

## **Ministerial Submission- Conclusion of Student Counselling PFG commitment**

### **Email**

**From: REDACTED**

**Sent:** Thursday, April 6, 2023 2:37 PM

**To:** Minister for Mental Wellbeing & Social Care <MinisterMWSC@gov.scot>;  
Minister for HE, FE, Youth Employment and Training <MinisterHEFEYET@gov.scot>

**Cc:** Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <CabSecES@gov.scot>; Minister for Children & Young People <MinisterCYP@gov.scot>; Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care <CabSecHSC@gov.scot>; DG Education, Communities & Justice <DGECJ@gov.scot>; DG Health & Social Care <DGHSC@gov.scot>; Director for Lifelong Learning and Skills <DirectorforLifelongLearningandSkills@gov.scot>; Director of Mental Health <DirectorofMentalHealth@gov.scot>; Greig S (Stuart) <Stuart.Greig@transport.gov.scot>; Pooley L (Linda) Dr <Linda.Pooley@gov.scot>; REDACTED>; REDACTED; REDACTED; REDACTED; <REDACTED >; REDACTED>; REDACTED; REDACTED; REDACTED; REDACTED; REDACTED; REDACTED>; REDACTED>; REDACTED; <REDACTED>; REDACTED>; REDACTED; REDACTED; REDACTED>; REDACTED>; REDACTED< REDACTED; McAllister C (Colin) <Colin.McAllister@gov.scot>; Hutchison D (David) (Special Adviser) <David.Hutchison@gov.scot>; Livey D (David) <David.Livey@gov.scot>; REDACTED; REDACTED; REDACTED>

**Subject:** Ministerial Submission- Conclusion of Student Counselling PFG commitment

**Importance:** High

PO Minister Mental wellbeing, Social Care and Sport &  
PO Minister for Higher and Further Education; and Minister for Veterans

Please find attached a submission on student mental health funding, marked urgent, for ministers' consideration.

Kind regards

**REDACTED**

**REDACTED**

Children & Young People's Mental Health Improvement Team | Scottish Government

**My normal working pattern is 9.30 to 5.30, Monday to Friday.**

**Phone: REDACTED**

### **Attachment**

**From: REDACTED**  
**Mental Health Directorate/Lifelong Learning and Skills Directorate**  
**5 April 2023**

**Minister for Higher and Further Education/ Minister for Social Care, Mental Wellbeing and Sport**  
**Programme for Government (PfG): Counsellors in Colleges and Universities**

**Priority: Urgent** – Confirmation is required so that the Scottish Government can release funding committed for the remainder of this Academic Year. That funding equates to £2.204 million.

**Purpose**

1. To ask Ministers to confirm (in light of the then Minister for Higher Education, Further Education Youth Employment and Training's letter of 28 February 2023 (attached as Appendix One) to the sector in late February 2023) a funding amount to conclude the four year student counsellor [Programme for Government \(PfG\)](#) at the end of the 22/23 Academic Year.
2. The submission:
  - sets out the current position on the 2018 student counsellor PfG commitment, the first operational year of which was academic year (AY) 2019/20;
  - asks Ministers to confirm expenditure of £2.204 million in Financial Year (FY) 2023/24 to bring the current PfG commitment to a close in AY 2022/23, its final year; and
  - **OUT OF SCOPE.**

**Recommendation**

3. For Ministers to approve expenditure from the Mental Health budget of £2.204 million in FY 2023/24 (April to July) to conclude the 2018 PfG four year commitment, in relation to student counsellors. This will ensure that the full AY 2022/23 allocation of £4.229 million is in line with the total previous AY allocation of £4.229 million, as indicated to the sector.
4. **OUT OF SCOPE.**

**Context and Issues**

**Fulfilment of Programme for Government Commitment 2019/20 to 2022/23.**

5. The Programme for Government (PfG) 2018 set out the Scottish Government's commitment to 'provide more than 80 additional counsellors in Further and Higher Education over the next four years with an investment of around £20 million.'<sup>1</sup> The Programme for Government 2021/22 committed to the development of

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<sup>1</sup> Delivering for today, investing for tomorrow: the Government's programme for Scotland 2018-2019, page 65 (<https://www.gov.scot/publications/delivering-today-investing-tomorrow-governments-programme-scotland-2018-19/documents/>)

a Student Mental Health Plan and the continued delivery of additional counsellors in universities and colleges until 2022/23<sup>2</sup>.

6. Funding has been made on the basis of Academic Years (2019/20, 2020/21, 2021/22). These run from August to July. Although these straddle the Scottish Government Financial Year, it has been possible in the past for the Scottish Government to commit to expenditure covering more than one Financial Year.

7. Since 2019/20, the first active AY of the PfG commitment, the Scottish Government has invested more than £13.5 million, this includes the £2.025 million invested so far in this Academic Year (August 2022 to March 2023).

8. The SFC has reported that this funding has allowed institutions to introduce almost 90 additional FTE counsellors in colleges and universities over and above those which some institutions already provided and exceeding our Programme for Government commitment ahead of time.

<b>Budget area</b>	<b>Academic Year</b>				<b>Cumulative Total</b>
	<b>Aug 19 – Jul 20 (actual)</b>	<b>Aug 20 – Jul 21 (actual)</b>	<b>Aug 21 – Jul 22 (actual)</b>	<b>Aug 22 – Jul 23*</b>	
Mental Health Counsellors for Universities and Colleges	£3.645m	£3.645m	£4.229m	£2.025m (actual) + £2.204m (planned)	£13.544m (actual) + £2.204m (planned) = £15.748m (actual + planned)
SFC post	£0.029m	£0.050m	£0.021m	£0.029m	£0.129m
<b>Total</b>	<b>£3.674m</b>	<b>£3.695m</b>	<b>£4.250m</b>	<b>£4.258m</b>	<b>£15.877m</b>

<sup>222</sup> A Fairer, Greener Scotland: Programme for Government 2021-22, page 46 (<https://www.gov.scot/publications/fairer-greener-scotland-programme-government-2021-22/documents/>)

Note: \*£2.025 million budget for counsellors represents Aug 22 - Mar 23. The planned budget for remainder of AY (Apr 23 - Jul 23) is £2.204 million

Budget area	Financial Year					Cumulative Total
	Apr 19 – Mar 20 (actual)	Apr 20 – Mar 21 (actual)	Apr 21 – Mar 22 (actual)	Apr 22 – Mar 23 (actual)	Apr 23 - Mar 24 (planned)*	
Budget from Mental Health Counsellors for universities and colleges	£1.969m	£3.645m	£3.960m	£3.970m	£2.204m	£15.748m
SFC post	£0.031m	£0.032m	£0.037m	£0.029m	£0.000m	£0.129m
<b>Total</b>	<b>£2.000m</b>	<b>£3.677m</b>	<b>£3.997m</b>	<b>£3.999m</b>	<b>£2.204m</b>	<b>£15.877m</b>

9. The Scottish Government has given a commitment to providing further funding for the remainder of the current Academic Year (April to July 2023) which falls in the Scottish Government's 2023/24 Financial Year.

10. In correspondence, and in response to parliamentary questions on this matter, the Scottish Government advised that the final allocation of funds for the current AY will be broadly in line with the previous AY - that is £4.229 million (please see Appendix One for the letter from the then Minister to stakeholders).

11. This would mean an allocation in FY 23/24 of £2.204 million from the Mental Health Budget. In line with previous allocations, officials will work with SFC on the distribution of those funds to colleges and universities.

**REDACTED – Section 30 (b) (i) - provision of free and frank advice**

**The Production of a Student Mental Health Plan**

**REDACTED – Out of scope**

**Bute House Agreement Implications**

18. There are no Bute House Agreements associated with this proposal.

**Financial and Legal Considerations**

19. Officials have asked ministers to confirm an allocation of £2.204 million in this FY (April 2023 to March 2024) to conclude the existing PFG commitment on the additional student counsellor allocation. This money has already been earmarked in the Mental Health FY 23/24 budget. It would bring our total allocation for the Academic Year to £4.229 million.

**Sensitivities**

**REDACTED – Section 30 (b) (i) – provision of free and frank advice**

**Quality Assurance**

26. This Submission has been approved by Stuart Greig, Deputy Director, Lifelong Learning and Skills and Angela Davidson, Deputy Director, Mental Health Directorate.

**Conclusions and next Steps**

Ministers are asked to:

27. Confirm spend from the Mental Health portfolio of £2.204 million to complete the four year PfG commitment to ‘provide more than 80 additional counsellors in Further and Higher Education.’

**REACTED – Out of scope**

**REDACTED**

Mental Health Directorate/Lifelong Learning and Skills Directorate

**REDACTED**

5 April 2023

<b>Copy List</b>	For Action	For Comments	For Information		
			Portfolio Interest	Constit Interest	General Awareness



February 2023

Minister for Higher Education, Further Education,  
Youth Employment and Training  
Jamie Hepburn MSP



Scottish Government  
Riaghaltas na h-Alba  
gov.scot

T: 0300 244 4000  
E: scottish.ministers@gov.scot

Email: [redacted] Universities Scotland (  
[redacted]@universities-scotland.ac.uk) [redacted]  
Colleges Scotland ([redacted]@glasgowclyde.ac.uk)

Copy to: [redacted] Scottish Funding Council  
[redacted]@sfc.ac.uk, [redacted] Colleges Scotland  
[redacted]@collegesscotland.ac.uk, [redacted]  
NUS Scotland ([redacted]@nus-scotland.org.uk)

28<sup>th</sup> February 2023

*Dev* [redacted]

I refer to your meeting with officials on 22 February 2023 at which the allocation methodology and funding for the tail end of the current Academic Year was discussed. In my letter of 25 January 2023 to Colleges Scotland, Universities Scotland and NUS Scotland, and in my letter to stakeholders (Colleges Scotland, Universities Scotland and NUS Scotland, copied to the Scottish Funding Council (SFC)) of 22 December 2022, I advised of an allocation for student counsellor support for financial year 2022-23 of £4 million.

Of that £4 million, £1.946 million covers the tail end of the Academic Year 21/22 (April – July 2022) and a sum of £2.025 million is for the current Academic Year (August 2022 to March 2023). The SFC has already published guidance on this part academic year allocation. As noted in my previous correspondence, I can also confirm that the Scottish Government remains committed to provide funding in the remainder of Academic Year 22/23 (April – July 2023), which falls into the first four months of our Financial Year 23/24.

Funds have been earmarked within 2023-24 Scottish Budget process and final allocations will be confirmed shortly. We anticipate that the total sum for AY 22/23 will broadly in line with the that for 21/22. My officials will contact you as soon as the final quantum is confirmed.

I hope this update is helpful.

*Jamie Hepburn*  
JAMIE HEPBURN

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