This means that difficult decisions are having to be taken to reduce public spending to enable us to afford increased pay offers.

Our policy of no compulsory redundancies in the public sector - which we continue to support notwithstanding the budgetary pressures we face - will give those delivering essential services the peace of mind of knowing their job is safe over this winter.

Public sector pay deals are, so far, costing £700m more than we budgeted for. On the contrary, paying higher wages is the biggest contribution we can make to helping families with soaring costs.

There is no unallocated pot of money from which to fund higher pay deals or extra support for those in need.

So unless Westminster increases the total amount of money available, every additional percentage point on a pay deal, and every pound we spend on measures to help with rising costs, must be funded by reductions elsewhere in our budget.

ANNEX D

AGENDA ITEM 3: HIGHER EDUCATION

UCEA 2022/23 Pay offer

Lines to take

Strike action is in no-one's interests. We expect management and unions to make every effort to reach a settlement.

Universities are autonomous institutions and matters relating to pay are for them to determine.

Pay Offer Details

Employers recognise that the effect of high inflation falls disproportionately on the lower paid. For this reason, UCEA has proposed an uplift which is structured so as to provide higher increases to those at the lower end of the pay spine.

Offer for 2022-23 is an uplift of 3 percent on all pay points, with higher uplifts for those below Spinal Column Point 20 of up to 9 percent. UCEA believe that this is a fair and reasonable offer in the current financial climate.

This offer is worth 3.18 percent on the total paybill. In making this offer UCEA has both exhausted its mandate and proposed an uplift which we know will be financially challenging for many institutions in the absence of any increase in undergraduate fee levels and ongoing expenditure increases. An uplift at this level, in order to ensure their continuing financial sustainability, will require increased levels of efficiency in very many institutions.

Digitisation of the HE Sector

EIS-FELA are seeking assistance from SG facilitating some joint working between the employers and the unions on the impact of digitisation in the HE sector

Lines to take

Although staffing matters are chiefly the responsibility of universities as autonomous institutions, it is important that universities as employers listen to concerns raised by staff and trade unions about the impact of increasing digitisation.

The Quality Assurance Agency for Scotland, as the quality body for higher education in Scotland, continues to work across the sector and with institutions individually to consider how each has responded to the challenges of increasing digitisation and online learning. This includes the potential impact on academic standards, transitioning teaching, and the student experience.

SRUC capital investment

Lines to take

SRUC is estimating 100 million over the next 10 years needed to maintain and replace decaying estate)

We will continue to work closely with the SFC and the HE sector to ensure the long-term financial sustainability of our institutions, including SRUC.

Background - Capital Funding

The Capital Spending Review agreed and allocated funding for the next five fiscal years (2021-22 to 2025-26).

In 22/23, £348 million of the £484 million Education and Skills capital budget is for Higher Education, of which £310.1m is for investment in research and innovation.

The college estates strategy due to be published by SFC in 2022 is to help set priorities for investment over the next five to ten years, improve the student experience and support better outcomes, as well as set out how the college estate will contribute to efforts to tackle climate change.

The college capital budget includes investment in the Dunfermline Learning Campus and college estate maintenance.

EIS-FELA/EIS-ULA: Quarterly Meeting – 28 September 2022

Attendees

EIS-FELA: [Redacted]

EIS-ULA: [Redacted]

SG: [Redacted]

Mr Hepburn welcomed attendees and thanked them for their time, and opened the floor to EIS-FELA to begin

SFC Review Progress

EIS-FELA Officials were given an update on the progress of the SFC Review and progress with the Statement of Intent.

Pay negotiations 22/23 and General NJNC update.

EIS-FELA Officials gave an update on the 22/23 pay claim, and progress to date with Employers. Further update with given on the wider work of the NJNC in relation to EIS priorities

Higher Education Pay negotiations

EIS-ULA gave an update on the pay offer and progress of negotiations with the UK wide employers, UCEA. EIS-ULA discussed the potential for Scotland specific negotiating machinery.

Impact of digitisation in the HE sector

EIS-ULA discussed the topic of digitisation in the Sector and the work of QAA in supporting the sector to respond to the challenges brought by digitisation and online learning

SRUC capital investment

EIS-ULA brought to the Ministers attention the issues faced by SRUC in its rural locations caused by its aging estate, issues such as accessibility, and the longer term viability of specific areas owned by the Institution

Jamie Hepburn's meeting with Anton Muscatelli on September 29

Minister for Higher Education and Further Education, Youth Employment and Training

Meeting with Principal and Vice Chancellor of University of Glasgow

| | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| <i>Date and Time of Engagement</i> | Thursday 29 September 11.15 – 11.45 Via Teams |
| <i>Who</i> | Professor Sir Anton Muscatelli – Principal and Vice-Chancellor of University of Glasgow |
| <i>Key Purpose</i> | This meeting was arranged urgently to enable discussion on the student accommodation issues in Glasgow |
| <i>Official Support</i> | [REDACTED] |
| <i>Top Lines</i> | <p>Student Accommodation: We are gravely concerned at reports of accommodation shortages being experienced at a number of institutions across the country, especially at Glasgow University. While we appreciate that Scottish Government has no direct role in the provision of student residential accommodation, whether that is managed by universities, colleges or private sector organisations, we are determined to improve accessibility, affordability and standards across the rented sector.</p> <p>Future work will be informed by our current review of Purpose Built Student Accommodation, which is examining affordability issues as well as supply of housing.</p> <p>The CaCHE report of research into PBSA and university halls is being finalised and will be available to the Review Group soon. A separate submission will be sent to Mr Hepburn imminently.</p> |
| <i>Additional Briefing</i> | Annex A: Agenda Annex B: Student Accommodation – issues Annex C: Student Accommodation – media reports and other contacts Annex D: Note of meeting with University staff 28/9 Annex E: Student Accommodation – lines Annex E: Biography - Professor Sir Anton Muscatelli |

ANNEX A

Agenda

Welcome (Mr Hepburn)

Introductions

Outline of SG concerns re reports of student accommodation issues at University of Glasgow

Response from University of Glasgow, current situation re. availability of accommodation and long term plans to address the shortfall.

Any other business

ANNEX B

ISSUES / BACKGROUND

Students at University of Glasgow are having significant difficulty obtaining accommodation in either university owned halls, private PBSA or private rented tenancies.

The University website notes:

We regret that we are no longer able to provide guaranteed accommodation for anyone who has not already received confirmation of University Accommodation. We are also highlighting that the city has limited private let or private sector purpose-built accommodation available.

If you have not yet made your accommodation arrangements, we strongly advise that you do not complete registration and enrolment or travel to Glasgow until you have secured your accommodation.

Undergraduate students have the option of deferring studies to September 2023.

When specifically asked about student numbers, University of Glasgow have advised that their student numbers have remained steady and haven't increased. They cite a shrinkage in the private rented sector as the predominant cause of the accommodation shortage.

However, media reports continue to publicise ongoing shortages. Most recently, there is an assertion that the university is renting a cinema to provide lectures with the media linking the need for this to increased student numbers at the university.

Annex C

Student Accommodation / Glasgow University - media:

25 Sep: Sunday Mail 12 - **No room for a few.** One of Scotland's leading universities has had to rent out a cinema complex for lectures. Undergraduates at Glasgow

University will attend the Grosvenor Picture Theatre, in the city's West End, for daytime classes. High numbers of student enrolling this year has created a shortage of lecture theatres and study areas, and sparked an accommodation crisis

22 Sep: Murdo Fraser tweeted that Mairi Spowage (Fraser of Allander Institute) said that SG plans for a rent freeze will exacerbate supply issues in private rented sector.

22 Sep: Glasgow University advising students without accommodation not to enrol unless they have secured accommodation.

30 Aug: Times reports that first-year students have been left without accommodation at UK Unis including Glasgow as they prepare to start degrees next month.

Meeting between Minister for Business, Trade, Tourism and Enterprise and Ainsley Mann, Scottish Trade Envoy ; 16 September 2022

Accommodation in Scotland/ UK: [REDACTED]

Note: Indonesian students to Glasgow tend to study finance / business.

PQs

There have been a number of written and oral PQs relating to student accommodation, although none related specifically to Glasgow.

Correspondence

22 letters have been received specifically about difficulties in getting accommodation, with 11 of these relating to the University of Glasgow and a further 3 for other Glasgow HEIs (Glasgow School of Art, Glasgow Caledonian University and the University of Strathclyde)

Annex D

Officials met on 28 September with Glasgow University staff. The following update was provided.

ACCOMMODATION PROVISION / SUPPORT

Increased demand:-

Post graduate students requesting accommodation up around 40-45%. Many of these are international students. Deadline for registration for all post graduates in person is by 24 October so clearer picture of this demographic will be available after this date. University has continued to advise post graduate students not to travel to Scotland unless accommodation has been secured.

Increase in student numbers progressing into 2nd and 3rd year due to additional places during covid years.

Increased demand for PBSA/university halls due to shrinkage in private rented sector

Wider systemic problem of supply UK wide with indications of similar issues in Manchester and Liverpool. Issues more apparent here at this time as our university semester has started.

Accommodation provision and support:-

Accommodation guarantee has been met. All 1st year undergraduate students who applied by the deadline of 14 July, and who don't live within a commutable distance, have been provided with accommodation.

Still around 100 students who applied after the deadline who have to find accommodation. University is running a waiting list for those.

Widening access, estranged students and care leavers given priority, along with those who are homeless (eg due to broken relationship, from abroad and did not secure accommodation etc). All applications considered on a case by case basis.

Between 90 – 100 students who live within a commutable distance are on a waiting list for accommodation as their preference would be to live in student accommodation.

All Sanctuary students have been housed

50 Ukrainian students have been housed

60 beds in Stirling have been secured for post graduates. University will pay travel costs.

For students who are suffering financial difficulty due to cost of living crisis, the University has increased funds in its hardship fund and this is now open.

Continue to communicate with students and provide advice.

Glasgow university accommodation provision team happy for us to direct any individual queries received by the Scottish Government to them.

STUDENT NUMBERS

University adamant that there is no significant increase in student numbers overall (although note small increase in Ukrainian students and additional student places during covid working their way through the system)

[REDACTED]

University will be able to provide a breakdown of all students by domicile in a couple of months (once post graduate registrations are complete)

Media report that cinema was being used for lectures is evidence of increased student numbers is incorrect. Use is due to delays in refurbishment of other teaching spaces as a result of COVID and supply chain issues.

INCREASING PROVISION

In the long term this requires local authorities, HEIs, SG and other partners working together to build, develop etc. Housing is very interconnected.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED].

Looking at options such as serviced flats, derelict land.

Reduction in private rented tenancies main driver for accommodation issues but difficult to evidence this. No requirement for HMO to specify what type of tenancy (e.g. student) and no way of monitoring small providers below the HMO threshold (single flat owners, 2 bedroom properties). Anecdotal evidence that landlords have moved away from student market to Air BNB for example, or who have sold up. Letting agents advised available flats are now attracting upwards of 300 notes of interest.

Annex E

We are gravely concerned at reports of accommodation shortages being experienced at a number of institutions across the country.

While the Scottish Government has no direct role in the provision of student residential accommodation, the Minister for Higher Education, Further Education, Youth Employment and Training will be discussing this matter with universities to seek an urgent resolution to the matter.

We are determined to improve accessibility, affordability and standards across student accommodation and the private rented sector as a whole.

We will deliver a Student Accommodation Strategy for Scotland. This will be informed by our comprehensive review of Purpose Built Student Accommodation. The review will address cost, contract terms, tenancy agreements, planning and regulation, specialist accommodation, support for students, and supply.

We are also taking forward a New Deal for Tenants in the mainstream private rented sector, with the aim of improving the quality, affordability and regulation of private renting in a way which improves services for tenants and encourages long term investment.

Purpose-built student accommodation will be included as part of the Scottish Government's emergency rent freeze and evictions moratorium.

If approved by the Scottish Parliament the emergency legislation will help ensure tenants – including students in the private rented sector – can remain in their homes and they will not see their rents rise over the autumn and winter.

We recognise tenancies in halls of residence and purpose built student accommodation are structured differently from other types of tenancies. However, we are committed to parity of protection.

There is no evidence that new protections for tenants will reduce supply in the mainstream private rented sector. The number of private tenancies has grown dramatically since devolution, through a period of increasing regulation and market intervention, more than doubling in size.

Recent research from the ongoing Rent Better study highlighted a possible increase in number of landlords seeking to leave the sector but there is no quantitative evidence on whether that is occurring or at what scale.

Between 1999-2000 and 2019-20 the Scottish Household Survey shows that the number of households renting privately in Scotland has more than doubled from 120,000 to 340,000.

Annex F

Professor Sir Anton Muscatelli (Principal and Vice Chancellor)



Sir Anton has been Principal and Vice-Chancellor since October 2009. An economist, his research interests are monetary economics, central bank independence, fiscal policy, international finance and macroeconomics.

Sir Anton chairs the Scottish Government's Standing Council on Europe, a non-political group which provides expert advice to Scottish ministers on protecting Scotland's relationship with the EU. He is also a member of the Scottish Government's Council of Economic Advisers.

From September 2017 he assumed the role of Chair of the Russell Group of Universities. He is a Director of USS (Universities Superannuation Scheme), a member of the Board of Glasgow Life, and Chair of the Commission on Economic Growth for the Glasgow City Region.

GLASGOW KEY FACTS

Founded in 1451 - second oldest university in Scotland and fourth oldest in the English-speaking world

The University has produced an illustrious alumni: engineer James Watt, economist Adam Smith; physicist Lord Kelvin; inventor John Logie Baird; seven Nobel laureates; and two British Prime Ministers

A forward-thinking University with a notable list of firsts: first university in the UK to appoint a Professor of Engineering (1840); Scotland's first female medical graduates completed their degrees (1894); first university in Scotland to have an electronic computer (1957); the world's first ultrasound images of a foetus were published by Glasgow Professor Ian Donald (1958)

Around 30,000 undergraduate and postgraduate students from over 140 countries
(Source: UoG website)

Structured around four colleges, each with a graduate school: The College of Arts; The College of Medical, Veterinary and Life Sciences; The College of Science and Engineering; and The College of Social Sciences.

Three main campuses: Gilmorehill Campus (main campus in west end of Glasgow); Garscube Campus (home of School of Veterinary Medicine and four Research Institutes in the College of Medical, Veterinary and Life Sciences); Crichton Campus in Dumfries (home of School of Interdisciplinary Studies).

NOTE OF MEETING BETWEEN MINISTER FOR HE, FE, YOUTH EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING AND PROFESSOR ANTON MUSCATELLI, VICE-PRINCIPAL OF UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW

Attendees:

Jamie Hepburn, Minister for Higher Education, Further Education, Youth Employment and Training

Professor Sir Anton Muscatelli, Vice Principal of University of Glasgow

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Mr Hepburn noted the current challenges encountered by students in obtaining suitable accommodation. These were not specific to the University of Glasgow but had been reported on significantly in the media. He asked what steps the University of Glasgow were taking to address these issues.

Professor Muscatelli acknowledged this, noting that accommodation problems applied throughout the UK, with recent reports about difficulties in Bristol and Manchester. He updated on the current situation:

1. The first year undergraduate guarantee was achieved. All first year undergraduates who applied for accommodation ahead of the deadline had been provided with accommodation. This applied only to those students who live outwith a commutable distance.
2. Some students did not meet the accommodation deadline. [REDACTED]. These students were on a waiting list and the University was trying to find accommodation for them.
3. [REDACTED]
4. Returning undergraduates are one of the biggest issues. The University does not guarantee accommodation for returning students (2nd year onwards). The University court met recently and acknowledged that there was a wider housing issue with fewer private rented tenancies available for students. [REDACTED]
5. More post-graduate students are looking for university or private PBSA accommodation, due to the contraction in the private rented sector.
6. They have around 50 Ukrainian students they have housing in student accommodation in Stirling, they are providing transport for them.
7. [REDACTED]

Professor Muscatelli noted that the figures quoted were based on surveys his staff are carrying out with the student body to establish how many students were sofa-surfing / staying with friends temporarily. These surveys will continue.

University of Glasgow consider this to be a student welfare issue. They have increased the amount in their hardship funds, are paying transport costs.

[REDACTED]

There had also been an increase in student numbers above the norm due to teacher assessed grades (as a result of covid).

Professor Muscatelli felt that the main issue was the contraction of the private rented sector, with anecdotal evidence suggesting that more and more landlords are not renting to students, are not renewing their HMO licences (plus city stopping issuing of HMOs) due to the most recent legislation in respect of tenants' rights. More holistic, national approach needed, with protection for those renting. Post Graduate students usually use to stay in PRS but are increasingly looking to the University for student accommodation given shortage in PRS.

In respect of the warning issued regarding the first year undergraduate student accommodation guarantee being suspended, Professor Muscatelli commented that he felt it was important to be transparent and to let students know the current position. Making the announcement had attracted a lot of negative media coverage but he felt that it was appropriate. Students suspending studies as a result of being unable to secure accommodation was a last resort. [REDACTED]

Professor Muscatelli advised that if accommodation issues continue as is, or there was a big shock to the private rented sector, it would have a sizeable impact on the university.

The Minister noted that University of Glasgow were taking all steps possible to address the accommodation issues and stressed that the SG would continue to work with the sector through the review of PBSA.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Jamie Hepburn's meeting with Colleges Scotland on October 26

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| <i>What</i> | Quarterly meeting with Colleges Scotland (CS) | | |
| <i>Where/ When</i> | Wednesday 26 October 2022: 13:00 – 13:45 | | |
| <i>Key Message(s)</i> | <p>To outline the challenging fiscal environment, where the combination of the ongoing cost of living crisis, high inflation and the forecast recession has increased the demand for government support, whilst also eroding the purchasing power of available funding.</p> <p>The Scottish Government is therefore undertaking an emergency budget review to assess any and all opportunities to: redirect additional resources to those most in need; reduce the burdens on business; and stimulate the Scottish economy.</p> <p>The funding outlook is extremely challenging in relation to the funding outlined in the RSR.</p> <p>Recognising the importance of the sector, we have sought to minimise the impact of required savings on front line allocations for learning and teaching, and support for students, for this academic year.</p> <p>How can CS support the sector to manage in difficult circumstances so that positive change can take place?</p> | | |
| <i>Who</i> | <p>Shona Struthers, CEO Colleges Scotland Waiyin Hatton, Chair of Colleges Scotland and Chair of West College Scotland Audrey Cumberland, Lead Principal for Colleges Scotland's College Principals' Group and Principal of Edinburgh College</p> | | |
| <i>Supporting official</i> | [REDACTED] | | |
| <i>Briefing contents</i> | Annex A | AGENDA | |
| | Annex B | DRAFT BUDGET | |
| | Annex C | OUTCOMES AND FLEXIBILITIES | |
| | Annex D | COLLEGES SCOTLAND EVIDENCE TO ECYPC – 5 OCTOBER | |
| | Annex E | NATIONAL BARGAINING | |
| | Annex F | PURPOSE AND PRINCIPLES | |
| | Annex G | CROSS PORTFOLIO (FOLLOW UP DISCUSSION TO MINISTERIAL RESPONSE LETTER DATED 21 SEPTEMBER 2022) | |
| | Annex H | NSET | |
| | Annex I | THINK THE UNTHINKABLE | |

ANNEX A
AGENDA

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| Agenda Item 1 | Draft Budget (CS) |
| Agenda Item 2 | Outcomes and flexibilities (SG) |
| Agenda Item 3 | Colleges Scotland evidence to ECYP Committee – 5 October 2022 (CS) |
| Agenda Item 4 | National Bargaining (CS) |
| Agenda Item 5 | Purpose and Principles (CS) |
| Agenda Item 6 | Cross portfolio (follow up discussion to Ministerial response letter dated 21 September 2022) (CS) |
| Agenda Item 7 | NSET (CS) |
| Agenda Item 8 | Update: Think the Unthinkable (SG) |

ANNEX B

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| ITEM 1 | <p>DRAFT BUDGET</p> <p>Top line message to convey: The Scottish Government is investing nearly £2bn in Scotland’s colleges and universities in 2022/23. We continue to work with the Scottish Funding Council, and our colleges, to tackle the pressures on budgets this year and next.</p> |
| Background | <p>There have been claims that the College sector is chronically under-funded, that there was a real terms cut in the 2022-23 budget and that, going forward, a flat cash RSR settlement will be extremely challenging for the sector.</p> <p>There has been discussion around how viable the college sector funding model is along with claims that college students receive the lowest funding per head when compared to levels ranging from pre-school to university.</p> <p>At a meeting on Thursday 29 September with representatives from CS and SG (Linda and [REDACTED]) it was confirmed that the funding outlook was extremely challenging and there was little prospect of any increase in funding outlined in the RSR, and in fact that is under major inflationary pressures.</p> <p>It was also confirmed at the meeting that finance colleagues were aware of where pay is landing and we are waiting to see how this is managed across SG in the emergency budget, but this could create further pressures.</p> <p>There’s also a range of inflationary pressures and how DFM will handle the challenge we need to wait and see. It was confirmed Ministers will be considering the college pay deal in the same manner as across all sectors.</p> <p>We have announced that SFC will be expected to make savings of £20 million in financial year 2022-23 despite the severe inflationary challenges currently being experienced by the economy.</p> <p>It has been predicted that college sector workforces would be reduced by 25% at the end of 2027.</p> |

Audit Scotland's publication titled Scotland's Colleges 2022 highlighted that Scotland's Colleges are increasingly reliant on public funding and colleges' financial position is forecast to deteriorate. CS provided the draft budget submission in the table below.

| Investment Requirements for Academic Year (AY) NOT including student support | 2023/24 £m | 2024/25 £m | 2025/26 £m | 2026/27 £m |
|--|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Revenue Funding | | | | |
| Baseline teaching (from previous year) | 522.0 | 574.7 | 632.7 | 696.6 |
| Sustainable Revenue – inflation | 52.7 | 58.0 | 63.9 | 70.4 |
| Energy additional costs premium | 15.0 | 16.5 | 18.2 | 20.0 |
| Digital Inclusion – provision of laptops and data | 7.8 | 8.6 | 9.5 | 10.5 |
| Mental Health and Well-Being Fund | 5.0 | 5.5 | 6.1 | 6.7 |
| <i>Total Revenue Request</i> | 602.5 | 663.3 | 730.4 | 804.2 |

Key message(s) / Lines to take

DFM announcement of a £20m cut funding in FY 2022-23
 In cash terms, the £1.97bn budget allocation in FY 2022/23 for Scotland's tertiary education sectors via the Scottish Funding Council is the highest in recent years.
 The £20m of savings is based on routine forecasts of underspends that have been assessed from across the broad range of SFC's budgets and programmes.
 While the underspends come from the Financial Year 22-23 budget, the majority of the savings are actually generated from within the previous Academic Year 21-22 budget.
 It has to be recognised that the combination of the ongoing cost of living crisis, high inflation and the forecast recession has increased the demand for government support whilst also eroding the purchasing power of available funding, meaning the SG budget is worth around £1.7 billion less than when it was published in December 2021.
 The Scottish Government is therefore undertaking an emergency budget review to assess any and all opportunities to: redirect additional resources to those most in need; reduce the burdens on business; and stimulate the Scottish economy.
 Recognising the importance of the sector we have sought to minimise the impact of required savings on front line allocations for learning and teaching, and support for students, for this academic year.

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| | <p>College sector pay awards for 2022-23 and 2023-24 funding The outcome of the Emergency Budget Review to Parliament is on week commencing 24th October and this will form part of an ongoing budget process which will shape plans for the 2023-24 Scottish Budget later this year. We are not expecting an increase in budgets beyond what has already been announced through the RSR. Given the flat cash budget as it stands, inflationary pressures will inevitably present greater challenges next year which the college sector will be considering.</p> <p>The college funding model The college funding model is essentially a volume/price model. This is a complex area and the SFC Review highlighted the need to consider whether it is right for the future. In our response to the Review Ministers supported taking forward a review of the current funding model and SFC plans to review this.</p> <p>Funding per head for college students less than that for university students. Figures comparing the public investment in schools, colleges and universities should be treated with some caution as different sectors have different cost bases. We have monitored the college sector’s view regarding funding. The on-going work of the SFC Review will be looking at issues of sustainability and funding model</p> <p>YPG and FWDF funding for colleges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In a difficult fiscal context we are working to finalise the budget for Year 6 of FWDF. We hope to be able to confirm shortly. Between 2020 and 2022, an additional £10m per year was allocated to colleges to deliver a wide range of skills boost and shorter industry focused opportunities for young people that meet the needs of employers and support economic recovery. Additional funding of up to £10m has been allocated to the college sector in the current financial year. <p>Ensuring the short financial sustainability of colleges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Scottish Funding Council has worked hard to extend budget flexibilities to colleges where possible, to provide greater planning certainty. • Our expectation is that colleges will prioritise spend within their allocations on the most impactful provision and skills alignment, and consider wider economic, local community and learner needs. |
| Contact point | [REDACTED] |

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| ITEM 2 | <p>OUTCOMES AND FLEXIBILITIES</p> <p>Top line message to convey:</p> <p>Outcomes</p> <p>We have a positive story to tell around how the 116K FTE target has supported learners to gain vocational qualifications over the past number of years. However, we are mindful that a simple input target isn't necessarily the best way to capture the full breadth of what colleges deliver.</p> <p>Flexibilities</p> <p>SG has supported SFC to extend a range of flexibilities to colleges including the application of a 2% tolerance threshold which provides colleges with some leeway with their core credit targets.</p> |
| Background | <p>Outcomes</p> <p>We maintained our target of 116,000 full-time equivalent (FTE) colleges places and exceeded the target every year since 2011. The FTE target has helped our colleges deliver high quality teaching and learning, giving students recognised qualifications and providing a skilled workforce to help grow our economy. The outputs of the SFC review of university and college provision will inform our thinking on the future strategy for ensuring our colleges support learners and the economy.</p> <p>Flexibilities</p> <p>The inability of colleges to access financial flexibilities including borrowing and using surplus funds between financial years was raised as part of the Colleges regionalisation inquiry at the Education, Young People and Children Committee by various college Principals on 21 September 2022 and by Shona Struthers on 5 October 2022.</p> <p>In your response to the SFC Review you advised that the SG will not explore the reclassification of colleges. There have since been significant developments in relation to the financial context putting the sustainability of some colleges at risk.</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>The Skills and Post-16 Education Act 2022 has prompted the ONS to review the classification of colleges in England (currently classified as private). The Act specifies more direction from government on regional skills planning and is likely to result in colleges in England being brought into the public sector. The outcome is expected to be published in December 2022. It is for ONS to make decisions regarding classification. Scottish Ministers can however amend Ministerial controls through legislation which may prompt reclassification.</p> <p>ONS' decision to classify colleges as public sector in 2010 (a decision based on controls Ministers already had over colleges at the time, and which was backdated to 1993),</p> |

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| | <p>Most importantly, colleges required government consent to borrow funds. In addition, government had control over governance arrangements and powers to close or merge colleges. SG Officials challenged ONS' interpretation of these controls, arguing that the evidence used by ONS was incomplete and did not take into account current practice resulting in misunderstanding of the legislative powers of Ministers in relation to colleges and the role of the SFC. The ONS refused to reconsider this, stating that section 10 of the Financial Memorandum (Monitoring and Control of Borrowing) was clear and the powers described within were significant enough to justify the reclassification.</p> |
| <p>Key message(s) / Lines to take</p> | <p>Outcomes FTE target –going forward new measures What thoughts do CS have on other measures that could be used to monitor impact and drive positive outcomes in the sector? What are the most important things for us to measure or take account of?</p> <p>Flexibilities SG has supported SFC to extend a range of flexibilities to colleges including the application of a 2% tolerance threshold this year which provides colleges with some leeway with their core credit targets. This would mean that SFC would not claw back funding from colleges if they fall short of their core target within the tolerance threshold. I am aware that SG, CS and SFC are meeting shortly to explore how we might find a route through the challenges being faced by the college sector at this time, especially looking at the next financial and academic years. I will look forward to the outcome of this meeting and its follow-up. SG's focus will be on flexibilities which can be extended to the sector, as opposed to classification. It is for ONS to make decisions regarding classification. Are there any particular flexibilities the sector is looking for?</p> |
| <p>Contact point</p> | <p>[REDACTED]</p> |

ANNEX D

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| <p>ITEM 3</p> | <p>COLLEGES SCOTLAND EVIDENCE TO ECYP COMMITTEE – 5 OCTOBER 2022 Top line message to convey: Regionalisation has improved curriculum planning and delivery at a regional level, enabling colleges to effectively coordinate. Changes have improved outcomes for learners and improved partnership working between local universities, NHS, local authorities and schools on learning pathways and articulation.</p> |
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| Background | <p>Colleges Scotland gave evidence to ECYPC on 5 October 2022. The Minister is due to appear on 2 November.</p> <p>Areas covered: Covid consequential Long term funding ONS reclassification Pay harmonisation ‘chronic underfunding’ Disparity of funding for HE in colleges Capital funding: estates Purpose and Principles Mergers Industrial Relations Glasgow Colleges Regional Board Completion rates Community Learning and Development</p> <p>Witnesses: Shona Struthers, Chief Executive, Colleges Scotland Andrew Witty, Director of Sector Policy, Colleges Scotland Karen Watt, Chief Executive, Scottish Funding Council James Dunphy, Director of Access, Learning and Outcomes, Scottish Funding Council</p> |
| Key message(s) / Lines to take | <p>From CS perspective, how did they feel the evidence session went? Regionalisation has brought a number of benefits to the sector through improving geographical entry points to courses, reducing duplication of courses and through aligning skills with industry demand at a regional level.</p> |
| Contact point | [REDACTED] |

.ANNEX E

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| ITEM 4 | <p>NATIONAL BARGAINING Top line message to convey: It is for the college unions and the employers to negotiate pay and terms and conditions voluntarily, in the spirit of collaboration and co-operation.</p> |
| Background | <p>Both Unions are due to begin formal negotiations, with the first formal meetings scheduled for w/c 24 October. For this academic year, unions, both for support staff and lecturers, have put in a pay claim of a consolidated flat cash settlement of £5000. This would create an additional financial pressure of £72 million per year. Even a 5% pay settlement, which is in line with the rest of the public sector, would create substantial budgetary pressures for the sector,</p> |

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| | <p>with employers indicating that they have £9.6m available to offer as an unconsolidated pay award.</p> <p>At the committee meeting on 5 October, Shona Struthers made reference to CS support for having an independent Chair of the NJNC, which is one of the recommendations in the Lessons Learned report into resetting national collective bargaining in the college sector.</p> <p>We will be seeking to publish the report in advance of the committee meeting of 2 November and signal Scottish Government endorsement of the recommendations made.</p> |
| Key message(s) / Lines to take | <p>Industrial action</p> <p>Industrial action is not in the best interests of anyone in the sector and every effort must be made, on both sides, to avoid strike action. However, the Scottish Government will not intervene in pay negotiations. It is for the college unions and the employers to negotiate pay and terms and conditions voluntarily, in the spirit of collaboration and co-operation.</p> <p>Lessons Learned report/improving national collective bargaining</p> <p>We are grateful to both the employers and trade unions for taking part in this exercise and working collaboratively to find solutions that work for all parties.</p> <p>We are committed to working collaboratively with both unions and employers to find enduring solutions that work for all and are considering the next steps with regard to the recommendations in the report.</p> |
| Contact point | [REDACTED] |

Annex F

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| ITEM 5 | <p>PURPOSE AND PRINCIPLES</p> <p>Top line message to convey:</p> <p>Defining a Purpose & Principles is an opportunity to stimulate debate and discussion on all aspects of our post school education, skills and research system and to start to shift cultural expectations and challenge perceptions of what the system can deliver. I thank Colleges Scotland for your input so far and look forward to your continued support as we develop this work and start to consult with a broader range of stakeholders.</p> |
| Background | <p>The Purpose and Principles for Post School Education, Research and Skills Development is currently being developed with input from a wide range of people across Scotland from learners to employers. This will fulfil the Scottish Government's commitment to publish a statement of strategic intent (now referred to as Purpose and Principles) following the Scottish Funding Council's (SFC)</p> |

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| | <p>recommendation in its review “Coherence and Sustainability: A Review of Tertiary Education and Research”.</p> <p>Colleges Scotland have been helpful in facilitating engagement across colleges on the P&P.</p> <p>Two sessions took place before the September weekend and a further session with Principals is planned shortly</p> <p>Sensitivity: Principals giving evidence at EYP session felt there has been a lack of engagement thus far on the P&P. We are keen to understand where we can work with CS to support wider engagement with the sector.</p> |
| <p>Key message(s) / Lines to take</p> | <p>On publication, the Purpose and Principles will represent the start of a period of wider change to ensure that our post school education, research and skills system is fit for the future.</p> <p>The project presents a bold and exciting opportunity to align a whole ecosystem behind a shared purpose and set of principles, articulating clearly defined roles and responsibilities which provides a clear strategic framework for decision making based on the outcomes we want to see.</p> <p>This Purpose & Principles ranges from the critical impacts of our colleges and universities to the role of the third sector in community learning and development, supporting those with complex needs or who are furthest from the labour market to access opportunities. It is also about making the fundamental connection to the needs of our economy and society into the future, acknowledging that employers in both the public and private sector have a role to play in developing the skills of our workforce.</p> <p>Given the breadth of scope it is right that the Purpose and Principles is developed in discussion with all of those who have a stake in it and that Government takes the time to do that.</p> <p>I know officials really appreciated the insights gained from workshops with CS in September as part of our early engagement work on the draft Purpose & Principles. They will continue to look for further opportunities for engagement with you and your members as part of our wider engagement programme, which will seek to ensure all voices are captured as we develop this work.</p> <p>I am grateful for the continued input from CS and look forward to working together to shape a Purpose & Principles that reflects their perspective of the sector.</p> |
| <p>Contact point</p> | <p>[REDACTED]</p> |

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| ITEM 6 | <p>CROSS PORTFOLIO (FOLLOW UP DISCUSSION TO MINISTERIAL RESPONSE LETTER DATED 21 SEPTEMBER 2022)</p> <p>Top line message to convey: I note the many areas within the papers that deliver on the Scottish Government's priorities and support the ambitions regarding the National Economic Transformation Strategy. The Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills and I will continue to promote and articulate the significant and enabling contribution made by colleges, which have a direct bearing on the deliverability of the Government's priorities, across all portfolios.</p> |
| Background | <p>The Minister received four position papers over summer. Being mindful of the DFM's recent statement, officials drafted a direct in tone response recognising this letter as an opportunity to indicate a shift in Scottish Government positioning and added explicit asks of CS for future engagements. CS have been encouraged at an official level to rally others (industry leaders) to advocate for the sector with Ministers on the importance of college sector to their policy ambitions Their Cross Portfolio paper is useful to demonstrate the totality of the Advanced Learning and Science/SFC 'enabling budget' and the intersection with Permanent Secretary and SAS/DFM discussions.</p> |
| Key message(s) / Lines to take | <p>I would like to hear your thoughts on the role Colleges Scotland can play in supporting Scottish Government and the sector with the difficult choices ahead. I would welcome your perspective on what should be prioritised in the fiscal context, and what contribution you consider Colleges Scotland best placed to make in support of this. Consequently, what they think could be deprioritised (it's all important but not everything is equally important)</p> |
| Contact point | [REDACTED] |

ANNEX H

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| ITEM 6 | <p>NSET</p> <p>Top line message to convey: Our National Strategy for Economic Transformation contains bold and ambitious actions - within the powers currently available to us - to deliver economic prosperity for all Scotland's people and places.</p> |
| Background | <p>The National Strategy for Economic Transformation (NSET) was published in March 2022. The five programmes of action set out in the Strategy focus on: stimulating entrepreneurship; opening new markets; increasing productivity; developing the skills we need for the decade ahead; and ensuring fairer and more equal economic opportunities.</p> |

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| Key message(s) / Lines to take | <p>In order to emerge strongly from the current economic crisis, we will focus on delivering our National Strategy for Economic Transformation, and will work with the business community to identify the most effective support we can offer them.</p> <p>NSET is a 10-year strategy and we are currently developing prioritised and affordable delivery plans for each of its programmes, which we hope to publish soon.</p> <p>Our initial focus will be on delivering the measures that will most help to support the economy through any recession and pave the way for a more resilient, fairer, greener, wellbeing economy.</p> |
| Contact point | [REDACTED] |

ANNEX I

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| ITEM 8 | THINK THE UNTHINKABLE |
| Background | Thinking the Unthinkable was an event held by CS on 12 September with all college Chairs and Principals - Mike Cantlay from SFC and Nora Senior presented at the meeting. The Group were tasked with looking at how they can take control collectively as sector leaders during these challenging times. Officials have suggested it may be helpful for CS to offer a formal update to Ministers. |
| Contact point | N/A |

Regular quarterly meeting between Colleges Scotland and Mr Hepburn
26 October 2022

Jamie Hepburn (JH) Minister for HE, FE, YE T
Shona Struthers (SS) (CEO Colleges Scotland)
Audrey Cumberford (AC) (Principal, Edinburgh College)
Waiyin Hatton (WH) (Chair, Colleges Scotland)

Scottish Government

[REDACTED] (Scottish Government)
[REDACTED] (Scottish Government)

Building a new Scotland publication

JH let CS know that the latest in series of papers on independence papers had been published, Cabinet Secretary had hoped to meet with CS last week to discuss it. Colleges have key interest given that the focus of the paper is on economic potential. Noted that education-specific paper related to independence will be forthcoming. AC noted that it was a timely publication and also the tension inherent between focus on dealing with immediate fiscal challenges and the need to lay pipeline for the future.

Budget

Noted changes at UKG level and the possible delays to budget updates this has generated. UKG expected to give fiscal update on 17 November. DFM had already announced the delay to SG Emergency Budget update until after the UKG position announcement. JH noted the wide range of pressures on public finances.

Outcomes/flexibilities and "Thinking the Unthinkable" update:

Colleges Scotland colleagues shared update around these strands of thinking, in particular WH noted that part of the purpose of the 2 x "Think the Unthinkable" sessions with principals and other stakeholders has been to generate momentum and bring the sector together/build shared sense of change. JH reiterated that he's open to hearing options – potential for radical ideas, keen to have the discussion.

AC suggested that a model using e.g. 75% credit target based/25% strategic deployment would be a better model than one based on clawback. WH noted demographics and needs have changed – FTE model doesn't work so well when lots of people want short, sharp courses. General discussion on need for appropriate metrics and that accountability of public money is still necessary. Focus is on being able to use money to deliver outcomes. Welcomed all ideas.

[Action] CS committed to provide written paper with specific proposals ASAP.

[Action] Minister requested officials provide separate update on thinking around funding/SFC thinking.

Evidence to Committee

Noted that JH is due to appear on 2 November. SS welcomed the Committee's interest in colleges. Raised point about infrastructure investment at Committee – noted that this also comes with significant investment needs. KD shared that SFC will soon be publishing the approach to developing the strategic plan on capital investment and that this is co-authored by the sector. If timescale doesn't meet sector expectations/needs SG needs to be made aware of this.

National bargaining

SS highlighted current claim - £5K/pp – not affordable by employers. Union relationships are currently fairly positive. It may be a case of sector outlining what it can afford and then approaching SG if ask exceeds this following negotiations. JH asked that CS stay close – noted his ongoing dialogue with union reps as well. Noted limits on affordability of pay claims on public purse.

Purpose and principles

SS shared that P&P forms part of CS board papers for discussion tomorrow. Broadly positive about what's been set out so far. Noted that delivery of ambition of P&P would need investment behind it. JH clarified that wouldn't expect P&P to lead to prescriptive descriptions about how investment should be made – will be a flexible grounding for future decision-making.

NSET and Student Mental Health:

SS reiterated the ask that there is a continuation of funding to support counsellors within tertiary education settings. JH noted the existing PfG commitments around development of Student Mental Health plan to set out further steps. Also a role for existing statutory services needing to align to need. On NSET JH reiterated that colleges have a clear role to play in delivery of NSET, provides a useful point of reference in thinking about discussion on funding/utilising resources in a different way. AC noted that she had participated in recent NSET meeting and had made the point that existing skills system is reactive and needs to become much more proactive – planning for the future growth areas (e.g. net zero).

Meeting closed with WH reiterating commitment to seek solutions – difficult but necessary decisions – overall optimistic. JH encouraged CS to reach out if further discussion helpful outside the existing quarterly meeting structure, also flagged how helpful his visits to colleges have proved and he intends to continue these.

ENDS

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 17 October 2022 13:32
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: Shona Struthers; Andy Witty; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Quarterly meeting between Colleges Scotland and Minister - 26 October

Hi [REDACTED].

As per our discussion I can confirm the following items for the agenda:

Draft Budget
Evidence to ESYC
National Bargaining
Purpose & Principles
Follow up discussion to letter 21 Sept (cross portfolio work)
NSET
Is there anything from the Ministers side that he wishes to add?

Regards
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 13 October 2022 10:17
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: Andy Witty
Subject: RE: Quarterly meeting between Colleges Scotland and Minister - 26 October

Hi [REDACTED],

Many thanks for passing along the below request for agenda items for the upcoming quarterly meeting between Colleges Scotland and the Minister. I wondered if the team have had time to consider and would be very grateful for a response by COB today (Thursday 13 October) to allow me to collate briefing.

Many thanks,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 07 October 2022 09:01
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Quarterly meeting between Colleges Scotland and Minister - 26 October

Thanks [REDACTED]I've passed this over for discussion.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 07 October 2022 08:35

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: Quarterly meeting between Colleges Scotland and Minister - 26 October

Hi [REDACTED],

Ahead of the upcoming quarterly meeting on 26 October between Colleges Scotland and the Minister, I would be grateful if you could let me know of the items which Colleges Scotland would like to include in the agenda and details of attendees from CS.

For reference I have shared the previous agenda below:

| | |
|---------------|---|
| Agenda Item 1 | Positioning the Sector for Delivery |
| Agenda Item 2 | Digital – Future Technology Partnership Proposal |
| Agenda Item 3 | WorldSkills – Proposal Paper with Scottish Government |
| Agenda Item 4 | Industrial Relations |

Grateful if you could provide a response by COB on Wednesday 12 October.

Many thanks,

[REDACTED]

Jamie Hepburn's meeting with unions including GMB, Unite and Unison on October 27

ENGAGEMENT TITLE: QUARTERLY TRADE UNION ENGAGEMENT MEETING: EIS-FELA

| | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| <i>Date and Time of Engagement</i> | Wednesday 28 September – 16:15 – 17:00 |
| <i>Where</i> | Microsoft Teams Click here to join the meeting |
| <i>Who</i> | You are meeting with representatives from Unison and Unite Unison: [Redacted] Unite: [Redacted] |
| <i>Key Purpose</i> | Scheduled Quarterly meeting |
| <i>Sensitivities</i> | None |
| <i>Media Handling</i> | None |
| <i>Official Support</i> | [REDACTED} |

Briefing Contents

| | |
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| Annex A | Agenda |
| Annex B | Agenda Item 1: Further Education Support Staff Pay Claim Compulsory redundancies in the Sector Cuts at Kelvin College Facilities Time National Pay & Grading update |
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| Annex D | Supplementary Briefing: College Budgets |

ANNEX A

AGENDA

Item 1: Further Education

Support Staff Pay Claim
Compulsory redundancies in the Sector
Cuts at Kelvin College
Facilities Time
National Pay & Grading update

Item 2: Higher Education

Pay negotiations and Industrial Action
Dundee Pensions Dispute

ANNEX B

AGENDA ITEM 1: FURTHER EDUCATION

Support Staff Pay Claim – 2022/23

TOP LINE

The Scottish Government remains firmly of the view that it is for the college unions and the employers to negotiate pay and terms and conditions voluntarily, in the spirit of collaboration and co-operation.

2022/23 Pay Ask

Both Unions have now submitted their pay claim for the 2022/23 year.

The ask is for a consolidated flat-rated pay rise of £5,000 on all national salary scale points for unpromoted and promoted lecturers, effective from 1st September 2022.

CES estimate this would bring the overall cost of the 2022/23 pay claims to approximately £72m per year.

Compulsory Redundancies in the College Sector

Unison will call on you to make a public commitment to ensuring there are no compulsory redundancies in the Sector.

Lines to take

Although Ministers cannot compel institutions to commit to no compulsory redundancies, I would expect them to work together with unions and make every effort to protect jobs where possible.

Operational decisions on resourcing and staffing matters are for colleges and Ministers have no direct role in negotiations. Our public sector pay policy for staff pay remits sets the framework for public sector pay, and applies directly to a number of Public Bodies.

Although the policy does not 'apply' directly to Colleges they should be aware that the policy of no compulsory redundancies is a key pillar of public sector pay policy, and colleges, although not bound by this, should have regard to this policy.

Any college considering compulsory redundancies should consult with the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) or regional strategic body as appropriate as early as possible.

CUTS AT KELVIN COLLEGE

Lines to take

The Scottish Government is investing almost £2 billion in Scotland's colleges and universities in 2022-23, and the Scottish Funding Council has worked hard to extend budget flexibilities to colleges where possible, to provide greater planning certainty. Our expectation is that colleges will prioritise spend within their allocations on the most impactful provision and skills alignment, and consider wider economic, local community and learner needs

The college sector is aware we are not expecting an increase in budgets beyond what has already been announced through the RSR, and given the flat cash budget as it stands, inflationary pressures will inevitably present greater challenges next year which the college sector will be considering and planning for

Background

During his evidence to the Education and Skills Committee, Derek Smeall, Principal of Kelvin College made reference to "chronic underfunding of colleges", particularly when looking at financial projections of flatcash over the next 5 years, with predictions that workforces would be reduced by 25% at the end of 2027.

[Redacted]

FACILITIES TIME

Lines to take

The Scottish Government remains absolutely committed to the Fair Work Framework and we have set out consistently that we expect colleges to adopt Fair Work principles.

A reasonable level of facility time that ensures meaningful engagement between colleges and trade unions is crucial to ensuring the staff voice is reflected in decision making.

Whilst it is not for the Scottish Government to intervene in local issues of this nature, we will continue to work closely with all parties to ensure there is a coherent process with constructive conversations during college sector negotiations.

Background

Unison commissioned the Watson report, which was produced in May 2022. The report recommended focused negotiations around the quantum of facilities time should take place to gain agreement.

Unison feel that CES have not placed enough importance on the outcomes of the report, and the above recommendation – to date no specific meeting has taken place.

However, following discussions in the summer, CES have offered an increase in facilities time from 1.5 FTE to 3 FTE, effectively doubling the time available.

Unison feel this is still not adequate, and argue that gaining agreement for release at a local level hinders the work of the Union and its involvement in NJNC business.

SUPPORT STAFF JOB EVALUATION PROJECT

Key Lines to take

Encourage both the employers and the Unions to continue to engage in the process, in order to agree a suitable way forward to ensure what has been agreed remains fit for purpose.

It is important that there are no further delays in this process to ensure that any backdated payments are made to support staff.

Job Evaluation Project: Background

The 2017/18 Pay and Terms and Conditions Agreement for support staff commits to implementing the outcomes of Job Evaluation from 1st September 2018 and includes every support staff role within the scope of National Bargaining.

The Employers' Association and support staff trade unions (UNISON, GMB and Unite) committed to joint ownership of the implementation of Job Evaluation and the National Joint Negotiation Committee (NJNC) Role Evaluation Process agreed in September 2018.

Latest position

Over the past few months, the project team has been concluding on the final quality assurance checks on the scores across all 22 colleges, as part of Stage Two (evaluation of roles) of the project.

The outcomes from the evaluation process will be presented to individual college HR departments for final feedback during mid-November 2022 before these are presented to the NJNC Job Evaluation Working Group and subsequently to the full NJNC for ratification.

Next Steps

Once Stage Two of the project has concluded, the project team will be able to communicate definite timescales for taking forward Stage Three (development of pay and grading options).

[Redacted]

ANNEX C

AGENDA ITEM 3: HIGHER EDUCATION

UCEA 2022/23 Pay offer

Lines to take

Strike action is in no-one's interests. We expect management and unions to make every effort to reach a settlement.

Universities are autonomous institutions and matters relating to pay are for them to determine.

Pay Offer Details

Employers recognise that the effect of high inflation falls disproportionately on the lower paid. For this reason, UCEA has proposed an uplift which is structured so as to provide higher increases to those at the lower end of the pay spine.

Offer for 2022-23 is an uplift of 3 percent on all pay points, with higher uplifts for those below Spinal Column Point 20 of up to 9 percent. UCEA believe that this is a fair and reasonable offer in the current financial climate.

This offer is worth 3.18 percent on the total paybill. In making this offer UCEA has both exhausted its mandate and proposed an uplift which we know will be financially challenging for many institutions in the absence of any increase in undergraduate fee levels and ongoing expenditure increases. An uplift at this level, in order to ensure their continuing financial sustainability, will require increased levels of efficiency in very many institutions.

Outcome of Unite Ballot/Further Industrial Action

Unite members now have a mandate for strike action in the following 5 institutions: Glasgow Uni, Strathclyde Uni, Napier, Dundee and Glasgow School of Art, with the dispute centering around pay, conditions and pensions.

Unions are legally bound to give employers 14 days' notice of strike action, as yet no dates have been publicly announced.

UNIVERSITY OF DUNDEE – DISPUTE OVER CHANGES TO LOCAL PENSION SCHEME

Lines to take:

Universities are autonomous institutions and matters relating to pay, working conditions and pensions are for them to determine. As such the Scottish Government has no locus to intervene directly in this dispute.

I wrote to Professor Gillespie again last month (6 September) to reiterate the importance of working together with the campus Unions to resolve this dispute and put an end to further industrial action.

Background

In September 2021, UNISON and UCU members voted in favour of industrial action over proposed changes to the University of Dundee Superannuation and Life Assurance Scheme (UoDSS), which is the recognised local pension scheme for primarily support staff on salary Grade 6 and below. Most academic staff above Grade 6 are on the UK-wide Universities Superannuation Scheme.

The University has sought to replace the existing defined benefit scheme for with a new defined contribution scheme, arguing that the costs of UoDSS have risen in recent years with the latest valuation at a deficit of around £55 million; there is a risk of further increases in the future, due to increases in life expectancy and reduced expectations of future investment return; and there is a need to control the University's costs.

Previous Strike Action

UNISON members previously took industrial action in response to the proposed changes on 29-30 September 2021, 1 October, 4-5 October, 25 October-9 November, 18-25 April 2022, and 25 April – 15 May 2022.

In November 2021 the University resumed consultation with UNISON, Unite and UCU on whether an amended Defined Benefit Scheme could be retained for existing members, however in February 2022 it was announced that agreement was not reached.

The University's proposals were subject to consultation, with a view to its Court agreeing details of the new scheme in September 2022, for introduction within Academic Year 2022-23. The existing UoDSS is also intended to close to new members during Academic Year 2022-23.

UNISON have argued that the University's proposals will see members working longer, paying more and receiving less, with no guaranteed benefits in retirement.

Mr Hepburn met with UNISON on 19 August 2021; with local UNISON branch members on 8 October; with the University Principal, Professor Iain Gillespie on 28 September; with UNISON and UCU on 28 September, and again with the Principal on 27 October.

Mr Hepburn has also written to UNISON and the University Principal on several occasions during that period, encouraging both parties to continue dialogue and seek a resolution to the dispute.

Latest Industrial Action

Unite commenced a period of continuous strike action on 25 August in response to the University Court agreeing the disputed changes.

Unison announced 2 weeks of strike action, which commenced on 19 September.

Latest engagement between the University and Unite

Neither the Principal nor his Senior Management team have made any efforts to further engage with Unite since the start of the latest action on the 25th August on the specific issue of pensions.

They have made it clear that there is no plan to re-open Court's decision on Pension reform which will not be reversed, however have offered to work together on a number of other issues. These issues include for example, seeking living wage accreditation, re-instating an annual HERA round and taking forward projects in the new People & Talent Strategy such as those on reward and recognition wellbeing and career development pathways for professional services staff.

DETAILS OF THE AGREED SCHEME – CHANGES COMMENCE 1 JANUARY 2023

The University Court, at its meeting of 25 August, decided on revised pension arrangements for staff on grades 1 to 6 to offer accessible, flexible and sustainable pensions for all.

The changes are:

Death in service benefit for staff grades 1-6 even if they choose not to join a pension scheme

The introduction of a strong, competitive Defined Contribution (DC) Scheme to all new members of staff from 1 January 2023, allowing existing UoDSS members to exit and join the DC scheme if they wish.

This element of the proposal also provides an option for current employees who have not joined UoDSS to save for retirement at a much lower entry cost (from 2%)

Changes to the existing UoDSS scheme are:

Alignment of the scheme retirement age to the UK state pension age (66 transitioning to 67), with benefit reductions for earlier retirement;

No changes to benefits accrued up to the date of implementation;

The introduction of a provision for members of UoDSS leaving the University's service to be able to rejoin the scheme within a 12-week period and maintain their pension scheme benefits;

Reduction in the accrual rate from 1/80th to 1/100th;

An increase in the employee contribution rate of 1% to 8.75%;

Closure to new members of the eligible staff group from 1 January 2023.

The University's original position was to close the existing Defined Benefit (DB) scheme and move to a Defined Contribution (DC) scheme for all in recognition of the fact that there is a significant deficit, and high level of liabilities, in the scheme that urgently needed to be addressed.

After listening to staff and the campus unions, we revised the proposals and will now maintain a modified DB scheme open for all existing members.

ANNEX D

College Funding and Costs

Top Lines

The SG has committed to an Emergency Budget Review to assess all opportunities to tackle the challenges facing the public finance and help support those hardest hit by the cost crisis.

The Scottish Budget is at the absolute limits of affordability and as such, challenging choices around reprioritisation are now required.

DFM has committed to setting out the Emergency Budget Review within two weeks of the UK Budget Review, which is to now be held on 17 November. As a result, we will be considering the impact of savings across the Education and Skills portfolio.

College Finances and implications of spending cuts announced by DFM on 7 September

From the SFC's budget of around £2 billion, we have announced that SFC will be expected to make savings of £20 million.

This level of saving is based on routine forecasts of underspends that SFC has assessed from across the broad range of SFC's budgets and programmes.

SFC will not be in a position to confirm where the £20m savings will come from until later in the year once they have a better idea about in-year underspends.

However, DFM's letter to the Finance and Public Administration Committee identified a number of potential programmes where funding may be cut – further education student support, ring fenced budgets such as National Transition Training Fund (NTTF) and additional European Structural Funds.

We have sought to minimise the impact of required savings on front line allocations for learning and teaching, and support for students, for this academic year.

The total FWDF budget has been reduced by £3m in FY 2022-23. SG and SFC are working on finalising the total amount available in AY 2022-23 and will announce allocations as soon as a decision has been reached.

None of the £53m employability saving nor the £16.7m resource/capital switch highlighted in DFM's letter to Finance and Public Administration Committee on 7th September will impact the SFC budget.

Additional lines to take

SFC will not be in a position to confirm where the £20m savings will come from until later in the year once they have a better idea about in-year underspends

However, this level of saving is based on routine forecasts of underspends that SFC has assessed from across the broad range of SFC's budgets and programmes. We have sought to minimise the impact of required savings on front line allocations for learning and teaching, and support for students, for this academic year. The Scottish Government has a limited budget and it must therefore focus resources where they will make the biggest difference to people across Scotland. SFC have already extended budget flexibilities to colleges where possible, and provided greater planning certainty. The Scottish Funding Council is working with colleges and universities to consider all options available to provide flexibilities within their budget allocation and across years. The Scottish Funding Council continues to liaise with colleges in addressing challenges.

ANNEX E

Public Sector Pay Policy

14 Sep: Inflation – CPI decreased 0.2pp to 9.9% for August.

5 Aug: SG permits enhanced flexibility beyond pay policy (i.e. beyond the 0.5% limit).

9 Dec: 2022-23 Public Sector Pay Policy published:

- Scottish Public Sector Wage floor of £10.50 an hour (10.5% increase on last year's real Living Wage of £9.50)
- £775 increase for those earning up to £25,000 (minimum 3.1% increase)
- £700 increase for those earning between £25,000 and £40,000
- £500 increase for those earning over £40,000

Our Public Sector Pay Policy for 2022-23 maintains a focus on sustainability, reducing inequalities and promoting wellbeing.

The UK Government has chosen not to act on public sector pay, meaning that our more progressive approach, with public sector wages on average 7% higher in Scotland than in the rest of the UK, is funded from within our severely limited budget. The Scottish Government is ensuring that existing budgets are being reprioritised to deliver fair and sustainable pay uplifts.

We acknowledge the challenge of inflation and continue to offer protection to the lowest paid, where cost of living impacts are felt the hardest.

We must ensure that pay rises are affordable now and in the future, and that they continue to be progressive and protect the lowest paid.

Given the change in the economic climate, we recognise it may be necessary for public bodies covered by Public Sector Pay Policy to go beyond the flexibility parameters set out in the 2022-23 pay policy.

Ministers expect that pay awards that exceed pay policy parameters remain sustainable and affordable.

The Scottish Budget is currently fully allocated, with the majority already legally committed; therefore public bodies need to assess affordability of pay awards from within their own budgets.

Our response to public sector pay is a key part of this government's response to the cost of living crisis.

The situation workers are finding themselves has clearly changed since last autumn when we set our Budget and Public Sector Pay Policy.

We are therefore adapting our approach to respond to the cost of living crisis and worsening position on inflation.

Given the financial restrictions of devolution, however, we are having to do so from within our fixed budget. This means that difficult decisions are having to be taken to reduce public spending to enable us to afford increased pay offers.

Our policy of no compulsory redundancies in the public sector - which we continue to support notwithstanding the budgetary pressures we face - will give those delivering essential services the peace of mind of knowing their job is safe over this winter.

Public sector pay deals are, so far, costing £700m more than we budgeted for.

On the contrary, paying higher wages is the biggest contribution we can make to helping families with soaring costs.

There is no unallocated pot of money from which to fund higher pay deals or extra support for those in need.

So unless Westminster increases the total amount of money available, every additional percentage point on a pay deal, and every pound we spend on measures to help with rising costs, must be funded by reductions elsewhere in our budget.

Support Unions: Quarterly Meeting – 28 September 2022

Attendees

Unison: [Redacted]

Unite: [Redacted]

SG: [Redacted]

Mr Hepburn welcomed attendees and thanked them for their time, and opened the floor to Unison to begin

Agenda Item 1:

Further Education Support Staff Pay Claim

Unison officials updated on the Support Staff pay claim, and progress to date on negotiations with employers.

Compulsory redundancies in the Sector

Unison officials raised the concerns of the Sector on the potential use of compulsory redundancies given the current budget.

Cuts at Kelvin College

Following discussions at the Education Committee, Unison officials raised comments made by the Principal of Glasgow Kelvin College around cuts.

Facilities Time

Unison officials took the opportunity to raise concerns around the perceived disparity around facilities time in the sector, and updated the Minister on discussions with the employer to increase the time available.

National Pay & Grading update

Unison officials updated on progress of the ongoing job evaluation project, and the revised timescales the project is currently working to.

Agenda Item 2: Higher Education

Pay negotiations and Industrial Action

Unite colleagues updated on the current state of play with UK wide, UCEA pay negotiations, and the outcome of its ballot across Scottish HE Institutions.

Dundee Pensions Dispute

Unite colleagues updated the Minister on the latest development in its dispute over pension changes, and the actions being taken at the University as a result.