

Document 1 – GERS Q&A

GERS – Questions and Answers

This note summarises key questions and answers about the GERS publication, based on the 2023 publication. Additional briefing on this will be provided alongside the publication on 13th August, the day prior to publication.

Key points

What does GERS measure?

GERS estimates the total revenue raised *in* Scotland and the total expenditure incurred *for* Scotland, under the current constitutional arrangements. The difference between the two is referred to as the Net Fiscal Balance.

GERS is a National Statistics publication, meaning it is produced independently of ministers, and is independently assessed by the UK Statistics Authority to ensure that it meets the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

What are the key results?

Scotland’s fiscal position in GERS has been worse than the UK’s since 2012-13, when oil and gas receipts began to fall. This reflects higher level of public spending for Scotland. The gap with the UK narrowed in 2021-22 and 2022-23, as rising energy prices and windfall taxes increased oil and gas receipts. However, it is expected to increase again in 2023-24, as oil and gas revenue falls back.

Net Fiscal Balance: Scotland and UK 2017-18 to 2021-22 (% GDP)					
	Outturn				Forecast
	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Scotland	-9.0%	-23.4%	-12.8%	-9.0%	-10.9%
UK	-2.8%	-15.0%	-5.2%	-5.2%	-4.2%
Difference	-6.3%	-8.4%	-7.6%	-3.8%	-6.7%

Note: Outturn from GERS 2022-23. Forecasts based on OBR March 2024

Are comparable figures published for other parts of the UK?

Yes. ONS figures show that most parts of the UK have a fiscal deficit, with only London and the South East consistently having more revenue than spending. The latest ONS figures relate to 2022-23, and show that the Scotland was 5th best of the 12 UK regions, behind London, the South East, East England, and the South West.

Key expected messages from the 2023-24 publication

Although the results for the 2022-23 publication will not be available until 13 August. Based on forecasts and the latest UK data:

- Scotland’s notional deficit is likely to increase from around 9% to around 11%. The UK deficit will fall from around 5% to around 4%.
- This reflects the importance of oil and gas receipts in the Scottish figures. UK oil and gas revenues are expected to fall from £10 billion to £5 billion.
- The decline in oil and gas revenue will be partially offset by an increase in revenue from the electricity generator levy. This will increase Scottish revenue by around £0.2 billion in 2023-24 (20% of the UK revenue).

- The 'union dividend', the number quoted by the Conservatives as the value to Scotland of being in the UK, will be around £2,600 per person.

Public Spending

A key conclusion of GERS is that public spending in Scotland is higher than in other parts of the UK. This primarily reflects:

- The public sector is larger in Scotland than the UK as a whole.
 - 22% of workers are in the public sector in Scotland, compared to 17% in the UK as a whole.
- Public sector workers earn slightly more on average than in the UK as a whole.
 - Average earnings in the public sector in Scotland are £32.7k a year, compared to £32.4k in the UK as a whole.

Overall, GERS shows that public spending for Scotland is consistently higher than for the UK (approximately £2,000 per person higher).

What proportion of spending in GERS is devolved?

Around 70% of spending in GERS in Scotland is devolved; that is, it is spent by the Scottish Government, local government in Scotland, or other Scottish public bodies.

How is spending assigned to Scotland in GERS?

Spending is assigned to Scotland in GERS based on the principle of 'who benefits'. That is, spending is counted as Scottish if it is deemed to benefit the residents of Scotland. In practice, most spending in GERS is spent in Scotland, e.g. spending by the Scottish Government and social security spending by the Department for Work and Pensions. The main areas where GERS spending differs from spending in Scotland relate to defence, debt interest, and international services.

How are defence, debt interest, and international aid spending assigned to Scotland, and why?

Scotland is allocated a population share of defence, international aid spending, and reserved debt interest. This is because these services are viewed as being a 'public good' which benefits all residents of the UK equally, regardless of where the spending takes place. Some interest expenditure is associated with Local Government pension funds, and Scottish expenditure reflects data from local government accounts.

Revenue

How does Scotland's total tax revenues compare to the UK as a whole?

Excluding oil and gas revenue, Scottish tax receipts are typically lower per head than in the UK as a whole by around £800 per person. This reflects the fact that UK receipts are boosted by very high revenues from London and the South East of England, reflecting higher salaries and property prices.

Current levels of oil and gas revenue mean that overall Scottish tax receipts per person are likely to be similar to the UK as a whole, although down on the 2022-23 position.

How much of tax revenue is devolved?

Around 30% of revenue in GERS is devolved, primarily Scottish income tax, council tax, and non-domestic rates.

How is reserved tax revenue assigned to Scotland in GERS?

For reserved taxes it is not possible to split out the revenue raised in Scotland using administrative data. Most taxes are therefore assigned to Scotland based on a series of apportionments. These normally relate directly to specific taxes, e.g. alcohol duties are apportioned using data on household consumption of alcohol.

How are oil and gas receipts assigned to Scotland in GERS?

GERS allocates Scotland around 90% of UK oil and gas tax revenue, reflecting the geographic location of production. This illustrative geographical share is based on figures published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and ultimately from analysis undertaken by HMRC.

The Scottish share of the North Sea is based on the on the median line principle as employed in 1999 to determine the boundary between Scotland and the rest of the UK for fishery demarcation purposes. Production, costs and sales revenue are allocated on a field by field basis to either the rest of the UK or Scotland using this boundary. From this an estimate of the tax receipts generated in Scottish waters can be derived.

What have been the recent trends in North Sea receipts?

North Sea revenue has increased significantly in recent years, following the increase in energy prices as a result of the war in Ukraine and the introduction of a windfall tax on oil and gas profits. In 2022-23, Scotland's geographical share of North Sea receipts reached £9.4 billion. However, total UK North Sea receipts are expected to have fallen to £5.2 billion in 2023-24.

How robust are the tax results in GERS?

Most of the tax data in GERS is based on estimates, rather than actual outturn receipts. The robustness of the tax results in GERS varies by tax. In general, the estimates are more precise for the larger taxes, for example, estimates of national insurance are considered accurate to $\pm 1\%$. Measured uncertainty in the GERS revenue estimates is $\pm \text{£}0.6$ billion. This represents less than 0.5% of Scottish GDP.

Scotland's Overall Fiscal Balance

How is Scotland's overall fiscal position measured in GERS?

GERS provides two measures of Scotland's fiscal position, the **net fiscal balance** and the **current budget balance**.

The net fiscal balance measures the difference between total public sector revenue and total public sector expenditure. It includes public sector capital investment which yields benefits not just to current taxpayers but also to future taxpayers.

The current budget balance shows the difference between total revenue and current expenditure. It therefore excludes capital spending, and measures the degree to which taxpayers meet the cost of paying for day-to-day public services, excluding capital investment.

How do Scotland's budget balances compare to UK?

In 2022-23, Scotland's net fiscal deficit was 9.0% of GDP. The UK figure was 5.2%.

In 2022-23, Scotland's current budget deficit was 6.4% of GDP. The UK figure was 3.2%.

What is Scotland's relative fiscal surplus/deficit?

When comparing Scotland's fiscal position to the UK as a whole, a number of commentators have focused on the 'Union dividend'. This compares the level of spending and tax per head in Scotland, to estimate how much Scotland benefits from being in the Union.

For example, in 2022-23, spend per head was around $\text{£}2,200$ per person higher in Scotland, whilst tax was around $\text{£}700$ per person higher. This gave an overall 'union dividend' of $\text{£}1,500$.

What does GERS show about independence?

The GERS report makes clear that it is estimating Scotland's public finances "*under the current constitutional arrangements*". Scotland's fiscal position under independence would depend on a number of factors – including the public policy choices made by future Scottish Governments and the level of growth seen in advance of full implementation.

However, GERS was used to illustrate the fiscal position of Scotland in the third paper in the Building a New Scotland series. In 2014, the Independence White Paper

noted that GERS “*provides a useful indication of the relative strength of Scotland's public finances as part of the UK and a starting point for discussions of Scotland's fiscal position following independence*”.

Document 2 – Submission on date of GERS publication

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
OCEA-ESA
13 August 2024

First Minister
Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government

GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE & REVENUE SCOTLAND (GERS) 2023-24

Purpose

1. To inform the First Minister and Cabinet Secretary of the publication of Government Expenditure and Revenue Scotland (GERS) 2023-24 on Wednesday 14 August 2024. Please note that the report is strictly embargoed until 09:30 on Wednesday 14 August 2024. These statistics (and any conclusions drawn from these statistics) **are restricted to Ministers and officials on this copy list until publication.**

Priority

2. **Immediate.**

Background

3. GERS is an Accredited Official Statistics publication. It estimates the contribution of public sector revenue raised in Scotland towards the public services provided for Scotland for the years up to 2023-24. The estimates in this publication are consistent with the UK Public Sector Finances published in July 2024. Tables are also published showing results back to 1998-99.

Key Points

4. The key points from the publication are covered in the attached briefing pack, which includes:

- An FMQ briefing note,
- A draft Speaking Note for the media event.

5. Today's report shows that the notional Scottish fiscal position worsened in Scotland in 2023-24, as oil and gas revenues fell by £4.0 billion. This offset strong growth in income tax and onshore corporation tax. Spending has increased, driven by additional spending on health and social protection, whilst spending on reserved debt interest has fallen slightly and cost of living support payments have mostly ended.

6. GERS shows:

- Scotland's notional deficit in 2023-24 was 10.4% of GDP, a worsening of 2.0 percentage points from 2022-23.

- The UK's deficit in 2023-24 was 4.5% of GDP, an improvement of 0.5 percentage points from 2022-23.
- Total revenue was £88.5 billion, up £1.7 billion from 2022-23
- Total spending was £111.2 billion, up £6.3 billion from 2022-23.

Handling

7. A Statistics News Release (attached) has been prepared as normal to highlight the main results from this publication. Communications colleagues will be in touch later today to agree an accompanying Ministerial statement. A copy of the full publication is also attached.

Recommendation

8. The First Minister and Cabinet Secretary are asked to note the publication of GERS 2023-24.

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

13 August 2024

Copy List:	For Action	For Comments	For Information		
			Portfolio Interest	Constit Interest	General Awareness
Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Gaelic					X
Cabinet Secretary for Constitution, External Affairs and Culture			X		
Minister for Public Finance			X		

Permanent Secretary
 DG Economy
 DG Scottish Exchequer
 Chief Economist
 Chief Statistician
 Deputy Director, OCEA, Economic Strategic Analysis

Colin McAllister
 Davie Hutchison
 Ewan Crawford
 Ross Ingebrigtsen
 Emily Mackintosh
 Jack Middleton

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Document 3 – Submission on GERS publication

Office of the Chief Economic Adviser
7 June 2024

Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government

Launch of Government Expenditure and Revenue Scotland 2023-24

Priority and Purpose

1. Routine. To inform the Cabinet Secretary that the Government Expenditure and Revenue Scotland (GERS) publication for 2023-24 will be published on 14 August 2024 and to consider a media event alongside the publication.

Recommendation

2. Recommends that you:
 - Note the timing of the GERS 2023-24 publication, and
 - Confirm that you would like to hold a media event alongside the publication.

Context

3. Government Revenue and Expenditure Scotland (GERS) is a National Statistics publication, setting out revenue and expenditure for Scotland. The next publication will cover the financial years up to and including 2023-24. In line with the Code of Practice for Statistics, the publication date is set by the Chief Statistician, with statistics published in an orderly and transparent manner. The Chief Statistician has now announced that GERS 2023-24 will be published at 9:30am on 14 August 2024, in line with publication date set in previous years.
4. Scottish Government ministers, Special Advisers, and communications officials will receive 24 hour pre-release access to the GERS statistics.

Sensitivities

5. In recent years, Ministers have held a media event alongside the publication of GERS with official support from the Chief Economist. If you are content to continue this, officials will liaise with Special Advisers and Communications in advance of the publication date to arrange a similar event this year.

Verity House Agreement Implications

6. None

Financial Considerations

7. None

Legal Considerations

8. None

New Deal for Business Implications

9. None

Conclusion and next Steps

10. You are asked to:

- Note the timing of the GERS 2023-24 publication, and
- Confirm that you would like to hold a media event alongside this year's publication.

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Office of the Chief Economic Adviser
MS Teams or [Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)]

Cabinet Secretaries and Ministers Copy List	For Action	For Information Portfolio interest	For Information Constituency interest	For Information General awareness
First Minister				X
Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Gaelic Minister for Public Finance		X		X

Officials Copy List
Communications Finance and Local Government David Hutchison – Special Adviser Ewan Crawford – Special Adviser Ross Ingebrigtsen – Special Adviser Chief Economist Chief Statistician Deputy Director, OCEA, Economic Strategy Analysis Redacted under Section 38(1)(b) Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Document 4 – GERS FMQ

ISSUE: The Scottish Government “Government Expenditure and Revenue Scotland” (GERS) report shows falling North Sea revenues caused Scotland’s net fiscal balance to worsen in 2023-24, whilst the UK improved slightly. Scotland’s fiscal deficit remains large compared to the UK and internationally.

Top lines

- Scotland’s onshore revenue has grown faster than the UK’s, reflecting our progressive income tax policies and the strength of our renewable energy sector.
- 90% of the GERS fiscal deficit is due to the UK Government’s choices.
- Scotland’s public finances are better than most other parts of the UK.
- It is normal for advanced economies to run a fiscal deficit. 26 of the 35 IMF advanced economies have a deficit, and the UK deficit is £122 billion.
- The UK’s approach to managing public finances means that it is paying more on debt than other comparable countries, adding £1 billion to the GERS deficit.
- Rejoining the EU could boost Scotland’s revenues by £2.3 billion.
- Scottish revenue covers all devolved spending and all reserved social security.
- A significant amount of the GERS spending (40%) and revenue (72%) is reserved and outside of the control of the Scottish Government.
- GERS represents Scotland’s fiscal position under current constitutional arrangements and the figures represent a notional fiscal deficit.

DEFICIT AND BORROWING

Scotland’s onshore revenue is growing faster than the UK’s

- Onshore revenue grew by £5.6 billion in 2023-24, faster than the UK (7.2% compared to 6.9%).
- Income tax revenue has grown faster in Scotland than the UK as the result of our progressive tax policies and stronger earnings (12% compared to 10%).
- Onshore corporation tax has grown faster in Scotland than the UK, reflecting revenue from Scotland’s renewable energy sector (29% compared to 26%).
- Excluding the North Sea, Scotland’s deficit improved by 0.3% of GDP in 2023-24, similar to the UK (0.5%).

90% of the GERS fiscal deficit is due to the UK Government.

- The Scottish Government and Local Authorities borrowed just £2.3 billion in 2023-24, or 1% of GDP.
- 90% of the GERS fiscal deficit is therefore the consequence of the UK Government's choices.

The UK Government spends more on debt interest than other European countries with similar levels of debt.

- The UK spends the more on debt interest (2.5% of GDP) than countries with a similar level of debt to the UK, such as Belgium (1.5%) France (1.7%), Spain (1.9%), and Portugal (2.0%). All these countries have debt to GDP ratios of around 100%.
- We the UK to spend a similar amount to the next highest, Portugal, this would reduce debt interest spending in GERS by £1 billion.

Scotland's public finances are better than most other parts of the UK

- The latest ONS figures show that Scotland is one of the better performing parts of the UK.
- Scotland has the third highest revenue per person in the UK, behind only London and the South East.
- Overall, Scotland's fiscal deficit as a share of GDP is 5th of the 12 UK countries and regions.
- GERS reflects the fact that Scotland is tied to a UK economic model which is overly reliant on London and the South East.

It is normal for advanced economies to run a fiscal deficit and the UK deficit is now £122 billion.

- Scotland's fiscal deficit in calendar year 2023 is estimated at 13.1% of GDP, which would be the largest among Advanced Economies (IMF forecasts).
- However, running a deficit is not unusual. 26 of the 35 IMF Advanced Economies for which there is data ran a deficit in 2022, including the UK.
- The UK fiscal deficit in 2023-24 stood at £122 billion. The UK has been in deficit for 68 of the 78 years since 1946-47.
- UK Government debt is at record levels, at over £2,500bn. In this context, suggesting that Scottish Government debt of £2.2bn is excessive or unsustainable is economic illiteracy.
- The question shouldn't be could Scotland borrow money – of course it could – the real question people should be asking is: can Scotland afford to leave all borrowing powers in the hands of a UK Government that is not delivering the green and just recovery we need.

- There is no reason Scotland cannot match the economic success of our European neighbours.

Growing the economy will underpin fiscal sustainability

- As we set out in the Medium Term Financial Strategy, growing the economy is one of the three pillars which support our approach to sustainable public finances – alongside focusing spending decisions on achieving our three critical missions, and maintaining and developing our strategic approach to tax.
- We have promised to act decisively to deliver our National Strategy for Economic Transformation, with a sharp focus on those policies and actions with the greatest potential to grow and change Scotland's economy, expand the tax base to fund excellent public services and make people's lives better.

EUROPEAN UNION

Scotland would seek to join the EU as soon as possible after independence, which would bring a number of economic, societal and cultural benefits.

- Scotland would be part of the world's largest single market, with free movement of goods, services, capital and people.
- It would place Scotland at the heart of an organisation with global reach where we could support the development of EU policies on tackling global challenges such as climate change.
- We could attract and retain people from across the EU to sustain our businesses, universities and public services.
- It would provide more opportunities for training and employment.
- Allow Scotland to regain access to the EU's law enforcement tools, which help in the fight against cross-border crime and threats.
- Create opportunities to foster cultural exchanges and develop research partnerships to promote the prosperity and wellbeing of our citizens.

Rejoining the EU would improve Scotland's finances.

- Modelling by the National Institute of Economic and Social Research suggest that compared to EU membership, the UK Economy was already 2.5% smaller in 2023, and it expects it to rise to 5.7% by 2035.
- This equates to Scottish revenues being £2.3 billion lower as a result of Brexit.

- As the Institute for Fiscal Studies have said, it is not unreasonable to assume that the economic boost of rejoining the EU would boost revenues by this much.

BORDER WITH rUK

This is only an issue because of Brexit and the UK Government's disastrous hard Brexit policy.

- Under an arrangement called the Common Travel Area, people would be able to move freely across the UK and Ireland as now. It is in all parties' interests for that to continue in the event of Scottish independence.

GERS SPENDING AND OTHER FIGURES

GERS represents Scotland's fiscal position under current constitutional arrangements and the figures represent a notional fiscal deficit.

- A significant amount of the GERS spending (40%) and revenue (74%) is reserved and outside of the control of the Scottish Government.
- Scottish revenue is enough to cover all Scottish Government spending and all reserved social security, including the State Pension.
- GERS 2023-24 assigns Scotland a population share of UK reserved debt interest (£8.4 billion) and defence spending (£4.6 billion). This takes no account of the £448 billion in revenue the UK Government has received from North Sea production in real terms over the past sixty years.
- An independent Scotland's fiscal position would depend on a number of factors – including the policy choices made by future Scottish Governments, growth seen in advance of independence and the level of spending Scotland chose to allocate to areas such as defence.

GENERAL BUDGET LINES

The Scottish Government has always adopted a fiscally sustainable approach to its public finances.

- Equating the GERS deficit with Scottish Government finances is just plain wrong.
- Under the current devolution settlement, the Scottish Parliament cannot overspend its budget.
- We always present a balanced budget to Parliament, and have made difficult decisions to target support to those in greatest need
- Ours is a budget built on our values – to protect people in tough times, sustain services, and take pragmatic steps on the climate emergency.

INCOME TAX

Publication of research by HMRC confirms that Scotland has attracted thousands of taxpayers from the rest of the UK since devolution of Scottish Income Tax.

- Between 2017/18 and 2021/22, more taxpayers have come to Scotland than left, with net inflows averaging almost 4,200 per year.
- This movement of taxpayers into Scotland has increased every year since introduction of Scottish Income Tax.
- In 2021/22, the latest year of data, net migration of taxpayers has improved across all tax bands and all age groups; and £200 million in additional taxable income was brought into Scotland.
- None of this is surprising. People choose where to live and work on a range of factors not just tax.
- In Scotland, people have access to a range of services not provided elsewhere such as free prescriptions and free higher education.
- It is for others to set out how slashing taxes and running down our public services will make Scotland a better place to live, work, study and do business in.

OFFSHORE OIL AND GAS

We're clear in our support for a just transition for Scotland's oil and gas sector, which recognises the declining nature of the North Sea basin and is in line with our climate change commitments.

- Offshore oil and gas licensing, as well as the associated regulatory and fiscal regimes, are reserved to the UK Government.
- Any further extraction and use of fossil fuels must be consistent with Scotland's climate obligations and just transition commitments. It's vital that we take an evidence-based approach to the energy transition.
- It is clear there can be no effective energy transition without drawing on the expertise of the workforce and investment from the oil & gas sector.
- The Scottish Government supports an approach to licensing decisions on a rigorously evidence-led, case by case, basis – with robust climate compatibility and energy security being key considerations.
- Our focus is on meeting the country's energy security needs, reducing emissions in line with climate commitments, and delivering affordable energy supplies. In doing so, we will focus on ensuring a just transition for the oil and gas workforce to a net-zero future as North Sea resources decline.
- We will set out a finalised position on North Sea oil and gas as part of our Energy Strategy and Just Transition Plan later this summer.

The Scottish Government has consistently called for a fiscal regime for North Sea oil and gas that provides stability and certainty to businesses, protects jobs based in Scotland and incentivises investment in renewables.

- The fiscal regime for North Sea oil and gas is reserved to UK Government.
- The new UK Government has set out the intention to make major changes to the North Sea fiscal regime. This must not threaten jobs and investments.
- Whilst we continue to support the Energy Profits Levy at its original rate and duration, we do not support the extension or increase announced by the UK Chancellor.
- More fundamentally, windfall levies must form part of a balanced approach to taxation across **all** sectors of the economy with excess

profits, not just energy companies that are disproportionately based in Scotland.

- We also continue to call on UK Government to retain and strengthen investment allowances that incentivise decarbonisation through initiatives such as INTOG and also investment in the wider transition to renewables.
- There is no route to net zero except in partnership with business and industry. The Scottish Government is committed to being a willing partner and we call upon UK Government to listen carefully to these major employers.
- We cannot ignore that the offshore industry has said that the proposals for North Sea oil and gas policy set out by Labour could cost tens of thousands of jobs across the UK, many of which will be located in Scotland.

OEUK Chief Executive David Whitehouse has said: **[QUOTE]**: “We remain deeply concerned about what Labour’s proposals could do to our people. If we can’t get companies to invest here, there are no jobs. It’s that simple.”

INCOME TAX

Since 2017/18, our distinctive approach to Income Tax rates and bands, as compared with elsewhere in the UK, means Scotland will have around £1.5bn of additional revenue in this Budget.

- The introduction of the new Advanced rate of Income Tax makes our tax system even more progressive. In total our income tax decisions this year are projected to raised £389m in additional revenue.
- We are committed to the principle of progressive taxation. Only taxpayers earning significantly above £28,200 will pay more Income Tax in 2024/25, with the new Advanced rate only paid by those earning above £75,000.
- Just over half of taxpayers will continue to pay less Income Tax in Scotland than in the UK in 2024/25.
- Our distributional analysis shows, on average, households in the lower half of the income distribution are £400 better off a year than they would be in the rest of the UK when considering both our tax and social security.

An individual earning £30,000 will pay £11 more in Income tax per year or less than a pound (£0.94) a month compared to an individual in the rest of the UK.

- In return, they have access to a range services and social security payments that are not available elsewhere, such as the Scottish Child Payment, free prescriptions, and free higher education.

Brexit has caused economic devastation to Scotland, and the UK.

- Modelling by the National Institute of Economic and Social Research suggest that compared to EU membership, the UK Economy was already 2.5% smaller in 2023, and it expects it to rise to 5.7% by 2035.
- That equates to a cut in public revenues in Scotland of around £2.3bn in 2023.

INCOME TAX – BEHAVIOUR CHANGE AND LEAKAGE CLAIMS

Publication of research by HMRC confirms that Scotland has attracted thousands of taxpayers from the rest of the UK since devolution of Scottish Income Tax.

- Between 2017/18 and 2021/22, more taxpayers have come to Scotland than left, with net inflows averaging almost 4,200 per year.
- This movement of taxpayers into Scotland has increased every year since introduction of Scottish Income Tax.
- In 2021/22, the latest year of data, net migration of taxpayers has improved across all tax bands and all age groups; and £200 million in additional taxable income was brought into Scotland.
- None of this is surprising. People choose where to live and work on a range of factors not just tax.
- In Scotland, people have access to a range of services not provided elsewhere such as free prescriptions and free higher education.
- It is for others to set out how slashing taxes and running down our public services will make Scotland a better place to live, work, study and do business in.

Income tax rates and bands in Scotland and the rest of the UK

The tables overleaf provide a comparison of income tax rates in Scotland and the rest of the UK.

BACKGROUND

Table 1: Income Tax 2024-25: rates and bands – Scotland and rUK

Income Tax Rates and Bands for 2024-25:					
Scotland			Rest of UK (England & Wales)		
Band	Band name	Rate (%)	Band	Band name	Rate (%)
£12,571* - £14,876	Starter rate	19	£12,571* - £50,270	Basic rate	20
£14,877 - £26,561	Scottish Basic rate	20			
£26,562 - £43,662	Intermediate rate	21			
£43,663 - £75,000	Higher rate	42	£50,271 - £125,140	Higher rate	40
£75,001 - £125,140**	Advanced rate	45			
Above £125,140**	Top rate	48	Over £125,140	Additional rate	45

**Assumes individuals are in receipt of the Standard UK Personal Allowance.*

***Those earning more than £100,000 will see their Personal Allowance reduced by £1 for every £2 earned over £100,000.*

- **An MSP earning £72,195 from April 2024 will pay just over £2,000 more in tax in Scotland than in the rest of the UK (£166.66 a month).**

Table 2: Comparison of Tax liability in Scotland and the rUK, 2024-25

Example Income of Scottish taxpayers in 2024-25	Tax paid in Scotland	Tax paid in rUK (England & Wales)	Tax differential (Scotland minus rUK)
£15,000	463	486	-23
£19,400	1343	1366	-23
£23,400	2143	2166	-23
£28,200 (Median Income)	3119	3126	-7
£35,000	4547	4486	61
£42,600	6143	6006	137
£50,000	9028	7486	1542
£60,000	13228	11432	1796
£70,000	17428	15432	1996
£72,195	18350	16310	2040
£80,000	21778	19432	2346
£90,000	26278	23432	2846
£100,000	30778	27432	3346
£130,000	50081	44703	5378
£140,000	54881	49203	5678

£700,000	323681	301203	22478
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Statistics News



August 14, 2024

Government Expenditure & Revenue Scotland 2023-24

An Accredited Official Statistics Publication for Scotland

Falling North Sea revenue leads to a deterioration in Scotland's net fiscal balance, although onshore performance improves

Scotland's net fiscal balance has worsened since last year, driven by falling North Sea revenue, which offset strong growth in income tax and onshore corporation tax. Spending has increased, driven by additional spending on health and social protection, whilst spending on reserved debt interest has fallen slightly and cost of living support payments have mostly ended.

Net Fiscal Balance 2023-24

This is the difference between total revenue and total public sector expenditure including capital investment. The net fiscal balance:

- Was a deficit of 10.4% of GDP (£22.7 billion).
- When excluding the North Sea, was a deficit of 13.2% of GDP (£26.6 billion)
- For the UK, was a deficit of 4.5% of GDP.

Total Public Sector Revenue 2023-24

- Scottish public sector revenue was estimated as £88.5 billion (8.1% of UK revenue). Of this, £4.0 billion was North Sea revenue. Scottish non-North Sea revenue was £84.6 billion (7.8% of UK revenue).
- Non-North Sea revenue increased by £5.7 billion in 2023-24, an increase of 7.2% as in particular income tax and onshore corporation tax grew strongly.
- Scotland's illustrative geographical share of North Sea revenue was 4.0 billion in 2023-24, down from £7.9 billion in 2022-23, following falls in energy prices and production.

Total Public Sector Expenditure 2023-24

- Total expenditure for Scotland by the Scottish Government, UK Government, and all other parts of the public sector was £111.2 billion. Spending increased by £6.3 billion (6.0%), reflecting increases in spending on health and social protection.

The figures released today were produced in accordance with professional standards set out in the Code of Practice for Statistics.

Background

The full statistical publication is available at XXX.

The aim of GERS is to enhance public understanding of fiscal issues in Scotland. The primary objective is to estimate a set of public sector accounts for Scotland through detailed analysis of official UK and Scottish Government finance statistics. The report is designed to allow users to understand and analyse Scotland's fiscal position under different scenarios within the current constitutional framework.

GERS is an Accredited Official Statistics publication, which means that it is produced independently of Scottish Ministers and has been assessed by the Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR), the regulatory arm of the UK Statistics Authority, to ensure that it meets the standards set out in the Code of Practice for Statistics. This means the statistics have been found to meet user needs, to be methodologically sound, explained well and produced free of political interference.

More information on the standards of official statistics in Scotland can be accessed at:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/about-our-statistics/>

Document 6 – GERS Key numbers

FISCAL AGGREGATES

In 2023-24, Scotland's net fiscal deficit is estimated to be 10.4% of GDP (UK : 4.5%).

REVENUE

- Scotland revenue in 2023-24 was up £1.7 billion to £88.5 billion, growth of 1.9%. UK revenue grew by 6.4%.

- Revenue has grown more slowly in Scotland primarily due to North Sea receipts, which fell by £4.0 billion.

- Excluding the North Sea, total Scottish revenue grew by £5.7 billion, or 7.2% (UK: 6.9%).

- Revenue per person in Scotland is higher than in the UK (£60 higher in 2023-24 including North Sea revenue).

EXPENDITURE

- Expenditure increased in 2023-24, driven by rising spend on health and social protection.

- Spending increased by £6.3 billion, or 6.0%. UK spending grew 5.19%. The higher increase in Scotland is due to a larger increase in social protection spending, reflecting increased spending on social protection funded by Scotland's more progressive income tax policies.

- Scotland's share of UK expenditure in 2023-24 was 9.1%. Expenditure for Scotland has been consistently higher per person than the UK average (£2,417 higher in 2023-24)

Net Fiscal Balance			
	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
	£ millions		
Scotland	-23,861	-18,029	-22,684
Scotland excluding North Sea	-26,275	-25,971	-26,642
	% GDP		
Scotland	-12.3%	-8.4%	-10.4%
Scotland excluding North Sea	-15.1%	-13.6%	-13.2%
UK	-5.4%	-5.0%	-4.5%

Revenue			
	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
	£ millions		
Scotland	73,050	86,878	88,546
Scotland excluding North Sea	70,636	78,936	84,588
	% UK revenue		
Scotland	7.9%	8.4%	8.1%
Scotland excluding North Sea	7.7%	7.7%	7.8%

Revenue per person			
	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
	£ per person		
Scotland	13,350	15,948	16,254
Scotland excluding North Sea	12,909	14,490	15,527
	£ difference from the UK		
Scotland	-361	721	60
Scotland excluding North Sea	-762	-590	-594

Spending			
	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Scotland	96,911	104,907	111,230
<i>As share of UK spending</i>	9.3%	9.1%	9.1%
	£ difference from the UK		
Scotland	17,711	19,257	20,418
UK	15,591	17,121	18,001
<i>Difference</i>	2,120	2,136	2,417

GERS 2023-24

Speaking Note – Ms Forbes

Introduction

Thank you Cabinet Secretary.

I'd like to begin by noting that the First Minister has been clear that we are committed to growing the economy and investing in net zero as the route toward stronger public finances. We welcome the fact that the new UK Government is also committed to sustainable economic growth.

Economic model

Whilst 2023-24 was a difficult year, there is much to be positive about in the recent data. The strength we are seeing in our labour market, where payrolled employment is at a record high and earnings in Scotland grew faster than the rest of the UK last year, is reflected in the strong income tax performance in today's GERS figures.

The economy is also growing faster than forecast, and falling inflation means that we are seeing sustained growth in real wages. This is reflected in improving consumer sentiment, which is at its highest level since the end of 2021.

Whilst we do not hold all the financial levers needed, we are using all the powers we do have to deliver our priorities of growing the economy, investing net zero, eradicating child poverty and stronger public services.

We are already delivering this through our National Strategy for Economic Transformation, with the roll out of Techscalars to support start-ups and boost entrepreneurship, and our Reaching 100% broadband programme has connected over 60,000 premises to faster broadband,

That is why the work of places such as here at Napier University is so important. The work it is doing to foster the development of cutting-edge technologies, developing smart systems and connected devices, is crucial for the future of industries such as manufacturing and healthcare. The collaboration between academia

and industry we see here is the type of positive collaboration that we want to see across Scotland. As a government we want to work with business to help drive the productivity growth that we need to create jobs and raise living standards.

Just Transition

Let me turn to another aspect of today's figures, which is the key challenge they highlight for Scotland: the declining nature of the North Sea basin. It is vital that we have a just transition for Scotland's oil and gas sector. We need an evidence-based approach to the energy transition, focussed on meeting our energy security needs, reducing emissions in line with our climate commitments, and delivering affordable energy. It does not mean stopping all future oil and gas activity, which would threaten energy security while destroying the very skills we need to transition.

This is why Labour's plans to increase the rate of the Energy Profits Levy to pay for nuclear energy power plants in England is plain wrong, and why we are delivering up to £500 million to strengthen funding to offshore wind supply chains.

Conclusion

Let me conclude by saying that I believe it is with a sharp focus on working together with business and industry, including universities, that we have the greatest potential to grow and change Scotland's economy, expand the tax base to fund excellent public services and make people's lives better. I firmly believe that it is this approach which will deliver fiscal sustainability.

I will hand back to the Cabinet Secretary, who will chair the Q & A session.

END

539 words = 4.1 minutes at 130 wpm

GERS 2023-24

Speaking Note – Gary Gillespie

Introduction

- Thank you Cabinet Secretary.
- I want to take a few minutes to set out some further background on GERS and to comment on this year's figures.

Scope of GERS

- GERS is a National Statistics publication, which means that it is produced independently of Scottish Ministers. It was fully accredited in 2005, but the original GERS publication was instigated in 1990-91 and there have been many changes over that time.
- This is first and foremost a statistical publication and follows the statistics Code of Practice.
- GERS uses statistical estimations and the methodology, assumptions, and sources of information are set out in the report and the separate methodology notes.
- As highlighted by the Cabinet Secretary, GERS sets out estimates of total expenditure for Scotland and of total revenues raised, including a geographical share of North Sea revenues.

- It covers devolved and reserved areas of expenditure. It allocates directly revenues raised in Scotland and a share of UK revenues.
- It also follows the UK Public Finances in terms of the treatment of expenditures and revenue such as student loans, pensions liabilities etc.
- This is done to provide consistency to allow comparisons with UK estimates, but of course any surplus or deficit figure for Scotland are notional as these don't relate to the Scottish Government budget or borrowing capacity.
- To help clarify this point, for the first time this year we have provided information on how much was borrowed by the Scottish Government and local government. This is provided in the FAQs and Preface, and shows the Scottish Government borrowing £404 million as part of the fiscal framework and local government borrowing £1.9 billion.
- So GERS provides a notional fiscal position for Scotland within the UK. As mentioned by the Cabinet Secretary, the Office for National Statistics publish similar statistics for the countries and regions of the UK. The latest ONS figures were released in June, and relate to 2022-23.
- These reflect the flow of revenue and expenditure within the UK, with London and the South East having positive fiscal balances, and the remainder of the UK negative balances.

Key messages

- As in previous years, Scotland's relative (or notional) deficit is larger than that of the UK, with the gap widening this year reflecting the decline in North Sea revenues, which are down £4 billion.
- A number of other trends are visible in the GERS data. In particular, the impact of Scottish Government's devolved tax and social security policy. For the second year in a row, both income tax revenue and social protection spending in Scotland have grown faster than in the rest of the UK. While income tax performance will in part reflect stronger earnings growth in Scotland, this trend also reflects the different approach to fiscal policy adopted by the Scottish Government, as has been highlighted by independent commentators.
- In a devolved context, additional tax and spending must be balanced, so the GERS deficit is not directly affected by this change. But the GERS figures do show a change in the role of the state, with tax and spending as a share of GDP increasing in recent years.

Conclusion

- To conclude, today's GERS numbers show that the public finances have not fully recovered from the economic shocks from the pandemic and the cost crisis. In particular, despite the recent cut in interest rates, public sector debt interest payments remain significantly higher than pre-pandemic, and are forecast to remain so.
- GERS also highlights that the Scottish Government has responded differently to these challenges than the rest of the UK.
- Let me stop there and hand back to the Cabinet Secretary.

GERS 2023-24

Speaking Note – Ms Robison

Introduction

Thank you for joining this media event on the GERS report for 2023-24.

I am joined today by the Scottish Government's Chief Economist, Gary Gillespie, and we will take your questions in a moment.

Before we do, I want to make a few opening remarks. GERS provides notional fiscal estimates for Scotland as part of the UK. This is important context as the Scottish Government is required to balance our budget each year in line with the fiscal framework. The figures included in GERS include both reserved and devolved areas of expenditure and revenue, and highlight the limits of our devolved powers: we have control over 60% of the expenditure but only 28% of revenue.

This was highlighted in the Chancellor's statement on 29 July, which announced cuts to public spending, including to the Winter Fuel Payment. The reality of the devolved settlement is that announcements like these make it harder to manage our budget.

That said, aspects of the data are useful in showing key trends.

I welcome the fact that onshore revenues are growing faster than in the rest of the UK.

A key driver of this is, of course, the decisions we have taken here in Scotland to introduce a more progressive income tax policy. But there has also been strong revenue growth from Scotland's renewable energy sector. Just yesterday, we saw the approval of a multi-billion 'electricity superhighway', running from Peterhead to Yorkshire. This highlights the sector's potential to support not only jobs and a just transition, but also sustainable public finances.

Clearly, the decline in North Sea revenue this year means that Scotland's notional fiscal deficit has increased. But as the report makes clear, this is not a reflection on the finances of the Scottish Government, or decisions that we have taken. It is instead a reflection of UK Government choices. Indeed, figures from the Office for National Statistics show that Scotland is one of the better performing parts of the UK in terms of public finances.

This underlines that the GERS numbers reflect the current constitutional arrangements – of Scotland as part of the UK – and not an independent Scotland. This highlights the importance of the economic model that underpins the public finances.

Economic model

Whilst 2023-24 was a difficult year, there is much to be positive about in the recent economic data. The strength we are seeing in our labour market, where payrolled employment is at record highs and earnings in Scotland grew faster than the rest of the UK last year, is reflected in the strong income tax performance in today's GERS figures.

The economy is also growing faster than forecast, and falling inflation means that we are seeing sustained growth in real wages. This is reflected in improving consumer sentiment, which is at its highest level since the end of 2021.

Whilst we do not hold all the financial levers needed, we are using all the powers we do have to deliver our priorities of growing the economy, investing in net zero, eradicating child poverty and building stronger public services.

That is why the work of places such as here at Napier University is so important. The work it is doing to foster the development of cutting-edge technologies, developing smart systems and connected devices, is

crucial for the future of industries such as manufacturing and healthcare. The collaboration between academia and industry we see here is the type of positive collaboration that we want to see across Scotland, helping drive growth, creating jobs and raising living standards.

Headline spending and revenue numbers

Let me turn to the detail of the figures. Today's report shows that revenue in Scotland (including oil) was £88.5 billion in 2023-24, up £1.7 billion, with increases in income tax and onshore corporation tax being offset by falling oil and gas revenue.

Total spending in 2023-24 was £111.2 billion, an increase from last year, as necessary spending increases in areas such as health and social protection outweighed the reduction in the cost of living support. Despite this increase in spending, Scotland's revenue is sufficient to cover all devolved spending and all social security.

Spending on reserved public sector debt interest fell slightly, but remains high. Indeed, UK public sector debt is now in excess of £2.5 trillion. This in part reflects the impact of previous UK budgets and higher interest rates, the UK spends more than other comparable European countries on servicing its debt. We estimate that the higher cost of UK government debt adds at least £1 billion to the GERS deficit this year.

Conclusion

Let me finish by making three points.

The first is to emphasise that Scotland's underlying finances have improved again this year, similar to the UK's.

The second is that GERS reflects the current constitutional position. An independent Scotland would have the powers to make different choices, with different budgetary results, to build a stronger economy and enable Scotland to be fairer, wealthier, and greener.

And the final point is that GERS highlights the importance of the economic model underlying the public finances. And this links back to the point about Scotland's performance compared to other parts of the UK. Scotland has the third highest revenue per person in the UK, and its notional deficit is smaller than most other UK countries and regions.

GERS highlights the imbalances in the UK economy. Scotland is tied to a low-growth, low-productivity UK.

I'll now hand over to the Chief Economist to give his views on the report, before we then take questions.

END

897 words = 5.6 minutes at 160 wpm

UPDATED FIGURES ON UK DEFICIT

It is normal for advanced economies to run a fiscal deficit and the UK deficit is now £122 billion.

- Scotland's fiscal deficit in calendar year 2023 is estimated at 13.1% of GDP, which would be the largest among Advanced Economies (IMF forecasts).
- However, running a deficit is not unusual. 26 of the 35 IMF Advanced Economies for which there is data ran a deficit in 2022, including the UK.
- The UK fiscal deficit in 2023-24 stood at £122 billion. The UK has been in deficit for 68 of the 78 years since 1946-47.
- UK Government debt is at record levels, at over £2,500bn. In this context, suggesting that Scottish Government debt of £2.2bn is excessive or unsustainable is economic illiteracy.
- The question shouldn't be could Scotland borrow money – of course it could – the real question people should be asking is: can Scotland afford to leave all borrowing powers in the hands of a UK Government that is not delivering the green and just recovery we need.
- There is no reason Scotland cannot match the economic success of our European neighbours.

INCOME TAX

Since 2017/18, our distinctive approach to Income Tax rates and bands, as compared with elsewhere in the UK, means Scotland will have around £1.5bn of additional revenue in this Budget.

- The introduction of the new Advanced rate of Income Tax makes our tax system even more progressive. In total our income tax decisions this year are projected to raised £389m in additional revenue.
- We are committed to the principle of progressive taxation. Only taxpayers earning significantly above £28,200 will pay more Income Tax in 2024/25, with the new Advanced rate only paid by those earning above £75,000.
- Just over half of taxpayers will continue to pay less Income Tax in Scotland than in the UK in 2024/25.
- Our distributional analysis shows, on average, households in the lower half of the income distribution are £400 better off a year than they would be in the rest of the UK when considering both our tax and social security.

An individual earning £30,000 will pay £11 more in Income tax per year or less than a pound (£0.94) a month compared to an individual in the rest of the UK.

- In return, they have access to a range services and social security payments that are not available elsewhere, such as the Scottish Child Payment, free prescriptions, and free higher education.

Brexit has caused economic devastation to Scotland, and the UK.

- Modelling by the National Institute of Economic and Social Research suggest that compared to EU membership, the UK Economy was already 2.5% smaller in 2023, and it expects it to rise to 5.7% by 2035.
- That equates to a cut in public revenues in Scotland of around £2.3bn in 2023.

INCOME TAX – BEHAVIOUR CHANGE AND LEAKAGE CLAIMS

Publication of research by HMRC confirms that Scotland has attracted thousands of taxpayers from the rest of the UK since devolution of Scottish Income Tax.

- Between 2017/18 and 2021/22, more taxpayers have come to Scotland than left, with net inflows averaging almost 4,200 per year.
- This movement of taxpayers into Scotland has increased every year since introduction of Scottish Income Tax.
- In 2021/22, the latest year of data, net migration of taxpayers has improved across all tax bands and all age groups; and £200 million in additional taxable income was brought into Scotland.
- None of this is surprising. People choose where to live and work on a range of factors not just tax.
- In Scotland, people have access to a range of services not provided elsewhere such as free prescriptions and free higher education.
- It is for others to set out how slashing taxes and running down our public services will make Scotland a better place to live, work, study and do business in.

Income tax rates and bands in Scotland and the rest of the UK

The tables overleaf provide a comparison of income tax rates in Scotland and the rest of the UK.

BACKGROUND

Table 1: Income Tax 2024-25: rates and bands – Scotland and rUK

Income Tax Rates and Bands for 2024-25:					
Scotland			Rest of UK (England & Wales)		
Band	Band name	Rate (%)	Band	Band name	Rate (%)
£12,571* - £14,876	Starter rate	19	£12,571* - £50,270	Basic rate	20
£14,877 - £26,561	Scottish Basic rate	20			
£26,562 - £43,662	Intermediate rate	21			
£43,663 - £75,000	Higher rate	42	£50,271 - £125,140	Higher rate	40
£75,001 - £125,140**	Advanced rate	45			
Above £125,140**	Top rate	48	Over £125,140	Additional rate	45

**Assumes individuals are in receipt of the Standard UK Personal Allowance.*

***Those earning more than £100,000 will see their Personal Allowance reduced by £1 for every £2 earned over £100,000.*

- **An MSP earning £72,195 from April 2024 will pay just over £2,000 more in tax in Scotland than in the rest of the UK (£166.66 a month).**

Table 2: Comparison of Tax liability in Scotland and the rUK, 2024-25

Example Income of Scottish taxpayers in 2024-25	Tax paid in Scotland	Tax paid in rUK (England & Wales)	Tax differential (Scotland minus rUK)
£15,000	463	486	-23
£19,400	1343	1366	-23
£23,400	2143	2166	-23
£28,200 (Median Income)	3119	3126	-7
£35,000	4547	4486	61
£42,600	6143	6006	137
£50,000	9028	7486	1542
£60,000	13228	11432	1796
£70,000	17428	15432	1996
£72,195	18350	16310	2040
£80,000	21778	19432	2346
£90,000	26278	23432	2846
£100,000	30778	27432	3346
£130,000	50081	44703	5378
£140,000	54881	49203	5678

£700,000	323681	301203	22478
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NUMBERS THAT MAY BE USED BY JOURNALISTS

Fiscal dividend of around £2,400 per person, or £12.8 billion

- Broadly speaking, this is the figure for higher spending in Scotland, which is around £2,400 per person, or £12.8 billion in total.

UK Gilt Rates

- 5 year gilts: 3.7%
- 10 year gilts: 3.9%

ADDITIONAL QUOTES

Oil and Gas

Following a meeting with UK Treasury Ministers in Aberdeen on 12 August, David Whitehouse CEO of OEUK said:

“The minister again heard in no uncertain terms direct from senior business leaders about the impact these proposals are already having for businesses of all sizes and their skilled people right across the whole of the UK”

ISSUE: The Scottish Government “Government Expenditure and Revenue Scotland” (GERS) report shows falling North Sea revenues caused Scotland’s net fiscal balance to worsen in 2023-24, whilst the UK improved slightly. Scotland’s fiscal deficit remains large compared to the UK and internationally.

Top lines

- Scotland’s onshore revenue has grown faster than the UK’s, reflecting our progressive income tax policies and the strength of our renewable energy sector.
- 90% of the GERS fiscal deficit is due to the UK Government’s choices.
- Scotland’s public finances are better than most other parts of the UK.
- It is normal for advanced economies to run a fiscal deficit. 26 of the 35 IMF advanced economies have a deficit, and the UK deficit is £122 billion.
- The UK’s approach to managing public finances means that it is paying more on debt than other comparable countries, adding £1 billion to the GERS deficit.
- Rejoining the EU could boost Scotland’s revenues by £2.3 billion.
- Scottish revenue covers all devolved spending and all reserved social security.
- A significant amount of the GERS spending (40%) and revenue (72%) is reserved and outside of the control of the Scottish Government.
- GERS represents Scotland’s fiscal position under current constitutional arrangements and the figures represent a notional fiscal deficit.

DEFICIT AND BORROWING

Scotland’s onshore revenue is growing faster than the UK’s

- Onshore revenue grew by £5.6 billion in 2023-24, faster than the UK (7.2% compared to 6.9%).
- Income tax revenue has grown faster in Scotland than the UK as the result of our progressive tax policies and stronger earnings (12% compared to 10%).
- Onshore corporation tax has grown faster in Scotland than the UK, reflecting revenue from Scotland’s renewable energy sector (29% compared to 26%).
- Excluding the North Sea, Scotland’s deficit improved by 0.3% of GDP in 2023-24, similar to the UK (0.5%).

90% of the GERS fiscal deficit is due to the UK Government.

- The Scottish Government and Local Authorities borrowed just £2.3 billion in 2023-24, or 1% of GDP.
- 90% of the GERS fiscal deficit is therefore the consequence of the UK Government's choices.

The UK Government spends more on debt interest than other European countries with similar levels of debt.

- The UK spends the more on debt interest (2.5% of GDP) than countries with a similar level of debt to the UK, such as Belgium (1.5%) France (1.7%), Spain (1.9%), and Portugal (2.0%). All these countries have debt to GDP ratios of around 100%.
- We the UK to spend a similar amount to the next highest, Portugal, this would reduce debt interest spending in GERS by £1 billion.

Scotland's public finances are better than most other parts of the UK

- The latest ONS figures show that Scotland is one of the better performing parts of the UK.
- Scotland has the third highest revenue per person in the UK, behind only London and the South East.
- Overall, Scotland's fiscal deficit as a share of GDP is 5th of the 12 UK countries and regions.
- GERS reflects the fact that Scotland is tied to a UK economic model which is overly reliant on London and the South East.

It is normal for advanced economies to run a fiscal deficit and the UK deficit is now £122 billion.

- Scotland's fiscal deficit in calendar year 2023 is estimated at 13.1% of GDP, which would be the largest among Advanced Economies (IMF forecasts).
- However, running a deficit is not unusual. 26 of the 35 IMF Advanced Economies for which there is data ran a deficit in 2022, including the UK.
- The UK fiscal deficit in 2023-24 stood at £122 billion. The UK has been in deficit for 68 of the 78 years since 1946-47.
- UK Government debt is at record levels, at over £2,500bn. In this context, suggesting that Scottish Government debt of £2.2bn is excessive or unsustainable is economic illiteracy.
- The question shouldn't be could Scotland borrow money – of course it could – the real question people should be asking is: can Scotland afford to leave all borrowing powers in the hands of a UK Government that is not delivering the green and just recovery we need.

- There is no reason Scotland cannot match the economic success of our European neighbours.

Growing the economy will underpin fiscal sustainability

- As we set out in the Medium Term Financial Strategy, growing the economy is one of the three pillars which support our approach to sustainable public finances – alongside focusing spending decisions on achieving our three critical missions, and maintaining and developing our strategic approach to tax.
- We have promised to act decisively to deliver our National Strategy for Economic Transformation, with a sharp focus on those policies and actions with the greatest potential to grow and change Scotland's economy, expand the tax base to fund excellent public services and make people's lives better.

EUROPEAN UNION

Scotland would seek to join the EU as soon as possible after independence, which would bring a number of economic, societal and cultural benefits.

- Scotland would be part of the world's largest single market, with free movement of goods, services, capital and people.
- It would place Scotland at the heart of an organisation with global reach where we could support the development of EU policies on tackling global challenges such as climate change.
- We could attract and retain people from across the EU to sustain our businesses, universities and public services.
- It would provide more opportunities for training and employment.
- Allow Scotland to regain access to the EU's law enforcement tools, which help in the fight against cross-border crime and threats.
- Create opportunities to foster cultural exchanges and develop research partnerships to promote the prosperity and wellbeing of our citizens.

Rejoining the EU would improve Scotland's finances.

- Modelling by the National Institute of Economic and Social Research suggest that compared to EU membership, the UK Economy was already 2.5% smaller in 2023, and it expects it to rise to 5.7% by 2035.
- This equates to Scottish revenues being £2.3 billion lower as a result of Brexit.

- As the Institute for Fiscal Studies have said, it is not unreasonable to assume that the economic boost of rejoining the EU would boost revenues by this much.

BORDER WITH rUK

This is only an issue because of Brexit and the UK Government's disastrous hard Brexit policy.

- Under an arrangement called the Common Travel Area, people would be able to move freely across the UK and Ireland as now. It is in all parties' interests for that to continue in the event of Scottish independence.

GERS SPENDING AND OTHER FIGURES

GERS represents Scotland's fiscal position under current constitutional arrangements and the figures represent a notional fiscal deficit.

- A significant amount of the GERS spending (40%) and revenue (74%) is reserved and outside of the control of the Scottish Government.
- Scottish revenue is enough to cover all Scottish Government spending and all reserved social security, including the State Pension.
- GERS 2023-24 assigns Scotland a population share of UK reserved debt interest (£8.4 billion) and defence spending (£4.6 billion). This takes no account of the £448 billion in revenue the UK Government has received from North Sea production in real terms over the past sixty years.
- An independent Scotland's fiscal position would depend on a number of factors – including the policy choices made by future Scottish Governments, growth seen in advance of independence and the level of spending Scotland chose to allocate to areas such as defence.

GENERAL BUDGET LINES

The Scottish Government has always adopted a fiscally sustainable approach to its public finances.

- Equating the GERS deficit with Scottish Government finances is just plain wrong.
- Under the current devolution settlement, the Scottish Parliament cannot overspend its budget.
- We always present a balanced budget to Parliament, and have made difficult decisions to target support to those in greatest need
- Ours is a budget built on our values – to protect people in tough times, sustain services, and take pragmatic steps on the climate emergency.

INCOME TAX

Publication of research by HMRC confirms that Scotland has attracted thousands of taxpayers from the rest of the UK since devolution of Scottish Income Tax.

- Between 2017/18 and 2021/22, more taxpayers have come to Scotland than left, with net inflows averaging almost 4,200 per year.
- This movement of taxpayers into Scotland has increased every year since introduction of Scottish Income Tax.
- In 2021/22, the latest year of data, net migration of taxpayers has improved across all tax bands and all age groups; and £200 million in additional taxable income was brought into Scotland.
- None of this is surprising. People choose where to live and work on a range of factors not just tax.
- In Scotland, people have access to a range of services not provided elsewhere such as free prescriptions and free higher education.
- It is for others to set out how slashing taxes and running down our public services will make Scotland a better place to live, work, study and do business in.

OFFSHORE OIL AND GAS

We're clear in our support for a just transition for Scotland's oil and gas sector, which recognises the declining nature of the North Sea basin and is in line with our climate change commitments.

- Offshore oil and gas licensing, as well as the associated regulatory and fiscal regimes, are reserved to the UK Government.
- Any further extraction and use of fossil fuels must be consistent with Scotland's climate obligations and just transition commitments. It's vital that we take an evidence-based approach to the energy transition.
- It is clear there can be no effective energy transition without drawing on the expertise of the workforce and investment from the oil & gas sector.
- The Scottish Government supports an approach to licensing decisions on a rigorously evidence-led, case by case, basis – with robust climate compatibility and energy security being key considerations.
- Our focus is on meeting the country's energy security needs, reducing emissions in line with climate commitments, and delivering affordable energy supplies. In doing so, we will focus on ensuring a just transition for the oil and gas workforce to a net-zero future as North Sea resources decline.
- We will set out a finalised position on North Sea oil and gas as part of our Energy Strategy and Just Transition Plan later this summer.

The Scottish Government has consistently called for a fiscal regime for North Sea oil and gas that provides stability and certainty to businesses, protects jobs based in Scotland and incentivises investment in renewables.

- The fiscal regime for North Sea oil and gas is reserved to UK Government.
- The new UK Government has set out the intention to make major changes to the North Sea fiscal regime. This must not threaten jobs and investments.
- Whilst we continue to support the Energy Profits Levy at its original rate and duration, we do not support the extension or increase announced by the UK Chancellor.
- More fundamentally, windfall levies must form part of a balanced approach to taxation across **all** sectors of the economy with excess

profits, not just energy companies that are disproportionately based in Scotland.

- We also continue to call on UK Government to retain and strengthen investment allowances that incentivise decarbonisation through initiatives such as INTOG and also investment in the wider transition to renewables.
- There is no route to net zero except in partnership with business and industry. The Scottish Government is committed to being a willing partner and we call upon UK Government to listen carefully to these major employers.
- We cannot ignore that the offshore industry has said that the proposals for North Sea oil and gas policy set out by Labour could cost tens of thousands of jobs across the UK, many of which will be located in Scotland.

OEUK Chief Executive David Whitehouse has said: **[QUOTE]**: “We remain deeply concerned about what Labour’s proposals could do to our people. If we can’t get companies to invest here, there are no jobs. It’s that simple.”

INCOME TAX

Since 2017/18, our distinctive approach to Income Tax rates and bands, as compared with elsewhere in the UK, means Scotland will have around £1.5bn of additional revenue in this Budget.

- The introduction of the new Advanced rate of Income Tax makes our tax system even more progressive. In total our income tax decisions this year are projected to raised £389m in additional revenue.
- We are committed to the principle of progressive taxation. Only taxpayers earning significantly above £28,200 will pay more Income Tax in 2024/25, with the new Advanced rate only paid by those earning above £75,000.
- Just over half of taxpayers will continue to pay less Income Tax in Scotland than in the UK in 2024/25.
- Our distributional analysis shows, on average, households in the lower half of the income distribution are £400 better off a year than they would be in the rest of the UK when considering both our tax and social security.

An individual earning £30,000 will pay £11 more in Income tax per year or less than a pound (£0.94) a month compared to an individual in the rest of the UK.

- In return, they have access to a range services and social security payments that are not available elsewhere, such as the Scottish Child Payment, free prescriptions, and free higher education.

Brexit has caused economic devastation to Scotland, and the UK.

- Modelling by the National Institute of Economic and Social Research suggest that compared to EU membership, the UK Economy was already 2.5% smaller in 2023, and it expects it to rise to 5.7% by 2035.
- That equates to a cut in public revenues in Scotland of around £2.3bn in 2023.

INCOME TAX – BEHAVIOUR CHANGE AND LEAKAGE CLAIMS

Publication of research by HMRC confirms that Scotland has attracted thousands of taxpayers from the rest of the UK since devolution of Scottish Income Tax.

- Between 2017/18 and 2021/22, more taxpayers have come to Scotland than left, with net inflows averaging almost 4,200 per year.
- This movement of taxpayers into Scotland has increased every year since introduction of Scottish Income Tax.
- In 2021/22, the latest year of data, net migration of taxpayers has improved across all tax bands and all age groups; and £200 million in additional taxable income was brought into Scotland.
- None of this is surprising. People choose where to live and work on a range of factors not just tax.
- In Scotland, people have access to a range of services not provided elsewhere such as free prescriptions and free higher education.
- It is for others to set out how slashing taxes and running down our public services will make Scotland a better place to live, work, study and do business in.

Income tax rates and bands in Scotland and the rest of the UK

The tables overleaf provide a comparison of income tax rates in Scotland and the rest of the UK.

BACKGROUND

Table 1: Income Tax 2024-25: rates and bands – Scotland and rUK

Income Tax Rates and Bands for 2024-25:					
Scotland			Rest of UK (England & Wales)		
Band	Band name	Rate (%)	Band	Band name	Rate (%)
£12,571* - £14,876	Starter rate	19	£12,571* - £50,270	Basic rate	20
£14,877 - £26,561	Scottish Basic rate	20			
£26,562 - £43,662	Intermediate rate	21			
£43,663 - £75,000	Higher rate	42	£50,271 - £125,140	Higher rate	40
£75,001 - £125,140**	Advanced rate	45			
Above £125,140**	Top rate	48	Over £125,140	Additional rate	45

**Assumes individuals are in receipt of the Standard UK Personal Allowance.*

***Those earning more than £100,000 will see their Personal Allowance reduced by £1 for every £2 earned over £100,000.*

- **An MSP earning £72,195 from April 2024 will pay just over £2,000 more in tax in Scotland than in the rest of the UK (£166.66 a month).**

Table 2: Comparison of Tax liability in Scotland and the rUK, 2024-25

Example Income of Scottish taxpayers in 2024-25	Tax paid in Scotland	Tax paid in rUK (England & Wales)	Tax differential (Scotland minus rUK)
£15,000	463	486	-23
£19,400	1343	1366	-23
£23,400	2143	2166	-23
£28,200 (Median Income)	3119	3126	-7
£35,000	4547	4486	61
£42,600	6143	6006	137
£50,000	9028	7486	1542
£60,000	13228	11432	1796
£70,000	17428	15432	1996
£72,195	18350	16310	2040
£80,000	21778	19432	2346
£90,000	26278	23432	2846
£100,000	30778	27432	3346
£130,000	50081	44703	5378
£140,000	54881	49203	5678

£700,000	323681	301203	22478
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Document 12 – Advice on Media Event

Office of the Chief Economic Adviser
9 July 2024

Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government

Government Expenditure and Revenue Scotland 2023-24 – Advice on Media Event

Priority and Purpose

1. Routine. To advise on whether the media event for the launch the Government Expenditure and Revenue Scotland (GERS) on 14 August 2024 should be a joint event between the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government and the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for the Economy and Gaelic.

Recommendation

2. Recommends that:
 - The media event for GERS launch is a jointly hosted event between the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government and the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for the Economy and Gaelic.

Context

3. Government Revenue and Expenditure Scotland (GERS) is a National Statistics publication, setting out revenue and expenditure for Scotland. The next publication will cover the financial years up to and including 2023-24. GERS 2023-24 will be published at 9:30am on 14 August 2024.
4. You confirmed that you would like to hold a media event alongside the publication and have asked for further advice on whether it should be a joint event with the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for the Economy and Gaelic, given potential cross over with the Economy portfolio.

Options Considered and Advice

5. The usual format for the GERS media event is that it is led by a Minister for Finance with support from the Chief Economist.
6. Last year, the GERS media event was led by the Cabinet Secretary for Wellbeing Economy, Fair Work & Energy, due to unavailability of Finance Ministers. The Cabinet Secretary spoke for a few minutes on the key findings, the main one being that a key driver of the improved fiscal position was the record revenues from Scotland's oil and gas sector.

7. The media questions last year, and subsequent media coverage, largely focused on the oil and gas figures rather than specific questions on the economy.
8. Although we do not yet have final figures for GERS, it is anticipated that oil and gas revenues will remain a focus of media interest, as it often is. This is because latest published data on UK oil and gas revenues show a different situation from last year – they show a drop from around £10 billion in 2022-23 to around £5 billion in 2023-24..
9. The media also tend to focus on the implied fiscal deficit for Scotland and how that compares with the comparable UK figure and relevant expenditure and revenue differentials between Scotland and the UK. The main links to the economy tend to be with regard to income tax revenue, given that it is largely devolved. More generally, it tends to attract broader constitutional type questions, such as what this would mean for an independent Scotland. Given the First Minister's priority on growing the economy, the media may also ask questions on this.

Assessment of Options

10. Our advice is that the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government and DFM should host a joint event. This would provide expertise on both the Finance and Economy portfolio areas and enable links to be made across the two areas. Technical support will be provided by the Chief Economist

Sensitivities

11. If you are content to continue this, officials will liaise with Special Advisers and Communications on the venue which will need to be in Edinburgh, given DFMs commitments that day.

Verity House Agreement Implications

12. None

Financial Considerations

13. None

Legal Considerations

14. None

New Deal for Business Implications

15. None

Officials Copy List

Emily Mackintosh – Special Adviser
David Hutchison – Special Adviser

Kathy

Kathy Johnston

Deputy Director, Economic Strategy Analysis & Head of Economist Profession |
Office of the Chief Economic Adviser (OCEA) | Scottish Government
Mobile number: 07817 949 585 | or call on MS Teams

From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b) **On Behalf Of** Cabinet Secretary for Finance & Local Government

Sent: Tuesday, July 2, 2024 2:01 PM

To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Economy & Gaelic <DFMCSEG@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Cabinet Secretary for Finance & Local Government <CabSecFLG@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Kathy Johnston <Kathy.Johnston@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Cc: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Communications Deputy First Minister, Economy and Gaelic <DFMEG@gov.scot>; David Hutchison <David.Hutchison@gov.scot>; Emily Mackintosh <Emily.Mackintosh@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Communications Finance and Local Government <CommunicationsFinanceandLocalGovernment@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Gary Gillespie <Gary.Gillespie@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); DG Economy <DGEconomy@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Subject: RE: GERS - Official Steer

Thanks both,

I believe policy officials are sending up some information re GERS and why it would be good to be a joint with DFM – noting this was a Cab Sec suggestion.

Happy to be minded by DFM's diary re the location being Edinburgh, we will add that to our hold.

Many thanks,

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Deputy Private Secretary to the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government – Shona Robison MSP

The Scottish Government

St Andrew's House | Regent Road | Edinburgh | EH1 3DG

M: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b) | **Email:** CabSecFLG@gov.scot

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From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b) **On Behalf Of** Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Economy & Gaelic

Sent: Tuesday, July 2, 2024 1:08 PM

To: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Cabinet Secretary for Finance & Local Government <CabSecFLG@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Kathy Johnston <Kathy.Johnston@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Cc: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Economy & Gaelic <DFMCSEG@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Communications Deputy First Minister, Economy and Gaelic <DFMEG@gov.scot>; David Hutchison <David.Hutchison@gov.scot>; Emily Mackintosh <Emily.Mackintosh@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Communications Finance and Local Government <CommunicationsFinanceandLocalGovernment@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Gary Gillespie <Gary.Gillespie@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); DG Economy <DGEconomy@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Subject: RE: GERS - Official Steer

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b) and I have spoken - and if DFM is to be involved the visit would need to be in Edinburgh on the morning of 14 August so that DFM can be in SAH for midday for external stakeholder meetings.

Thanks

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Private Secretary to the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Gaelic – Kate Forbes MSP

Karen Sheathach, Rùnaire Priobhaideach dhan Leas-Phrìomh Mhinistear is do Rùnaire a' Chaibineit airson na h-Eaconamaidh is Gàidhlig – Ceit Fhoirbeis BPA

The Scottish Government | St Andrew's House | Regent Road | Edinburgh | EH1 3DG

T: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b) | **M:** Redacted under Section 38(1)(b) | **Email:** DFMCSEG@gov.scot

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From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Sent: Tuesday, July 2, 2024 12:05 PM

To: Cabinet Secretary for Finance & Local Government <CabSecFLG@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Kathy Johnston <Kathy.Johnston@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Cc: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Economy & Gaelic <DFMCSEG@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Communications Deputy First Minister, Economy and Gaelic <DFMEG@gov.scot>; David Hutchison <David.Hutchison@gov.scot>; Emily Mackintosh <Emily.Mackintosh@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Communications Finance and Local Government <CommunicationsFinanceandLocalGovernment@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Gary Gillespie <Gary.Gillespie@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); DG Economy <DGEconomy@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Subject: RE: GERS - Official Steer

Hi Redacted under Section 38(1)(b),

Just to confirm we are liaising with policy colleagues regarding a venue for the GERS publication. Once we have some options we will discuss with spads and put these to Cab Sec to review along with a wider comms handling plan.

We have suggested central belt area for the visit – we were thinking Edinburgh or Dundee would be best for Cab Sec, or potentially Glasgow if DFM is also attending. Let me know if this sounds okay in terms of location.

As discussed via Teams we will have comms handling and venue options with you by mid-July.

Thanks,

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b) **On Behalf Of** Cabinet Secretary for Finance & Local Government

Sent: Tuesday, July 2, 2024 11:45 AM

To: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Kathy Johnston <Kathy.Johnston@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Cc: Cabinet Secretary for Finance & Local Government <CabSecFLG@gov.scot>; Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Economy & Gaelic <DFMCSEG@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Communications Deputy First Minister, Economy and Gaelic <DFMEG@gov.scot>; David Hutchison <David.Hutchison@gov.scot>; Emily Mackintosh <Emily.Mackintosh@gov.scot>

Subject: GERS - Official Steer

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Please add further colleagues to the chain if required.

I am sure Redacted under Section 38(1)(b) from Finance Comms would have been in touch, but DFM and Cab Sec Finance currently have a hold in the diaries for the GERS publication on 14 August. In a recent meeting with our comms team, Ms Robison suggested a joint visit / media briefing with DFM.

I would be grateful if you could provide some general information, suggestion(s) of a visit(s), and some advice on why it should be a joint visit between DFM and Cab Sec – could we please have this by the end of this week.

Many thanks,

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Deputy Private Secretary to the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government – Shona Robison MSP

The Scottish Government

St Andrew's House | Regent Road | Edinburgh | EH1 3DG

M: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b) | **Email:** **CabSecFLG@gov.scot**

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Document 14 – Email on initial media coverage

From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Sent: Wednesday, August 14, 2024 4:32 PM

To: Cabinet Secretary for Finance & Local Government <CabSecFLG@gov.scot>

Cc: First Minister <FirstMinister@gov.scot>; Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Economy & Gaelic <DFMCSEG@gov.scot>; Cabinet Secretary for Constitution, External Affairs and Culture 2024 <CabSecCEAC@gov.scot>; Minister for Public Finance <MinisterPF@gov.scot>; Permanent Secretary <PermanentSecretary@gov.scot>; DG Economy <DGEconomy@gov.scot>; DG Scottish Exchequer Mailbox <DGScottishExchequer@gov.scot>; Gary Gillespie <Gary.Gillespie@gov.scot>; Chief Statistician <ChiefStatistician@gov.scot>; Colin McAllister <Colin.McAllister@gov.scot>; David Hutchison <David.Hutchison@gov.scot>; Ewan Crawford <Ewan.Crawford@gov.scot>; Ross Ingebrigtsen <Ross.Ingebrigtsen@gov.scot>; Emily Mackintosh <Emily.Mackintosh@gov.scot>; Jack Middleton <Jack.Middleton@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Kathy Johnston <Kathy.Johnston@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Communications Finance and Local Government <CommunicationsFinanceandLocalGovernment@gov.scot>

Subject: For awareness - initial coverage summary - GERS

Finance Secretary PO, colleagues

Further to the media visit, stats release and news release this morning, the GERS figures and Cab Sec's comments have been picked up by numerous outlets, stakeholders and on X/Twitter.

The infographic and photos from the visit have been posted on our social media channels, and the visit video is being edited by social content colleagues with a view to posting tomorrow.

Comms will provide a full media evaluation once we have print cuts and social media analytics, but in the meantime here is a summary of coverage so far. PA copy is also included.

Many thanks

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

News websites

- Reporting Scotland's lunchtime bulletin (includes Cab Sec's bid with Douglas Fraser)
- Gers figures: Public spending deficit rises as oil revenues fall - BBC News
- GERS: Increase in Scotland's notional deficit | The Herald (heraldscotland.com)

- North Sea oil revenues drop pushes Scottish finances deeper into the red, GERS report finds - Daily Record
- RIP Scexit: Latest Gers figures show a £22.7billion black hole in Scotland's coffers - Scottish Daily Express
- Scottish Government hail GERS figures showing revenue boost | The National
- Watch: Economist expertly debunks Scotland's GERS figures | The National
- LIVE: The latest updates as GERS figures published | The National

Social media

- Conor Matchett on X: "GERS is mostly interesting due to just how dependent the entire UK economy and public spending (inc. Scotland) is on London and the South East The £4k gap between Scottish income pp and expenditure also underlines that it's unsustainable *whatever the constitutional arrangement* <https://t.co/7XAs2M41ef>" / X

Stakeholders

- Lower oil and gas prices hit Scotland's underlying public finances in 2023-24 | Institute for Fiscal Studies (ifs.org.uk)
- David Phillips on X: "My @theIFS analysis of today's #GERS figures is now OUT. <https://t.co/sV3N4ywBOr> Scotland's notional deficit rose (by £4.7 billion) in 2023-24 as North Sea revenues halved. Scotland's deficit per person (£4,164) was over double the UK's (£1,807). [1/5] <https://t.co/R2QxuDdTEC>" / X
- GERS 2023-24: The results are in! | FAI (fraserofallander.org)
- Podcast: Our annual GERS-planation | FAI (fraserofallander.org)
- Fraser of Allander Institute on X: "GERS results are in! Net fiscal balance has widened to -10.4%. Fall in oil and gas revenues, spending per head rising faster than the UK average, and additional revenues from income tax rates and fiscal drag - read below and check back during the day <https://t.co/UnB7CN2XPz>" / X

Political/UKG responses

- GERS stats show higher public spending for Scotland as part of UK - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- UK Government Scotland on X: "The collective economic strength of the UK means higher spending on public services in Scotland. The @scotgov GERS figures show people in Scotland benefit from £2,417 more per head of additional spending compared to the UK average. 1/4 🍷 <https://t.co/YkqMQFRM8b>" / X
- Scottish Conservatives on X: "BREAKING: Today's GERS figures underline the huge benefits Scotland gains from being part of the United Kingdom. Every single person is almost £2,400 better off because of higher spending on Scotland's public services. <https://t.co/EPFHPCgCHI>" / X

PA Copy: Tough choices ahead but we will not let public services crumble, says Robison

By Craig Paton, PA Scotland Deputy Political Editor

The Scottish Government will make sure public services do not “crumble away”, the Finance Secretary has said, but she warned of “tough decisions” ahead.

Shona Robison was speaking as the Government Expenditure and Revenue Scotland (Gers) figures showed a net fiscal deficit of £22.68 billion in 2023-24, compared to just over £18 billion the previous year. Published on Wednesday, the figures showed the deficit as a proportion of GDP increased from 8.4% to 10.4%.

Elsewhere, the Government confirmed its version of the winter heating payment will now be means-tested following the same decision by the UK Government, along with reports of a letter sent by Ms Robison to Cabinet colleagues calling for a freeze on all unnecessary spending.

Asked if the dire financial warnings could wreck public services, Ms Robison said: “We’ll make sure they don’t crumble away and our priority is clear in making sure that we sustain public services, that we continue to tackle poverty and that we continue to invest in net zero and transforming our economy – those are our key priorities.

“But we will have to decide what we de-prioritise, and that work is ongoing.”

Ms Robison also raised the possibility of a reduction in the public sector workforce.

“What I have said in the letter saying we are putting in strict controls is that for the foreseeable future, only recruitment in those absolutely critical areas like, for example, blue light services, can move forward,” she said.

“There is absolutely going to be restraint on recruitment.”

The Scottish Government will work with the public sector, she said, to pinpoint what “voluntary options” are available in light of the policy of not allowing compulsory redundancies.

The Gers figures also showed total revenue increased in Scotland from £86.9 billion to £88.5 billion.

Government expenditure per person in Scotland is £2,417 higher than the rest of the UK, with £20,418 spent on average for every single person north of the border.

Ms Robison said the deficit is “not a reflection on the finances or policies of the Scottish Government – it is a reflection of UK Government choices”.

She added: “As an independent nation, we would have the powers to make different choices.

“As it is, we are using all the powers we do have to deliver our priorities of growing the economy, investing in net zero, eradicating child poverty and delivering strong public services.”

Ms Robison – who visited Edinburgh Napier University to mark the publication of the Gers figures – hailed the increase in revenue, which she said was due in part to “our progressive approach to tax and the revenue from renewable energy”.

But the Scotland Office pointed to the level of spending per head north of the border.

“These figures underline the collective economic strength of the United Kingdom,” said minister Kirsty McNeill.

“By pooling and sharing resources across the UK, Scots benefit by £2,417 more per head in public spending than the UK average.

“That means more money for schools and hospitals, if the Scottish Parliament chooses to invest in those areas.

“Ensuring economic stability and then delivering economic growth are two of the driving missions of the UK Government.

“We have reset relationships with partners across the UK and want to work closely with the Scottish Government to produce better results for people in Scotland.”

The Scottish Conservatives also touted the so-called “union dividend”, with finance spokeswoman Liz Smith saying: “Once again, their own Government’s stats underline the huge – and growing – union dividend that Scotland derives from being part of a strong United Kingdom.

“Every single person in the country is £2,400 better off because we are part of the UK.”

But Scottish Labour finance spokesman Michael Marra said that despite the higher public spending per head in Scotland, “Scots will be right to question why they aren’t seeing better public services as a result of this extra public spending”.

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Senior Media Manager | Finance and Local Government
Scottish Government
3-W, St Andrew’s House, Edinburgh, EH1 3DG
Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Document 15 – Website publication summary

Executive summary

Government Expenditure and Revenue Scotland (GERS) is an Accredited Official Statistics publication. It estimates the revenue raised in Scotland and the cost of public services provided for Scotland.

Description

Scotland's net fiscal balance has worsened since last year, driven by falling North Sea revenue, offsetting strong growth in income tax and onshore corporation tax. Spending has increased, driven by additional spending on health and social protection, whilst spending on reserved debt interest has fallen slightly and cost of living support payments have mostly ended.

Net Fiscal Balance 2023-24

This is the difference between total revenue and total public sector expenditure including capital investment. The net fiscal balance:

Was a deficit of 10.4% of GDP (£22.7 billion).

When excluding the North Sea, was a deficit of 13.2% of GDP (£26.6 billion)

For the UK, was a deficit of 4.5% of GDP.

Total Public Sector Revenue 2023-24

Scottish public sector revenue was estimated as £88.5 billion (8.1% of UK revenue). Of this, £4.0 billion was North Sea revenue. Scottish non-North Sea revenue was £84.6 billion (7.8% of UK revenue).

Non-North Sea revenue increased by £5.7 billion in 2023-24, an increase of 7.2% as, in particular, income tax and onshore corporation tax grew strongly.

Scotland's illustrative geographical share of North Sea revenue was 4.0 billion in 2023-24, down from £7.9 billion in 2022-23, following falls in energy prices and production.

Total Public Sector Expenditure 2023-24

Total expenditure for Scotland by the Scottish Government, UK Government, and all other parts of the public sector was £111.2 billion. Spending increased by £6.3 billion (6.0%), reflecting increases in spending on health and social protection.

Background

The aim of GERS is to enhance public understanding of fiscal issues in Scotland. The primary objective is to estimate a set of public sector accounts for Scotland

through detailed analysis of official UK and Scottish Government finance statistics. The report is designed to allow users to understand and analyse Scotland's fiscal position under different scenarios within the current constitutional framework.

GERS is an Accredited Official Statistics publication, which means that it is produced independently of Scottish Ministers and has been assessed by the Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR), the regulatory arm of the UK Statistics Authority, to ensure that it meets the standards set out in the Code of Practice for Statistics. This means the statistics have been found to meet user needs, to be methodologically sound, explained well and produced free of political interference.

More information on the standards of official statistics in Scotland can be accessed at:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/about-our-statistics/>

Memo:

GERS ISBN:

Document 16 – GERS publication

This document is available at:

[Government Expenditure and Revenue Scotland \(GERS\) 2023-24 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/gers-2023-24/pages/introduction.aspx)

Under Section 25 of FOISA we do not need to provide you with information if it is already reasonably available to you.

Query

And the worrying news doesn't stop here. GERS also contains breakdowns of where the money is spent. This shows that in 2022-23 there was a 12 per cent drop in spending on health in Scotland, compared to a two per cent drop for the UK. The Scottish figure bounced back strongly in 2023-24 but health spending remains below its 2021-22 level whereas it is over two per cent higher for the UK. Equally, spending on "education and training" is 11 per cent higher in the UK (2023-24 vs 2021-22) but only four per cent higher in Scotland.

Such shortfalls are partly explained by higher spend on Social Protection policies, like additional child benefit payments. However, questions remain around the size and source(s) of such spending patterns, as well as over the relative merits of extra spending on benefits at the expense of the health and education budgets. Tricky. Unfortunately budget decisions often are.

All of the key findings discussed above are uncontroversial. They are repeated year in, year out by reputable bodies like the Fraser of Allander Institute and the Institute for Fiscal Studies. If the pro-independence argument is to move forward then the logjam around how to deal with these "difficult" numbers needs to be broken.

Until then the main purpose of GERS is to remind us of how moribund the SNP has become in putting together a coherent case on the economic and fiscal aspects of independence.

Document 18 – GERS Communications Plan

News: Communications Plan Government Expenditure and Revenue Scotland Purpose

To promote the Government Expenditure and Revenue Scotland 2023-24 statistics, explaining and providing context while promoting key Scottish Government lines.

Communications objectives

- Aim for print and broadcast coverage, regardless of tone, to include key messages.
- Proactive comms to highlight innovative sectors of Scotland's economy.
- Outline the limitations of the statistics for interpreting Scotland's public finances under independence, and put figures in context of wider challenging financial situation facing Scotland

GERS key results

Scotland's fiscal position in GERS has been worse than the UK's since 2012-13, when oil and gas receipts began to fall. This reflects a higher level of public spending for Scotland. The gap with the UK narrowed in 2021-22 and 2022-23, as rising energy prices and windfall taxes increased oil and gas receipts. However, it is expected to grow again in 2023-24 as oil and gas revenue falls back.

Key messages (to be refined once statistics are available)

- The figures show again the importance of Scotland's natural resources to the UK economy.
- GERS represents Scotland's position within the UK, not as an independent nation.
- As we have said, Scotland faces a deeply challenging financial situation, as does the UK as a whole. Within the Scottish Government's fixed budget, we have responded to higher inflation and cost of living pressures by making tough decisions on tax and spending.
- The First Minister has been clear that driving growth is a key priority and we welcome that the new UK Government is also committed to sustained economic growth.

Communications strategy

- Media visit to highlight successful Scottish sector, focusing on innovation. Two options have been prepared, as below - comms recommend Napier University's School of Computing, Engineering & the Built Environment.
- Ministerial news release and stats release issued at 09:30 to coincide with publication of the statistics
- Visuals captured for social media, with stills from the visit and graphics posted on the day of the visit, followed by a video the next day.
- Off camera, on-the-record media conference with DFM, Cab Sec Finance and Chief Economist to handle technical questions from journalists.
- On-camera bids with DFM organised as part of visit.
- Other bids, including GMS, considered case by case, led by Ms Robison.

Media visit

Napier University is happy to host an event in its School of Computing, Engineering & the Built Environment at the Merchiston campus in Edinburgh. This would involve a tour of the labs – potentially including robotics, Internet Of Things-powered devices

or cybersecurity – with the media briefing held in the campus’s Glassroom. The tour demonstration could be in line with this open day event from May this year.

Proposed timings

- 09:30 Media to arrive at venue
- 09:30 GERS figures published – journalists at visit handed printed media releases and executive summary
- 09:30 Statistical and Ministerial news releases issued, and social media posted on @scotgoveconomy
- 09:45 DFM and Cab Sec arrive for tour of venue
- 10:15 Media briefing begins, off camera, on the record
- 10:45 Media briefing ends. DFM undertakes broadcast bids
- 11:00 DFM and Cab Sec depart

Evaluation

Comms will undertake a full communications evaluation to measure the effectiveness of our approach, and use the findings to shape future comms projects.

Document 19 – GERS Communications Plan email chain

From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Sent: Monday, August 12, 2024 2:47 PM
To: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Cc: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Communications Finance and Local Government <CommunicationsFinanceandLocalGovernment@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Gary Gillespie <Gary.Gillespie@gov.scot>; Kathy Johnston <Kathy.Johnston@gov.scot>
Subject: RE: To clear - comms plan - GERS

Hi Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Thanks for sending this on – to confirm we've added the link to the media invite ready for it to go live at 09:30 on Wednesday

Many thanks
Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Sent: Monday, August 12, 2024 9:21 AM
To: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Cc: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Communications Finance and Local Government <CommunicationsFinanceandLocalGovernment@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Gary Gillespie <Gary.Gillespie@gov.scot>; Kathy Johnston <Kathy.Johnston@gov.scot>
Subject: RE: To clear - comms plan - GERS

Hi Redacted under Section 38(1)(b),

Just to say, we haven't yet received the 'official' link to the publication. However, we do have the ISBN number, so the link below should work:

<https://www.gov.scot/isbn/9781836015451>

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Sent: Thursday, August 8, 2024 5:41 PM
To: Cabinet Secretary for Finance & Local Government <CabSecFLG@gov.scot>; Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Economy & Gaelic <DFMCSEG@gov.scot>
Cc: Minister for Public Finance <MinisterPF@gov.scot>; Emily Mackintosh <Emily.Mackintosh@gov.scot>; Colin McAllister <Colin.McAllister@gov.scot>; Ross Ingebrigtsen <Ross.Ingebrigtsen@gov.scot>; Jack Middleton <Jack.Middleton@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under

DFM thinks that if the Cabinet Secretary for Finance is leading on this, then she should do broadcast bids. DFM is of the view that it is a little bit unusual for two Cabinet Secretaries to do something like this so is very keen that there is no confusion on who is leading on this. DFM notes that if it is the Cabinet Secretary for Finance who is essentially hosting it then she should take the lead, including on broadcast.

Kind regards,
Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Deputy Private Secretary to the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Gaelic – Kate Forbes MSP

Lauren Jeffries, Leas-rùnaire Priobhaideach dhan Leas-Phrìomh Mhinistear is do Rùnaire a' Chaibineit airson na h-Eaconamaidh is Gàidhlig – Ceit Fhoirbeis BPA
The Scottish Government | St Andrew's House | Regent Road | Edinburgh | EH1 3DG

M: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b) E: DFMCSF@gov.scot

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From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Sent: Wednesday, August 7, 2024 4:56 PM

To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Economy & Gaelic <DFMCSEG@gov.scot>; Cabinet Secretary for Finance & Local Government <CabSecFLG@gov.scot>

Cc: Minister for Public Finance <MinisterPF@gov.scot>; Emily Mackintosh <Emily.Mackintosh@gov.scot>; Colin McAllister <Colin.McAllister@gov.scot>; Ross Ingebrigtsen <Ross.Ingebrigtsen@gov.scot>; Jack Middleton <Jack.Middleton@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Communications Finance and Local Government <CommunicationsFinanceandLocalGovernment@gov.scot>; Communications Deputy First Minister, Economy and Gaelic <DFMEG@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Gary Gillespie <Gary.Gillespie@gov.scot>; David Hutchison <David.Hutchison@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Kathy Johnston <Kathy.Johnston@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); DG Economy <DGEconomy@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Subject: RE: To clear - comms plan - GERS

Thanks Redacted under Section 38(1)(b), for the briefing, we'd propose that Cab Sec gives an opening statement, followed by a statement from DFM. Cab Sec would then chair the Q&A, bringing in DFM or Gary to answer questions as required, with DFM taking questions relating to economic growth or oil and gas revenues.

While this will need to be confirmed after we have the stats on Tuesday morning, our initial proposal for what the two opening statements would cover is as follows.

Cab Sec:

- GERS shows a challenging situation for both Scotland and the UK
- Key drivers of GERS numbers
- GERS shows Scotland's position as part of the UK, not independence
- Any positive points on numbers
- Within the Scottish Government's fixed budget, we have responded to higher inflation and cost of living pressures by making tough decisions on tax and spending.

DFM:

- The First Minister has been clear that driving growth is a key priority and we welcome that the new UK Government is also committed to sustained economic growth.
- Actions SG is taking on the economy
- Points on oil and gas just transition

For continuity, we'd recommend one Minister leads on broadcast bids after the briefing. Grateful for confirmation as to whether this should be Cab Sec or DFM.

Many thanks

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b) **On Behalf Of** Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Economy & Gaelic

Sent: Wednesday, August 7, 2024 11:23 AM

To: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Economy & Gaelic <DFMCSEG@gov.scot>; Cabinet Secretary for Finance & Local Government <CabSecFLG@gov.scot>

Cc: Minister for Public Finance <MinisterPF@gov.scot>; Emily Mackintosh <Emily.Mackintosh@gov.scot>; Colin McAllister <Colin.McAllister@gov.scot>; Ross Ingebrigtsen <Ross.Ingebrigtsen@gov.scot>; Jack Middleton <Jack.Middleton@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Communications Finance and Local Government <CommunicationsFinanceandLocalGovernment@gov.scot>; Communications Deputy First Minister, Economy and Gaelic <DFMEG@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Gary Gillespie <Gary.Gillespie@gov.scot>; David Hutchison <David.Hutchison@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Kathy Johnston <Kathy.Johnston@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under

Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); DG Economy <DGEconomy@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Subject: RE: To clear - comms plan - GERS

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b),

DFM has asked for what is the choreography of who answers the questions and speaks to each item?

Grateful for confirmation of these arrangements as soon as possible.

Kind regards,
Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Deputy Private Secretary to the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Gaelic – Kate Forbes MSP

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

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From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Sent: Tuesday, August 6, 2024 4:45 PM

To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Economy & Gaelic <DFMCSEG@gov.scot>; Cabinet Secretary for Finance & Local Government <CabSecFLG@gov.scot>

Cc: Minister for Public Finance <MinisterPF@gov.scot>; Emily Mackintosh <Emily.Mackintosh@gov.scot>; Colin McAllister <Colin.McAllister@gov.scot>; Ross Ingebrigtsen <Ross.Ingebrigtsen@gov.scot>; Jack Middleton <Jack.Middleton@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Communications Finance and Local Government <CommunicationsFinanceandLocalGovernment@gov.scot>; Communications Deputy First Minister, Economy and Gaelic <DFMEG@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Gary Gillespie <Gary.Gillespie@gov.scot>; David Hutchison <David.Hutchison@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Kathy Johnston <Kathy.Johnston@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); DG Economy <DGEconomy@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under

Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Subject: To clear - comms plan - GERS

DFM PO
Finance Secretary PO

Please see attached for a proposed comms plan for the GERS stats next Wednesday.

We have organised a visit to Napier University's School of Computing, Engineering & the Built Environment, giving DFM and Cab Sec the opportunity to tour the labs and have a demonstration of the robots being developed there. There would then be space for a media briefing and broadcast bids.

We'd suggest DFM undertakes bids during the visit, with Cab Sec being on hand to do any that come in later in the day or the following morning.

This comms handling and visit proposal has been agreed with SpAds. Grateful if you could confirm whether DFM and Ms Robison are content.

Many thanks
Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Senior Media Manager | Finance and Local Government
Scottish Government
3-W, St Andrew's House, Edinburgh, EH1 3DG
Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Document 20 – GERS media invite

From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Sent: Monday, August 12, 2024 2:51 PM
To: Ross Ingebrigtsen <Ross.Ingebrigtsen@gov.scot>
Subject: Media invite: GERS statistics 2023-24

News From The Scottish Government



12/08/24 14:47

Media invite: GERS statistics 2023-24

Government Expenditure and Revenue Scotland (GERS) 2023-24 will be published on Wednesday 14 August.

For operational purposes only – not for publication

Government Expenditure and Revenue Scotland (GERS) 2023-24 will be published on Wednesday 14 August.

Finance Secretary Shona Robison will undertake a visit and lead a technical briefing at the School of Computing, Engineering & the Built Environment at Napier University.

Cameras are invited to capture footage/images of the Finance Secretary being shown how the university is leading the way in robotics research.

Journalists are invited to attend an off-camera, on-the-record briefing with the Cabinet Secretary and Chief Economist Gary Gillespie.

Broadcast interviews will follow the briefing.

Attendance is strictly through registration. Please register your attendance by **14:00 tomorrow (Tuesday 13 August)** to Redacted under Section 38(1)(b) (

SCHEDULE

09:30: Media to arrive at venue, met by Scottish Government comms. GERS figures are published.

09:45: The Cabinet Secretary tours the robotics labs. Cameras are invited to follow the tour.

10:15: Media briefing begins (**on-the-record, off-camera**).

10:45: Broadcast interviews will be undertaken.

11:00: Visit ends.

The GERS statistics will be available online from 09:30 on Wednesday 14 August.

Address: School of Computing, Engineering & the Built Environment, Merchiston Campus (Colinton Road entrance), Napier University, 10 Colinton Rd, Edinburgh

EH10 5DT. There is some parking available on site, in addition to street parking near by.

Contact Information

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Media Manager

Scottish Government

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Document 21 – GERS media bids

From: Ross Ingebrigtsen <Ross.Ingebrigtsen@gov.scot>
Sent: Wednesday, August 14, 2024 2:03 PM
To: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Colin McAllister <Colin.McAllister@gov.scot>; Jack Middleton <Jack.Middleton@gov.scot>; Emily Mackintosh <Emily.Mackintosh@gov.scot>; David Hutchison <David.Hutchison@gov.scot>
Cc: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Cabinet Secretary for Finance & Local Government <CabSecFLG@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Subject: RE: For consideration: BBC bids, Lunchtime Live and World at One

Yes thanks

Thanks

Ross

Please note Scottish Ministers, Special advisers and the Permanent Secretary to the Scottish Government are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See www.lobbying.scot for information.

From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Sent: Wednesday, August 14, 2024 2:02 PM
To: Colin McAllister <Colin.McAllister@gov.scot>; Jack Middleton <Jack.Middleton@gov.scot>; Emily Mackintosh <Emily.Mackintosh@gov.scot>; David Hutchison <David.Hutchison@gov.scot>; Ross Ingebrigtsen <Ross.Ingebrigtsen@gov.scot>
Cc: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Cabinet Secretary for Finance & Local Government <CabSecFLG@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Subject: RE: For consideration: BBC bids, Lunchtime Live and World at One

SpAds,

To updated - we've had bids from PM Show, Drivetime and Today show (for tomorrow morning). Can I check if you're content for these to go to Ms Robison in first instance and keep DFM copied in case she isn't available? Grateful for consideration.

Thanks,

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

WHO	OUTLET	TIME	LIVE/PR E-REC	INTERVIEWER	TOPICS	Recommendation	Other details
Cab Sec	BBC Radio	1705 if live, pre	LIVE	Andrew Black	GERS	Accept	They have

for Finance	Scotland Drive time	rec at 1445 or 1530					suggested over Zoom, Facetime, or Whatsapp.
Cab Sec for Finance	BBC R4 Today	1730 0800 (Thursday 15 August)	LIVE LIVE	Evan Davis TBC	GERS / Spending freeze	Accept Accept	Zoom or over the phone Zoom, over the phone
Cab Sec for Finance	BBC R4 PM show				Spending controls		

From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Sent: Wednesday, August 14, 2024 1:31 PM
To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Economy & Gaelic <DFMCSEG@gov.scot>; Colin McAllister <Colin.McAllister@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Cc: Jack Middleton <Jack.Middleton@gov.scot>; Emily Mackintosh <Emily.Mackintosh@gov.scot>; David Hutchison <David.Hutchison@gov.scot>; Ross Ingebrigtsen <Ross.Ingebrigtsen@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Cabinet Secretary for Finance & Local Government <CabSecFLG@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Subject: RE: For consideration: BBC bids, Lunchtime Live and World at One

With apologies, World at One are unable to accommodate. I've asked them to consider a bid for tomorrow.
 Thanks,
 Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Sent: Wednesday, August 14, 2024 1:24 PM
To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Economy & Gaelic <DFMCSEG@gov.scot>; Colin McAllister <Colin.McAllister@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Cc: Jack Middleton <Jack.Middleton@gov.scot>; Emily Mackintosh <Emily.Mackintosh@gov.scot>; David Hutchison <David.Hutchison@gov.scot>; Ross Ingebrigtsen <Ross.Ingebrigtsen@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Cabinet Secretary for Finance & Local Government <CabSecFLG@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under

Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Subject: RE: For consideration: BBC bids, Lunchtime Live and World at One

Hi Redacted under Section 38(1)(b),
To update, Lunchtime Live are unable to accommodate 1345 but have passed to the Drivetime team to consider a bid for later in the afternoon.
I'm still chasing R4 but their phones are ringing out, will keep chasing.
Thanks,
Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Sent: Wednesday, August 14, 2024 1:14 PM
To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Economy & Gaelic <DFMCSEG@gov.scot>; Colin McAllister <Colin.McAllister@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Cc: Jack Middleton <Jack.Middleton@gov.scot>; Emily Mackintosh <Emily.Mackintosh@gov.scot>; David Hutchison <David.Hutchison@gov.scot>; Ross Ingebrigtsen <Ross.Ingebrigtsen@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Cabinet Secretary for Finance & Local Government <CabSecFLG@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Subject: RE: For consideration: BBC bids, Lunchtime Live and World at One

Briefings attached.
I am speaking to producers now and will come back imminently.
Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b) **On Behalf Of** Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Economy & Gaelic
Sent: Wednesday, August 14, 2024 1:09 PM
To: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Colin McAllister <Colin.McAllister@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Economy & Gaelic <DFMCSEG@gov.scot>
Cc: Jack Middleton <Jack.Middleton@gov.scot>; Emily Mackintosh <Emily.Mackintosh@gov.scot>; David Hutchison <David.Hutchison@gov.scot>; Ross Ingebrigtsen <Ross.Ingebrigtsen@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Cabinet Secretary for Finance & Local Government <CabSecFLG@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Subject: RE: For consideration: BBC bids, Lunchtime Live and World at One

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
If bids are on GERS, DFM will need the full briefing on GERS in order to undertake these bids and time after her meeting closes to prepare quickly.
If the bids could take place in 15 mins, they could start at 13:45, giving DFM 15 mins prep after her meeting finished.
Please provide full briefing as soon as possible as this will be required by DFM.
Thanks,

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Deputy Private Secretary to the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Gaelic – Kate Forbes MSP

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

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From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Sent: Wednesday, August 14, 2024 1:00 PM

To: Colin McAllister <Colin.McAllister@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Economy & Gaelic <DFMCSEG@gov.scot>

Cc: Jack Middleton <Jack.Middleton@gov.scot>; Emily Mackintosh <Emily.Mackintosh@gov.scot>; David Hutchison <David.Hutchison@gov.scot>; Ross Ingebrigtsen <Ross.Ingebrigtsen@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Cabinet Secretary for Finance & Local Government <CabSecFLG@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Subject: RE: For consideration: BBC bids, Lunchtime Live and World at One

DFMPO,

Grateful if 1330 availability could be checked please. The shows are about to start, however I can make contact with producers to see if they can still take an SG voice if we can provide one.

Lunchtime Live have confirmed they will use audio provided by Douglas Fraser during the show regardless.

Thanks

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

From: Colin McAllister <Colin.McAllister@gov.scot>

Sent: Wednesday, August 14, 2024 12:55 PM

To: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Economy & Gaelic <DFMCSEG@gov.scot>

Cc: Jack Middleton <Jack.Middleton@gov.scot>; Emily Mackintosh <Emily.Mackintosh@gov.scot>; David Hutchison <David.Hutchison@gov.scot>; Ross Ingebrigtsen <Ross.Ingebrigtsen@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Cabinet Secretary for Finance & Local Government <CabSecFLG@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Subject: RE: For consideration: BBC bids, Lunchtime Live and World at One

Why can't DFM do the bids at 1.30 at SAH?

Regards

Colin McAllister



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From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Sent: Wednesday, August 14, 2024 12:45 PM
To: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Economy & Gaelic <DFMCSEG@gov.scot>
Cc: Jack Middleton <Jack.Middleton@gov.scot>; Emily Mackintosh <Emily.Mackintosh@gov.scot>; David Hutchison <David.Hutchison@gov.scot>; Ross Ingebrigtsen <Ross.Ingebrigtsen@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Cabinet Secretary for Finance & Local Government <CabSecFLG@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Colin McAllister <Colin.McAllister@gov.scot>
Subject: RE: For consideration: BBC bids, Lunchtime Live and World at One

Adding Colin tba
Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Social Justice portfolio | Scottish Government
Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Sent: Wednesday, August 14, 2024 12:37 PM
To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Economy & Gaelic <DFMCSEG@gov.scot>
Cc: Jack Middleton <Jack.Middleton@gov.scot>; Emily Mackintosh <Emily.Mackintosh@gov.scot>; David Hutchison <David.Hutchison@gov.scot>; Ross Ingebrigtsen <Ross.Ingebrigtsen@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Cabinet Secretary for Finance & Local Government <CabSecFLG@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Subject: RE: For consideration: BBC bids, Lunchtime Live and World at One

Thanks Redacted under Section 38(1)(b),
SpAds I will decline at 1245, any problems let me know.
Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b) **On Behalf Of** Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Economy & Gaelic
Sent: Wednesday, August 14, 2024 12:36 PM
To: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Economy & Gaelic <DFMCSEG@gov.scot>
Cc: Jack Middleton <Jack.Middleton@gov.scot>; Emily Mackintosh

<Emily.Mackintosh@gov.scot>; David Hutchison <David.Hutchison@gov.scot>;
Ross Ingebrigtsen <Ross.Ingebrigtsen@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section
38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b);
Cabinet Secretary for Finance & Local Government <CabSecFLG@gov.scot>;
Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under
Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section
38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Subject: RE: For consideration: BBC bids, Lunchtime Live and World at One

Hi Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
The DFM is currently in a meeting, and will be for some time, so is therefore unable
to undertake these bids.
Many thanks

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Private Secretary
Office of Richard Lochhead MSP, Minister for Business
MinisterforBusiness@gov.scot
St Andrew's House | Regent Road | Edinburgh | EH1 3DG | T: Redacted under
Section 38(1)(b)| Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

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on behalf of a Minister relating to a decision, request or comment made by a
Minister, or a note of a Ministerial meeting, must be filed appropriately by the
recipient. Private Offices do not keep official records of such e-mails or attachments.
Scottish Ministers, Special advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the
terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See www.lobbying.scot

From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Sent: Wednesday, August 14, 2024 12:20 PM
To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Economy & Gaelic
<DFMCSEG@gov.scot>
Cc: Jack Middleton <Jack.Middleton@gov.scot>; Emily Mackintosh
<Emily.Mackintosh@gov.scot>; David Hutchison <David.Hutchison@gov.scot>;
Ross Ingebrigtsen <Ross.Ingebrigtsen@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section
38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b);
Cabinet Secretary for Finance & Local Government <CabSecFLG@gov.scot>;
Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under
Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section
38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Subject: RE: For consideration: BBC bids, Lunchtime Live and World at One
Importance: High

Good afternoon DFMPO,
We've discussed with SpAds, and grateful if the below bids could be put to the DFM
for consideration.
Grateful for your thoughts.
Many thanks,
Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

WHO	OUTLET	TIME	LIVE/PR E-REC	INTERVIEWE R	TOPICS	Recommendati on	Other details
Cab Sec for Financ e	BBC Radio Scotland, Lunchtim e Live	1305 (sho w runs until 1400)	LIVE	Mhairi Stuart	GERS	Accept	They have sugge sted over Zoom, Facetim e, or Whatsap p.
Cab Sec for Financ e	BBC R4 – World at One	1320	LIVE	Sarah Montague	GERS / Spending freeze	Accept	Zoom or over the phone

From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b) **On Behalf Of** Cabinet Secretary for Finance & Local Government

Sent: Wednesday, August 14, 2024 12:08 PM

To: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Cabinet Secretary for Finance & Local Government <CabSecFLG@gov.scot>

Cc: Jack Middleton <Jack.Middleton@gov.scot>; Emily Mackintosh <Emily.Mackintosh@gov.scot>; David Hutchison <David.Hutchison@gov.scot>; Ross Ingebrigtsen <Ross.Ingebrigtsen@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Subject: RE: For consideration: BBC bids, Lunchtime Live and World at One

Hi Redacted under Section 38(1)(b),

Thanks for your email. Cab Sec is unavailable to do these bids as she is travelling with a poor connection and then has a private appointment. Apologies but please decline.

Thanks,

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b) | Deputy Private Secretary | Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government – Shona Robison MSP | Scottish Government | St Andrew's House (2N.08) | Regent Road | Edinburgh | EH1 3DG | M Redacted under Section 38(1)(b) E: CabSecFLG@gov.scot

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Private Offices do not keep official records of such e-mails or attachments. Scottish Ministers, Special advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See www.lobbying.scot

From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Sent: Wednesday, August 14, 2024 11:50 AM
To: Cabinet Secretary for Finance & Local Government <CabSecFLG@gov.scot>
Cc: Jack Middleton <Jack.Middleton@gov.scot>; Emily Mackintosh <Emily.Mackintosh@gov.scot>; David Hutchison <David.Hutchison@gov.scot>; Ross Ingebrigtsen <Ross.Ingebrigtsen@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Subject: For consideration: BBC bids, Lunchtime Live and World at One

Good afternoon Cab Sec / PO,
 We've had two follow up GERS bids from the BBC – one from Lunchtime Live and the other from the World at One. Both can be done remotely. We've discussed with SpAds and would recommend to accept if possible.
 Grateful for your consideration.
 Many thanks,
 Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

News | Media Manager – Finance, Local Government and Corporate
 The Scottish Government, St Andrew's House, Edinburgh
 Mobile: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b) | Portfolio Media inquiries: 0300 244 9027
www.gov.scot/news

WHO	OUTLET	TIME	LIVE/PR E-REC	INTERVIEWER	TOPICS	Recommendation	Other details
Cab Sec for Finance	BBC Radio Scotland, Lunchtime Live	1305 (shown until 1400)	LIVE	Mhairi Stuart	GERS	Accept	They have suggested over Zoom, Facetime, or Whatsapp.
Cab Sec for Finance	BBC R4 – World at One	1320	LIVE	Sarah Montague	GERS / Spending freeze	Accept	Zoom or over the phone

Document 22 – Social Media clearance

From: Ross Ingebrigtsen <Ross.Ingebrigtsen@gov.scot>
Sent: Wednesday, August 14, 2024 2:28 PM
To: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Emily Mackintosh <Emily.Mackintosh@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Colin McAllister <Colin.McAllister@gov.scot>; David Hutchison <David.Hutchison@gov.scot>; Jack Middleton <Jack.Middleton@gov.scot>
Cc: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Head of Institutional Governance and Reform Unit <IGRUnitHead@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Communications Finance and Local Government <CommunicationsFinanceandLocalGovernment@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); AI Data Policy <ai@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Subject: RE: For SpAds Clearance please - Social Media on Napier visit - for issue Wed PM

Yes, thank you

Thanks

Ross

Please note Scottish Ministers, Special advisers and the Permanent Secretary to the Scottish Government are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See www.lobbying.scot for information.

From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Sent: Wednesday, August 14, 2024 2:24 PM
To: Emily Mackintosh <Emily.Mackintosh@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Colin McAllister <Colin.McAllister@gov.scot>; David Hutchison <David.Hutchison@gov.scot>; Ross Ingebrigtsen <Ross.Ingebrigtsen@gov.scot>; Jack Middleton <Jack.Middleton@gov.scot>
Cc: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Head of Institutional Governance and Reform Unit <IGRUnitHead@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Communications Finance and Local Government <CommunicationsFinanceandLocalGovernment@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); AI Data Policy <ai@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Subject: RE: For SpAds Clearance please - Social Media on Napier visit - for issue Wed PM

Sorry to chase – grateful for consideration when possible.

Thanks,

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Sent: Wednesday, August 14, 2024 12:42 PM

To: Emily Mackintosh <Emily.Mackintosh@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Colin McAllister <Colin.McAllister@gov.scot>; David Hutchison <David.Hutchison@gov.scot>; Ross Ingebrigtsen <Ross.Ingebrigtsen@gov.scot>; Jack Middleton <Jack.Middleton@gov.scot>

Cc: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Head of Institutional Governance and Reform Unit <IGRUnitHead@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Communications Finance and Local Government <CommunicationsFinanceandLocalGovernment@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); AI Data Policy <ai@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Subject: RE: For SpAds Clearance please - Social Media on Napier visit - for issue Wed PM

Hi Emily / SpAds,

Can I check you're content to use the attached images for this tweet? (We'll use larger file sizes and here is link with full suite).

Thanks,

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Sent: Tuesday, August 13, 2024 5:16 PM

To: Emily Mackintosh <Emily.Mackintosh@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Colin McAllister <Colin.McAllister@gov.scot>; David Hutchison <David.Hutchison@gov.scot>; Ross Ingebrigtsen <Ross.Ingebrigtsen@gov.scot>; Jack Middleton <Jack.Middleton@gov.scot>

Cc: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Head of Institutional Governance and Reform Unit <IGRUnitHead@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Communications Finance and Local Government <CommunicationsFinanceandLocalGovernment@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); AI Data Policy <ai@gov.scot>

Subject: RE: For SpAds Clearance please - Social Media on Napier visit - for issue Wed PM

Thanks Emily,

Best wishes

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

From: Emily Mackintosh <Emily.Mackintosh@gov.scot>

Sent: Tuesday, August 13, 2024 5:09 PM

To: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Colin McAllister <Colin.McAllister@gov.scot>; David Hutchison <David.Hutchison@gov.scot>; Ross Ingebrigtsen <Ross.Ingebrigtsen@gov.scot>; Jack Middleton <Jack.Middleton@gov.scot>

Cc: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Head of Institutional Governance and Reform Unit <IGRUnitHead@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Communications Finance and Local Government <CommunicationsFinanceandLocalGovernment@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); AI Data Policy <ai@gov.scot>

Subject: RE: For SpAds Clearance please - Social Media on Napier visit - for issue Wed PM

One small add - thanks

From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Sent: Tuesday, August 13, 2024 5:08 PM

To: Emily Mackintosh <Emily.Mackintosh@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Colin McAllister <Colin.McAllister@gov.scot>; David Hutchison <David.Hutchison@gov.scot>; Ross Ingebrigtsen <Ross.Ingebrigtsen@gov.scot>; Jack Middleton <Jack.Middleton@gov.scot>

Cc: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Head of Institutional Governance and Reform Unit <IGRUnitHead@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Communications Finance and Local Government <CommunicationsFinanceandLocalGovernment@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); AI Data Policy <ai@gov.scot>

Subject: RE: For SpAds Clearance please - Social Media on Napier visit - for issue Wed PM

Hi Emily,

Please see below revised tweet for your review,

With thanks

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Finance Secretary @ShonaRobison visited @EdinburghNapier to mark publication of the 2023-24 Government Expenditure and Revenue Scotland (GERS) statistics.

She learnt how the university's cutting-edge Robotics research is informing the future of manufacturing and healthcare.

From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Sent: Tuesday, August 13, 2024 4:37 PM

To: Emily Mackintosh <Emily.Mackintosh@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Colin McAllister <Colin.McAllister@gov.scot>; David Hutchison <David.Hutchison@gov.scot>; Ross Ingebrigtsen <Ross.Ingebrigtsen@gov.scot>; Jack Middleton <Jack.Middleton@gov.scot>

Cc: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Head of Institutional Governance and Reform Unit <IGRUnitHead@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Communications Finance and

Local Government <CommunicationsFinanceandLocalGovernment@gov.scot>;
Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); AI Data Policy
<ai@gov.scot>

Subject: RE: For SpAds Clearance please - Social Media on Napier visit - for issue
Wed PM

Thanks Emily, will revise with officials and come back on this.

Best wishes

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

From: Emily Mackintosh <Emily.Mackintosh@gov.scot>

Sent: Tuesday, August 13, 2024 4:30 PM

To: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Colin
McAllister <Colin.McAllister@gov.scot>; David Hutchison
<David.Hutchison@gov.scot>; Ross Ingebrigtsen <Ross.Ingebrigtsen@gov.scot>;
Jack Middleton <Jack.Middleton@gov.scot>

Cc: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted
under Section 38(1)(b); Head of Institutional Governance and Reform Unit
<IGRUnitHead@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under
Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Communications Finance and
Local Government <CommunicationsFinanceandLocalGovernment@gov.scot>;
Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); AI Data Policy
<ai@gov.scot>

Subject: RE: For SpAds Clearance please - Social Media on Napier visit - for issue
Wed PM

Is this really the quote we want to use?

The Cab Sec is doing the media visit on the GERs figures so I think it is odd not to
mention that?

Emily

From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Sent: Tuesday, August 13, 2024 4:28 PM

To: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Colin McAllister <Colin.McAllister@gov.scot>;
David Hutchison <David.Hutchison@gov.scot>; Ross Ingebrigtsen
<Ross.Ingebrigtsen@gov.scot>; Emily Mackintosh <Emily.Mackintosh@gov.scot>;
Jack Middleton <Jack.Middleton@gov.scot>

Cc: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted
under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Head of Institutional
Governance and Reform Unit <IGRUnitHead@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section
38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b);
Communications Finance and Local Government

<CommunicationsFinanceandLocalGovernment@gov.scot>; Redacted under
Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); AI Data Policy <ai@gov.scot>

Subject: For SpAds Clearance please - Social Media on Napier visit - for issue Wed
PM

Hi SpAds,

Grateful for your clearance of a tweet -agreed with Officials- to issue tomorrow afternoon on @scotgoveconomy.
This will mark Ms Robison's visit to Napier.

Best wishes
Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Tweet

1 tweet with up to 4 photos and accompanying text:

Finance Secretary @ShonaRobison visited @EdinburghNapier where cutting-edge Robotics research is informing the future of industries such as manufacturing and healthcare.

She said: "Academia and industry collaboration helps drive growth, create jobs and reform the public sector."

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

News | Media Manager – Finance, Local Government and Corporate

The Scottish Government, St Andrew's House, Edinburgh

Mobile: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b) | Portfolio Media inquiries: 0300 244 9027

www.gov.scot/news

Document 23 – Venue confirmation

From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Sent: Monday, August 5, 2024 4:33 PM
To: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Cc: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Subject: RE: Potential DFM and Cab Sec Finance and Local Government Visit - 14th August - Government Expenditure & Revenue statistics launch?

Hi Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Thank you for looking into this for us so quickly – great to hear that the School of Computing, Engineering & the Built Environment is available for this. I'll be in touch to confirm asap tomorrow.

Many thanks
Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Sent: Monday, August 5, 2024 4:08 PM
To: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Cc: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Subject: RE: Potential DFM and Cab Sec Finance and Local Government Visit - 14th August - Government Expenditure & Revenue statistics launch?

Hello Redacted under Section 38(1)(b),

Thank you for getting in touch.

It seems both Redacted under Section 38(1)(b) and Redacted under Section 38(1)(b) are out of the office.

We will be happy to host a visit at the Merchiston campus (not Craiglockhart), as this is where our School of Computing, Engineering & the Built Environment is based.

As the focus is on the innovative sectors of the Scottish economy, I believe as a more technical school, we can champion this activity and provide material.

Despite my leave, it will be an honour to accommodate such an event.

When it comes to our facilities, we have plenty of labs with different equipment, as well as the Kilby Computer Suite (JKCC). When it comes to the Craiglockhart Theatre, I cannot make any promises as it is not in my jurisdiction.

Does that sound ok? So we can start making arrangements.

Kindest regards,

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

School of Computing, Engineering & the Built Environment
Merchiston Campus, Room C109
Edinburgh Napier University
10 Colinton Road, Edinburgh EH10 5DT

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)



Edinburgh Napier UNIVERSITY  School of Computing,
Engineering & the
Built Environment

From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Sent: Monday, August 5, 2024 3:56 PM

To: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Cc: JRedacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Subject: RE: Potential DFM and Cab Sec Finance and Local Government Visit - 14th August - Government Expenditure & Revenue statistics launch?

CAUTION: This email originated from outside Edinburgh Napier University. Do not follow links or open attachments if you doubt the authenticity of the sender or the content.

Hi Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Good to talk to you just now. As discussed, we're looking at options for a media visit to tie in with the **Government Expenditure & Revenue** statistics, which are published next Wednesday morning.

Our focus is on innovative sectors of the Scottish economy, and as my colleague Paul says in his email below, the Cyber Academy seems like a great fit for this. We'd be looking to take a tour of the facilities to secure visuals for broadcasters, followed by a news conference with the Deputy First Minister, Finance Secretary and Chief Economist – we'd need space for about 20 people for this I'd say.

I understand you'll be on leave yourself on the 14th but if you were able to pick this up with colleagues and let us know if that sounds workable, I'd really appreciate it.

It would particularly helpful to know what sorts of facilities would be included on any media tour? I'm aware that the business school's main lecture theatre is particularly striking.

Hope to hear from you soon.

Best wishes

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Sent: Monday, August 5, 2024 1:13 PM

To: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Cc: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Subject: Potential DFM and Cab Sec Finance and Local Government Visit - 14th August - Government Expenditure & Revenue statistics launch?

Importance: High

Hi Redacted under Section 38(1)(b) / Redacted under Section 38(1)(b),

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b) and Redacted under Section 38(1)(b) suggested you might be able to help with this slightly left field request!

My colleagues are launching the **Government Expenditure & Revenue** statistics on 14 August and are looking at options for a press conference and a media visit with the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government.

Naturally, we thought of the Business School at Napier, the good work of the Cyber Academy and perhaps the main lecture theatre could be good fit for the press conference.

Timings would likely be media arriving at 9:30 am for a 10 am start, finishing around 11 am.

Is this something that could be facilitated at Napier and perhaps more importantly would you be interested in hosting such an event?

I'm copying in Redacted under Section 38(1)(b), our Senior Media Manager who would be taking this forward from the Scottish Government side if it's possible. I'm also copying in my colleague Redacted under Section 38(1)(b) to keep an eye on things as I escape on leave tomorrow 😊

Kind Regards and happy to discuss,

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Digital Directorate | Scottish Government

Tel: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

The CyberScotland Partnership is a leadership collaboration collaboration to focus efforts on improving cyber resilience across Scotland.

Visit CyberScotland.com/about/ for more info.

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BSL users can contact us via contactSCOTLAND-BSL, the on-line British Sign Language interpreting service. Find out more on the contactSCOTLAND website.

Document 24 – Event Arrangements

From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Sent: Tuesday, August 13, 2024 12:40 PM
To: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Cc: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Subject: RE: Potential DFM and Cab Sec Finance and Local Government Visit - 14th August - Government Expenditure & Revenue statistics launch?

Thank you!

From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Sent: Tuesday, August 13, 2024 12:38 PM
To: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Cc: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Subject: RE: Potential DFM and Cab Sec Finance and Local Government Visit - 14th August - Government Expenditure & Revenue statistics launch?

Hi Redacted under Section 38(1)(b),

As promised, here's a short description of the robotics research being demonstrated during tomorrow's visit for your comms and socials content:

Our research in socially assistive robots aims to design and develop robots that can help people using social interaction. We do this by studying people's responses to the robots in field studies, lab experiments and surveys. We are interested in topics including how the robot's appearance, especially its face, influences people's impressions, using psychophysical measures to collect real-time feedback, and the robot's ability to improve the well-being of populations such as young people and older adults.

Cheers,

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Marketing and External Relations

Sighthill Campus
Edinburgh Napier University
EH11 4BN
napier.ac.uk

Tel: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Email: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Sent: Tuesday, August 13, 2024 9:56 AM

To: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Cc: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Subject: RE: Potential DFM and Cab Sec Finance and Local Government Visit - 14th August - Government Expenditure & Revenue statistics launch?

Hi Redacted under Section 38(1)(b),

I've copied our University boilerplate below, and here are some links to more info on the School of Computing, Engineering & the Built Environment, Applied Informatics (the subject area which encompasses the robot research being demonstrated), and our Centre for Artificial Intelligence & Robotics. Please give me a shout if there's anything I can clarify further.

I've asked the researchers involved in tomorrow's robotics demonstration for a short blurb on their work for you as well.

Cheers,

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

About Edinburgh Napier University

We are Edinburgh Napier University, the #1 modern university in Scotland (*Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2024*), the #1 university in Edinburgh for student satisfaction (*NSS 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023 & 2024*), a top 10 UK modern university (*Times/Sunday Times Good University Guide 2023*), and the top Scottish modern university for research power and impact (*Research Excellence Framework 2021*). We pride ourselves on being the home of difference makers—an enterprising and innovative community, renowned internationally, with an unrivalled student learning experience. With more than 300 undergraduate and postgraduate courses and nearly 20,000 students from over 140 countries studying on campus in Edinburgh, online and at partner universities worldwide, we deliver meaningful, difference-making education and research for a rapidly changing world. For more information, visit www.napier.ac.uk.

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Marketing and External Relations

Sighthill Campus
Edinburgh Napier University
EH11 4BN
napier.ac.uk

Tel: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Email Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Sent: Monday, August 12, 2024 5:36 PM
To: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Cc: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Subject: RE: Potential DFM and Cab Sec Finance and Local Government Visit - 14th August - Government Expenditure & Revenue statistics launch?

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Hi again both

I also meant to ask, is there any written material about the School, including the cyber academy and robotics lab, that we could use as part of our comms products?

We're taking pictures of the tour to post on our social media channel, so it would be good to have a few sentences about the robotics to use for that. We can also use a par of Cab Sec's quote to talk about the visit and the work you do, as well as adding a boilerplate to background.

Many thanks

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Sent: Monday, August 12, 2024 5:05 PM
To: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Cc: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Subject: RE: Potential DFM and Cab Sec Finance and Local Government Visit - 14th August - Government Expenditure & Revenue statistics launch?

Hi Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Yes of course – perhaps we could include both Redacted under Section 38(1)(b) in the social media video? We v much appreciate his role in setting this up so keen to involve him in proceedings.

Best wishes

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Sent: Monday, August 12, 2024 4:43 PM
To: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Cc: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Subject: Re: Potential DFM and Cab Sec Finance and Local Government Visit - 14th August - Government Expenditure & Revenue statistics launch?

Hi Redacted under Section 38(1)(b),

That's fine. I think we'll still have our cyber academic Redacted under Section 38(1)(b) there who can talk about some of the cyber work if there's time, even if we're not in that specific lab. I'm conscious he was the initial contact for this so keen to keep him involved!

Anyway, it all sounds good. I'm off tomorrow but Redacted under Section 38(1)(b) can help with anything in the meantime, otherwise I'll see you on Wednesday morning.

Cheers

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Sent: 12 August 2024 16:31

To: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Cc: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Subject: RE: Potential DFM and Cab Sec Finance and Local Government Visit - 14th August - Government Expenditure & Revenue statistics launch?

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Thanks Redacted under Section 38(1)(b), yes that's correct – just trying to keep things as simple as possible

From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Sent: Monday, August 12, 2024 3:40 PM

To: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Cc: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Subject: Re: Potential DFM and Cab Sec Finance and Local Government Visit - 14th August - Government Expenditure & Revenue statistics launch?

Thanks Redacted under Section 38(1)(b). Can I just confirm you only want to use the one lab on the tour - the one with the humanoid robots - and don't need the cyber or engineering labs we also saw?

Cheers

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Sent: 12 August 2024 15:24

To: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Cc: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted

under Section 38(1)(b)

Subject: RE: Potential DFM and Cab Sec Finance and Local Government Visit - 14th August - Government Expenditure & Revenue statistics launch?

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Hi Redacted under Section 38(1)(b), Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Thank you again for the helpful tour this morning and for lining up some great options for this visit.

For the tour, we'd like to go with the robotics demonstration – it would be great if the student were on hand to talk Cab Sec and broadcasters through her work and show the robots in action.

For the media briefing, we'd like to use the Glassroom if possible. We'll have this as a slightly less formal affair than a full press conference, with Cab Sec, Chief Economist Gary Gillespie and reporters all sitting in a circle. If we could arrange say 16 chairs in a circle that would be great, with a table in front of the chairs earmarked for Cab Sec and Gary for their papers and for reporters to leave their Dictaphones on.

Hopefully the weather will be nice enough for the broadcast bids to be held in the quad – if not we'd like to do these in the Glassroom. We'll just need to allow broadcasters some space to get set up while the media briefing is happening, so they're ready to go as soon as the briefing is finished.

As discussed, our social media team will be there as well. They'll film the tour and get an interview with Cab Sec after the broadcast bids.

If Redacted under Section 38(1)(b) were happy to be filmed for social media, that would be great. This would be to discuss Napier's Research and Innovation programme, as well as the sector in Scotland in general, and would be used at a later date for general content rather than specifically for the video about the GERS stats.

The proposed running order is as follows...

- 09:00 – SG comms support to arrive to help set up
- 09:30 – Media to arrive and be taken to Glassroom. GERS figures published. Journalists handed printed media releases and executive summary
- 09:45 – Cab Sec arrives for tour of robotics lab, filmed by broadcasters and SG social media team. Print journalists to remain in Glassroom – Redacted under Section 38(1)(b) will stay with them to make sure they've got everything they need. I will support Cab Sec on the tour.
- 10:15 – Cab Sec taken to Glassroom for media briefing. Broadcasters to set up for bids, either in quad or Glassroom, depending on weather.

- 10:45 – Media briefing ends. Cab Sec undertakes broadcast bids and filming for social media.
- 11:00 – Cab Sec departs. Redacted under Section 38(1)(b) invited to take part in filming for social media.

Let me know if that works for you, or if you need anything more from us. The media invite is now out with a deadline of 2pm tomorrow for responses, so we'll be able to let you know numbers after that.

Many thanks
Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Sent: Friday, August 9, 2024 9:52 AM
To: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Cc: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Subject: RE: Potential DFM and Cab Sec Finance and Local Government Visit - 14th August - Government Expenditure & Revenue statistics launch?

Lovely, thanks Redacted under Section 38(1)(b).
Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Sent: Friday, August 9, 2024 9:51 AM
To: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Cc: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Subject: Re: Potential DFM and Cab Sec Finance and Local Government Visit - 14th August - Government Expenditure & Revenue statistics launch?

Great, thanks Redacted under Section 38(1)(b). I'd just need the reg number and I'll book that in and send you a wee map of where the visitor spaces are.

We can just meet you at the main entrance at 11 on Monday.

Cheers

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Sent: 09 August 2024 09:49
To: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Cc: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Subject: RE: Potential DFM and Cab Sec Finance and Local Government Visit - 14th August - Government Expenditure & Revenue statistics launch?

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Hi Redacted under Section 38(1)(b),
Jumping in here as Redacted under Section 38(1)(b) is out today. Redacted under Section 38(1)(b) and I will be coming for the recce on Monday.
A parking space that would be helpful, thank you. Let me know if you need car details and I will share separately.
Kind regards
Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Sent: Friday, August 9, 2024 9:46 AM
To: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Cc: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Subject: Re: Potential DFM and Cab Sec Finance and Local Government Visit - 14th August - Government Expenditure & Revenue statistics launch?

Hi folks,

I know lots of people are in and out of the office at the moment, including myself, so catching up on things. Just checking that someone will definitely be coming to Merchiston for a recce on Monday at 11am? Please let me know if you would need a parking space and I can get that booked in for you.

Cheers

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Sent: 08 August 2024 16:21
To: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Cc: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Subject: RE: Potential DFM and Cab Sec Finance and Local Government Visit - 14th August - Government Expenditure & Revenue statistics launch?

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Thanks Redacted under Section 38(1)(b), I'm on leave tomorrow as well but Redacted under Section 38(1)(b) and Redacted under Section 38(1)(b) in copy will be on hand if needed

From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Sent: Thursday, August 8, 2024 4:14 PM
To: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Cc: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted

under Section 38(1)(b)

Subject: RE: Potential DFM and Cab Sec Finance and Local Government Visit - 14th August - Government Expenditure & Revenue statistics launch?

Hi Redacted under Section 38(1)(b),

Thanks for letting me know. I passed this on to my colleagues earlier today to see if we can arrange a look around campus for you on Monday, in advance of the visit on Wednesday.

I'm out of the office tomorrow, but Redacted under Section 38(1)(b) will be able to update you on any progress.

Cheers,

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Marketing and External Relations

Sighthill Campus
Edinburgh Napier University
EH11 4BN
napier.ac.uk

Tel: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Email Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Sent: Wednesday, August 7, 2024 5:42 PM

To: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Cc: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Subject: RE: Potential DFM and Cab Sec Finance and Local Government Visit - 14th August - Government Expenditure & Revenue statistics launch?

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Thanks Redacted under Section 38(1)(b) – shall we aim for 11am? It's particularly the robotics we're interested in, but we're open to suggestions if there's anything else that would work visually and would tie in with the theme of innovation/boosting economic growth.

Many thanks
Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Sent: Wednesday, August 7, 2024 5:11 PM

To: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Cc: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Subject: RE: Potential DFM and Cab Sec Finance and Local Government Visit - 14th August - Government Expenditure & Revenue statistics launch?

Hi Redacted under Section 38(1)(b),

No problem, thank you for letting us know.

You'll have seen Redacted under Section 38(1)(b) is out of office today and tomorrow, but I'm sure we can arrange a recce at Merchiston on Monday. Let us know if there's anything in particular you'd like to see in advance, and what time you'd like to aim for.

Thank you for the heads-up on parking requirements too, I can look into it and see what availability we have.

Cheers,

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Marketing and External Relations

Sighthill Campus
Edinburgh Napier University
EH11 4BN
napier.ac.uk

Tel: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Email: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Sent: Wednesday, August 7, 2024 5:00 PM

To: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Cc: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Subject: RE: Potential DFM and Cab Sec Finance and Local Government Visit - 14th August - Government Expenditure & Revenue statistics launch?

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Hi Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Apologies for radio silence – just awaiting final confirmation, but I think we can now progress on the assumption that the visit will be going ahead at Napier. Thank you again for accommodating us.

We were wondering whether it would be possible for us to have a recce of the campus on Monday morning, so we can look around the space to see what would work visually for broadcast? Can also discuss logistics like parking then as well. If we could have say 5 spaces reserved for Ministerial cars and broadcasters, with instructions on parking for other media, that should be fine.

Many thanks

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Sent: Tuesday, August 6, 2024 4:55 PM

To: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Cc: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Subject: Re: Potential DFM and Cab Sec Finance and Local Government Visit - 14th August - Government Expenditure & Revenue statistics launch?

Thanks Redacted under Section 38(1)(b). Yes, it came through Redacted under Section 38(1)(b) in our School of Computing, Engineering & the Built Environment.

That all sounds fine and we can put final details in place once you have confirmation.

In terms of car parking, given the city centre location, it can be tricky but we do have some visitor parking and can potentially use some other spaces. Do you have an idea of what you'd need?

Cheers

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Sent: 06 August 2024 16:26

To: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Cc: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Subject: RE: Potential DFM and Cab Sec Finance and Local Government Visit - 14th August - Government Expenditure & Revenue statistics launch?

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Hi Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Thanks for getting in touch – I'm assuming you've been referred on by Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)?

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b) will have mentioned but this visit is to tie in with the **Government Expenditure & Revenue** statistics, which are being published at 09:30am next Wednesday.

You're right that Merchiston would be our preferred location, as we'd be interested in using the labs for the tour. Our focus is on innovation to boost economic growth, and the robots that are mentioned in this open day event would work for us in terms of the tour if possible?

We'd be looking for somewhere with space for about 20 people, including a panel of three (Deputy First Minister, Finance Secretary and Chief Economist) and reporters. We'd also need somewhere with a decent backdrop for broadcast media bids after the media briefing. Redacted under Section 38(1)(b) mentioned that we'd be able to use the Glassroom for the briefing, if that works for you.

Here's what we're thinking in terms of timings.

Proposed timings

- From 09:00 – SG comms support to arrive to help set up
- 09:30 – Media to arrive
- 09:30 – GERS figures published. Journalists at visit handed printed media releases and executive summary
- 09:45 – DFM and Cab Sec arrive for tour of venue, followed by broadcasters. Print media will need somewhere to sit and read through the printed materials while the tour takes place.
- 10:15 – Media briefing begins, off camera, on the record, with DFM, Cab Sec and Chief Economist
- 10:45 – Media briefing ends. DFM undertakes broadcast bids
- 11:00 – DFM and Cab Sec depart and visit ends.

We've got a comms plan with DFM and the Finance Secretary with a recommendation that the visit takes place at Napier – once we hear back on that we'll be confirmed. I'll keep you posted.

Would also be helpful to know about car parking?

Let me know if you need any further details from us – perhaps we could have a call once everything's confirmed.

Best wishes

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Sent: Tuesday, August 6, 2024 2:35 PM

To: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Cc: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Subject: RE: Potential DFM and Cab Sec Finance and Local Government Visit - 14th August - Government Expenditure & Revenue statistics launch?

Hi He Redacted under Section 38(1)(b) nry,

I hope you're well. I've just been made aware of the chat around the GERS launch next week and ENU acting as potential host. Happy to support this in any way we can and I can liaise with everyone involved at the uni.

Reading the previous correspondence, it sounds like Merchiston is the venue of choice. Craiglockhart has a great lecture theatre but, given it's the Business School, lacks the visually interesting labs. However, we can book a lecture theatre at Merchiston for the press conference element.

I've asked for some photos of the theatre and of the labs once the School has identified the most appropriate ones. Is there anything specifically you are looking for in those?

If you've got any more questions or need further info on anything, please just drop me a note. I'm in and out of the office over the next week but have copied in my colleague Redacted under Section 38(1)(b) who can pick up anything when I'm out.

Cheers

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Marketing & External Relations
Edinburgh Napier University

Tel: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
napier.ac.uk



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Document 25 – Media event attendees

From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Sent: Tuesday, August 13, 2024 2:47 PM

To: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Cc: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Subject: Update on Media attendees tomorrow -GERs launch with Cab Sec Finance and Local Government Visit

Hi Redacted under Section 38(1)(b) and Redacted under Section 38(1)(b),

We have 18 members of the media confirmed for tomorrow. Details below.

Bauer
Scotsman
P&J
Daily Record
Scottish Sun
Deputy Political Editor
BBC Scotland x2
The Times
Global
Guardian
FT
Telegraph
STV x2
Daily Business
Daily Mail
The National

The plus one's for BBC and STV are camera persons.

Thanks again for all your support, and see you tomorrow.

Best wishes

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

News | Media Manager – Finance, Local Government and Corporate

The Scottish Government, St Andrew's House, Edinburgh

Mobile: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b) | Portfolio Media inquiries: 0300 244 9027

www.gov.scot/news

Document 26 – Transcript from GMS

Programme(s)	BBC Radio Scotland Good Morning Scotland
Date & time	Thursday 15 August 2024 08.07
Subject/Interviewee	Interview – Shona Robison
Duration	12:01

Gary Robertson, presenter: We're joined now by the Finance Secretary, Shona Robison. Good morning to you.

Shona Robison MSP, Finance Secretary: Good morning.

GR: Why didn't you see this coming?

SR: Well, first of all, we place the utmost importance on planning accordingly to balance the budget each year, which of course we have to do. We have to balance the budget. But the approach of the last UK government was very chaotic. They started and suspended spending reviews. They regularly moved budget dates. They made it very difficult to plan, and that led to decisions on our part to delay the publication of the public sector pay policy because we did not know what the financial outlook was like. Now, while we welcome the fact—

GR: Was that a mistake in hindsight?

SR: Well, for the last two years, it would have really been impossible to have published a public sector pay policy if we didn't know what the financial envelope was going to be available to us. So, you can only plan on what you know and the assumptions you can make. And because of the chaotic nature of the UK government and the lack of financial information that flowed to us, that made it very, very difficult. Now, the public pay policy that we did then publish was basically on the basis of what we could afford, and we made it very, very clear to the UK government that any pay policy or pay review body recommendations that went beyond that would have to be funded through the UK government because we simply didn't have the resources. And of course, now we know that the pay review body recommendations are not going to be fully funded and about a third of it will have to be funded through departmental cuts. And all of that has led to the position where we are having to take these exceptional measures in order to constrain its spend and create the headroom to manage those departmental cuts. And of course, the £22 billion of public sector funding cuts is of a magnitude that has consequences for every part, not just for Scotland, but for Wales and Northern Ireland too.

GR: But you did know this was coming because your party spent the whole of the election campaign telling us about the black hole in the finances. That was your main mantra during this. When it came to drawing up your budget last year, when inflation was in double figures at some points last year, how much percentage-wise did you budget for public sector pay increases?

SR: Well, first of all, we did warn through the election of the new era of austerity, the fact that the two main parties were not being honest about the finances and the decisions and steps that could then be taken. We called for transparency, and we also called for a change of policy in order to not cut public services. And of course, the Chancellor had those options at her disposal, but she has chosen to stick, by and large, with Tory spending plans, and that is going to mean a big impact on the budget in Scotland as well as elsewhere in the UK.

GR: But in terms of transparency, is it the case that you budgeted 2% for these pay rises?

SR: So, it was 2% plus 1% from January. That was essentially the—

GR: That was never going to be enough, was it?

SR: Well, essentially that is what we could afford, and we've made it clear to the UK government that anything beyond that would need to be funded through consequentials. And of course, what we've seen is that the pay review body recommendations have been

accepted, but the funding is not going to flow in full. And indeed, for local government pay, there is no funding coming from the UK government at all. So, we're having to find that money because we want to avoid costly industrial action. But on a fixed budget with very limited room for manoeuvre, it is very difficult. And you think about the headwinds that the Scottish government has faced over the last few years, whether it's COVID, the rampant high inflation you referenced earlier, 11% eroding the value of public spending, and of course, driving pay deals, and then we had all the chaotic Tory government fiscal events, the mini-budget, and now we've got this new era of austerity and £22 billion of cuts—

GR: But you also have to take responsibility. You mentioned the fixed budget several times now, but you also have to take responsibility, don't you, for the spending decisions that you have made. And you've been told by the Auditor General several times about money that he believes has been wasted: £50 million on BiFab, £52 million on Preston Airport, £237 million on the two ferries, £147 million on a council tax freeze, which goes to everybody across the board, no matter how much money they've got. You've also got a sweetener deal of £35 million for Sanjeev Gupta. A lot of the spending has been made, which potentially didn't need to be spent, and that's part of the reason, isn't it, why you find yourself in this situation?

SR: Well, we take responsibility for the spending decisions and choices we've made. But most of the projects that you've mentioned would be largely capital projects. And of course, the overspend and delays on the ferries is something that we have taken very, very seriously indeed. But what we're talking about here is day-to-day spend. That is what pays for pay, and of course, the major element of outlay from Scottish government finances and public spending is on pay. So, that's day-to-day spend that has to be factored in every year. You can't do it as a one-off. These are not one-off costs, and we have to factor those in. And the issue, of course, is not just for Scotland. These same issues are affecting Northern Ireland and Wales of different political colours. So, when my opponents try to make out that there are somehow exceptional challenges for Scotland that we have created, well, that doesn't stand up to scrutiny because the same issues are being raised by Northern Ireland and Wales, and we're working together very closely to try to get the flexibilities from the UK government to try and help smooth through what is going to be a turbulent time.

GR: How many pensioners will lose out on their winter fuel payment?

SR: Well, look, first of all, let me say this: that is not a decision that we took lightly. It is a decision that we would have not wanted to make because essentially, we were absolutely at an advanced stage of delivering that winter fuel payment on a universal basis. But unfortunately, when £160 million is taken out, or up to £160 million removed from us, we had no choice other than to follow the UK government in terms of the means-tested benefit.

GR: How many pensioners will no longer qualify?

SR: I don't have that number to hand, Gary, but I know a lot of pensioners will no longer qualify, and actually—

GR: So, how much money will be saved by doing this then?

SR: Well, it's £160 million that we were expecting to get that we would have spent on that universal provision. Because we do not have that £160 million, then the policy will remain the same, and what we're asking is that essentially it is delivered by the UK government this winter, and then we will manage a very similar benefit for the following winter.

GR: Do you have to look again at universal provision that is provided elsewhere? We have a text from people this morning asking why everybody, no matter what your income, gets a baby box? Why free bus travel is afforded to so many people, no matter, again, of income?

SR: Well, look, we have a social contract with the public that people pay into a system, and they expect to get some benefit from that. And we have a number of—

GR: But pensioners might wonder why they're being targeted here when, actually, people who are on potentially quite high incomes are getting things as part of universal benefits.

SR: Well, look, I understand that point, but the point on the up to £160 million is in the here and now I would have to find that money from elsewhere in order to make that benefit or keep that benefit universal. And I just can't do that. What you're talking about in terms of those other social provisions is money that's already in the system. Now, to be clear, we are

going to have to take some very, very difficult decisions about what we can afford and what we can't afford going forward, and I'll set all of that out in a transparent way to Parliament.

GR: So, are you looking at everything across the board? All spending that has been planned, that is now being reviewed?

SR: Well, what we're doing is looking at the spending in terms of prioritisation of frontline services, our key aims of tackling poverty, of—

GR: Free school meals, for instance, which you've promised as part of eradicating child poverty, that's not something that will be looked at?

SR: Well, I'm not going to go through everything and say what is or what isn't. That work is ongoing, apart from anything else, and we want to set out the decisions in an orderly way. We've had to set out the decision on the winter fuel payment because it was reaching the point of no return, and the £160 million is just simply not there. It really is with a very heavy heart because we know that fuel poverty levels are higher in Scotland and, of course, in the north of Scotland, particularly, we have very cold winters, so it is absolutely the last thing we wanted to do, but we simply couldn't take that money from elsewhere in the budget.

GR: And might things get worse because, of course, we know that in trying to settle the train dispute, the UK government is offering somewhere in the region of a 4.5% increase, but that's year-on-year. At the moment, I think the Scottish government is offering 4%, so are you going to have to look again at that, for instance?

SR: Well, look, these are all live negotiations, and I think we need to let them take their course, but on the general point, of course, decisions that are made elsewhere inevitably have an impact.

GR: Is the UK government too generous?

SR: Well, it's not about them being too generous. It's about if they accept pay review body recommendations, they really ought to fully fund it, and, of course, they're not. What they're saying is that a third of it needs to come from departmental cuts, but, of course, that is less than clear about where they're going to fall, and—

[Technical difficulty]

GR: Well, our apologies. We seem to have lost our line there to the Finance Secretary—

SR: —and it means that the net consequential of providing that pay uplift—

GR: Apologies, sorry. We lost the line to you there for a second. It's just come back. Just in terms of the public sector and the freeze that you've put in place, what will that mean for the NHS, for instance?

SR: Well, look, I want to be clear that I've within that said essential frontline posts, of course, will be able to be recruited, but we'll be making sure that the controls on recruitment are enhanced to make sure that we prioritise only those essential frontline posts. We, of course, recognise very much the need to tackle waiting times, for example, in the NHS, and we want to make sure that work can continue.

GR: Shona Robison, thank you very much indeed.

Ends

Document 27 – Transcript from Today programme

Programme(s)	BBC Radio 4 Today
Date & time	Thursday 15 August 2024 08.07
Subject/Interviewee	Interview – Shona Robison
Duration	04:16

Justin Webb, presenter: Scotland is in really dire financial straits, with emergency spending controls being imposed by the Scottish Government, and Shona Robison is on the line, Scotland's Finance Secretary. Good morning to you.

Shona Robison MSP, Finance Secretary: Good morning, Justin.

JW: What is going wrong?

SR: Well, look, first of all, let me say that Scotland is not unique in this position. The other devolved nations, Wales and Northern Ireland, are also facing some really tough financial decisions because we don't have the levers in-year that the UK government has, for example, when it's trying to go through bumps and troughs to work its way through difficult financial headwinds that hit them. We don't have those levers in-year. And what we've seen from the Chancellor's statement is a £22 billion cut in public spending, which will have consequences for Scotland, and the acceptance of pay review body recommendations without fully funding those. So, that is a headwind that we did not anticipate, and we are now wrestling with, the same with Northern Ireland and Wales, and we now have to create some headroom through these emergency spending controls.

JW: Is it fair to say so, though, that that headwind comes on top of decisions that you have made and chosen to make, particularly when it comes to public sector pay that some would say have got you into this mess?

SR: Well, look, we have to balance our budget every year and have done every single year. Since 2007, we've been in power, we have balanced our budget. It's a legal requirement, but that requires some tough decisions. So, when inflation was running at 11%, mainly as a result of the disastrous mini-budget, that had a big impact on pay because it fuelled pay settlements that were way above anything that could have been budgeted for by anybody, and that was a real challenge, and we set all of that out, and of course, that was a headwind that really eroded the value of public expenditure per se. We've had many headwinds on top of that that have been difficult, and the point here is we don't have the levers, particularly in-year, to be able to deal with these headwinds, and that's why we'd called for the UK government to fully fund the pay review body recommendations. But of course, they're saying that a third of that has to come from departmental cuts.

JW: But you also – I mean, I suppose it's fair to say, and they would say, when you also get to make your own decisions, they're clearly quite big spending decisions. You think of free prescriptions, you think of the tuition fees that you pay at the moment, and those are choices. You choose how to spend your money, and I suppose at Westminster, they might say, well, you have to live within the means that there are.

SR: Well, and we have. We have balanced our budget every single year, and of course, we have funded these commitments, and of course, we have our own income tax position here in Scotland that has raised around £1.5 billion for public services, so we balance our budget. The point I'm making here though, is when the Chancellor made this announcement, this impacts in-year the position of the Scottish budget, and the Welsh budget, and the Northern Ireland budget, and we do not have the levers that the UK government would have to be able to smooth that through. So, the only lever we have is spending controls.

JW: I suppose when it comes to individual decisions that you have to make now, for instance, on whether you roll out free school meals, wider free school meal programmes, things like that, these are choices, aren't they? And they're choices that you can still make because you could save the money elsewhere.

SR: Well, we are going to look very, very carefully, as you would expect us to, at what spending decisions we make in terms of prioritisation and deprioritisation, and the First Minister has set out very clearly that tackling child poverty is one of our key ambitions as a government, along with Net Zero and growing the economy, and sustaining public services. So, when we set all of this out, as we will, to Parliament in due course, we will have to make tough decisions, but we want to make sure that we do it through a lens of those key priorities.

JW: Shona Robison, Scotland's Finance Secretary, thank you very much for talking to us.

Ends

Document 28 – Amends to follow ups

From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Sent: Thursday, August 15, 2024 12:07 PM

To: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Cabinet Secretary for Finance & Local Government <CabSecFLG@gov.scot>

Cc: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Ross Ingebrigtsen

<Ross.Ingebrigtsen@gov.scot>; Colin McAllister <Colin.McAllister@gov.scot>; Jack Middleton <Jack.Middleton@gov.scot>; Emily Mackintosh

<Emily.Mackintosh@gov.scot>; David Hutchison <David.Hutchison@gov.scot>;

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section

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38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b);

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Deputy First

Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Economy & Gaelic <DFMCSEG@gov.scot>;

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under

Section 38(1)(b)

Subject: Amend for Cab Sec awareness: GERS follow up bids

Cab Sec Finance/ PO, Redacted under Section 38(1)(b),

For awareness

Good morning Ms Robison, PO, Redacted under Section 38(1)(b),

Policy colleagues have requested a single word amend to copy which is a language preference. Please see change highlighted below.

Kind regards

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

1. How many people would have been eligible for the original policy that was to be devolved? Roughly **Around** 1 million
2. How many people will be eligible for the new policy - up to 130,000 individuals in receipt of Pension Credit and other means-tested benefits. Given the UK Government's decision to restrict to those in receipt of means-tested benefits such as Pension Credit, take-up of which is the lowest of all benefits (caseload take-up of 66%), The Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice has urged the UK Government to undertake a benefits take-up campaign for Pension Credit and to move forward with plans for a social energy tariff. Both of these measures will provide some further protection to energy customers in greatest need.

Good evening,

Ahead of the Cabinet Secretary's media interviews tomorrow, please find below a note of running issues with SG lines to take.

BBC GMS has been confirmed for 08:05 and BBC R4 has been confirmed for 08:30. I have not yet received a Zoom link for the latter, I will forward on as soon as this comes in.

Please let me know if anything further is required.

Many thanks,

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

This evening's news

BBC Online are running a piece by Douglas Fraser on the GERS figures: GERS figures are a reminder of tough choices for finance secretary - BBC News. In the piece, he cites the recent blog by the auditor-general Stephen Boyle that "calls for clearer leadership and better governance". Our lines in response to that blog post are included below for reference.

The decision to scrap universal winter fuel payments for pensioners is still running as the top story on BBC. The story also references the Finance's Secretary's direction to Ministers to constrain all but essential spending. The Deputy First Minister appeared on *Drivetime* this evening to discuss this issue – a transcript of her interview is attached.

BBC and other outlets are reporting the following story: Angus Robertson criticised by SNP colleagues for Israel meeting - BBC News. Our lines on the Cabinet Secretary's meeting are included below for awareness.

Running issues – SG lines to take

Behaviour in schools

We issued the following trail to the BBC on the behaviour in schools guidance that will be published tomorrow at 10:00:

Improving relationships and behaviour in schools

New guidance to empower schools to take action on mobile phone use and next steps in ongoing work to improve relationships and behaviour in schools will be published by the Education Secretary Jenny Gilruth, today.

The Scottish Government and COSLA's 'Relationships and Behaviour in Schools' action plan, and targeted guidance for teachers to manage mobile phone use in schools, will set out steps to be deployed at the national, local and school level over the next three years in response to concerns about relationships and behaviour in schools.

For info:

Both publications will go live at around 10am on the Scottish Government website and links will be circulated in the SG news release

Weapons in schools

The Daily Mail are doing a story tomorrow – based on <https://www.gov.scot/collections/recorded-crime-in-scotland/> - about the number of weapons seized in schools. Their angle is that the combined total for the number of weapons in schools is higher in the last two years than any of the previous years since stats began in 2017-18. Sharon Dowe has picked out the stats for possession of an offensive weapon in school which have almost doubled in seven years. She claims this is 'symptomatic of an epidemic of disorder and violence sweeping through Scotland's schools'.

We have focussed a draft response on the weapons element. Statistician colleagues have advised that some of the figures referenced by the journalist are inaccurate so we have pointed this out to the journalist and provided the correct numbers (table below in background note). The inaccuracies do not affect the central claims in the story.

A Scottish Government spokesperson said:

"These statistics are inaccurate, however weapons should never be in our schools. The number of recorded incidents of handling offensive weapons in schools in 2023-24 is down on the previous year and we will continue to deliver activities to prevent violence and build on the 58% decrease in violent crime since 2008-09. This work, backed by investment of more than £4 million over the past two years, includes supporting partners to address youth violence, the carrying of weapons and violence in and around schools."

Background

Crime category	2017-18	2018-19	2019-
Handling offensive weapons - Not used in other criminal activity	161	127	146
Possession of an offensive weapon in a school	33	36	34
Having in a school an article with a blade or point	128	91	112
Handling offensive weapons - Used in other criminal activity	61	72	61
Possession of an offensive weapon in a school	32	38	40
Having in a school an article with a blade or point	29	34	21
Total handling offensive weapons in a school (used and not used)	222	199	207

Culture funding

BBC Radio Scotland asked what we are doing to protect culture, in light of the Peter Pan Museum closing.

A Scottish Government spokesperson said:

“We have significantly increased arts culture funding this year, as the first step to achieving our commitment to invest at least £100 million more annually in culture and the arts by 2028/29.

“The Scottish Budget continues to face significant challenges. We are considering the implications of the actions announced by the Chancellor on 29 July for our public finances, and the next steps required by the Scottish Government.”

Junior doctor pay talks

There were further discussions today on junior doctor pay. Negotiations ended with no comms from any parties planned.

The following *holding lines* have been cleared by the Health Secretary, though we have not been approached about this.

Health Secretary Neil Gray said:

“Our pay discussions with BMA Scotland Junior Doctors and NHS employers continued today and we have scheduled in further talks.”

Domestic abuse - sentencing

The Scottish Sentencing Council published a report this afternoon looking at the view on sentencing for domestic abuse cases in Scotland. The focus of the report is on sentencing and this would be for the sentencing council to respond to, however, one of the key findings highlight that very few women overall felt positive about their experience of the criminal justice system.

The following *holding lines* have been cleared by SpAds – we have been not been approached on this as yet.

A Scottish Government spokesperson said:

“Domestic abuse is abhorrent and we continue to work towards a society where women and girls live free from violence and abuse. The Victims, Witnesses and Criminal Justice Reform (Scotland) Bill, which is continuing its passage through the Scottish Parliament, will put victims and witnesses at the heart of the justice system. Building on the experiences of survivors, victims, and their families, key reforms in the Bill will make justice services more sensitive to the risk of re-traumatisation for victims and ensure fairness is cemented into the bedrock of the system.”

Background

Sentencing in any given domestic abuse case is for the independent court. Sentencing guidelines are developed by the independent Scottish Sentencing

Council and approved by the High Court. Scottish Ministers do not sit on the Council or have any role in approving sentencing guidelines.

External Affairs Secretary meeting with the Deputy Ambassador of Israel

Following the Cab Sec's meeting with the Deputy Ambassador of Israel to the UK, we issued the following proactive statement.

A Scottish Government spokesperson said:

"Scotland's Cabinet Secretary for the Constitution, External Affairs and Culture, Angus Robertson, met the Deputy Ambassador of Israel to the UK, Daniela Grudsky Ekstein, on 8 August.

"They discussed areas of mutual interest, including culture, renewable energy, and engaging the country's respective diasporas.

"Mr Robertson reiterated the Scottish Government's position in calling for an immediate ceasefire by all sides in Gaza, the unconditional release of all hostages and the opening of safe routes to allow more humanitarian aid to reach the people of Gaza.

"Following the criminal and far-right acts we have seen in parts of England and Northern Ireland, the Cabinet Secretary emphasised the Scottish Government's continued work with Police Scotland to protect Scotland's faith communities and tackle all hate crimes, including antisemitism, head on."

Auditor general comments

We were asked for our response to a blog post written by Stephen Boyle, Auditor General for Scotland - Shrewd approach needed for public sector success | Audit Scotland.

Public Finance Minister Ivan McKee said:

"The Scottish Government recognises the need for pace when it comes to delivering Public Service Reform. I am committed in my new role to working with the Auditor General and others to ensure we continue to provide the leadership he calls for. I have already engaged with the leaders of our public bodies around how we work collectively to address the challenges and make the changes necessary to ensure our public services are fit for the future.

"The current financial challenges we face make it even more critical that we ensure resources are focussed on front line services that improve outcomes for the people of Scotland. We will be updating the Scottish Parliament on this work following the summer recess."

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

First Minister's Communications

Scottish Government, St Andrew's House

e: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

m: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

I've spoken to R4, who can do 0715 or 0830. Grateful for Cab Sec's consideration when possible. Kirsty is duty comms and has details of relevant producers. A running issues note will be provided this evening and updated if anything breaks overnight. Many thanks,
 Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

WHO	OUTLET	TIME	LIVE/P RE-REC	INTERVIEWER	TOPICS	Recommendation	Other details
Cab Sec for Finance	BBC GMS	0805 (confirmed)	LIVE	Gary Robertson	GERS / Spending	Accept	https://bbc.zoom.us/j/4528030954
	BBC R4	Slots available	LIVE	Justin Webb and Emma Barnett	Freeze	Accept if available	Zoom
Cab Sec for Finance	Today show	0715 or 0830	LIVE		Spending controls	WITHDRAWN	WITHDRAWN
	BBC Breakfast	Propose for 0730		TBC			
Cab Sec for Finance					Winter heating payments		

From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Sent: Wednesday, August 14, 2024 4:56 PM
To: Cabinet Secretary for Finance & Local Government <CabSecFLG@gov.scot>
Cc: Ross Ingebrigtsen <Ross.Ingebrigtsen@gov.scot>; Colin McAllister <Colin.McAllister@gov.scot>; Jack Middleton <Jack.Middleton@gov.scot>; Emily Mackintosh <Emily.Mackintosh@gov.scot>; David Hutchison <David.Hutchison@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Economy & Gaelic <DFMCSEG@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section

Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Economy & Gaelic <DFMCSEG@gov.scot>

Subject: RE: For consideration: GERS follow up bids, Drivetime, Today. PM

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Both will be fine, please send through details.

Many thanks

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Sent: Wednesday, August 14, 2024 3:22 PM

To: Cabinet Secretary for Finance & Local Government <CabSecFLG@gov.scot>

Cc: Ross Ingebrigtsen <Ross.Ingebrigtsen@gov.scot>; Colin McAllister <Colin.McAllister@gov.scot>; Jack Middleton <Jack.Middleton@gov.scot>; Emily Mackintosh <Emily.Mackintosh@gov.scot>; David Hutchison <David.Hutchison@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Cabinet Secretary for Finance & Local Government <CabSecFLG@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Economy & Gaelic <DFMCSEG@gov.scot>

Subject: RE: For consideration: GERS follow up bids, Drivetime, Today. PM

Good afternoon Ms Robison / PO,

To update on bids for tomorrow morning. We now have received GMS, alongside the Today show. We would propose taking part in the Today show at 0745, followed by GMS at 0805.

Updated details below and grateful for your consideration.

Thanks,

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

WHO	OUTLET	TIME	LIVE/P RE-REC	INTERVIEWER	TOPICS	Recommendation	Other details
Cab Sec for Finance	BBC GMS	0805 (confirmed)	LIVE LIVE	Gary Robertson	GERS / Spending Freeze	Accept Accept if available	https://bbc.zoom.us/j/4528030954 Remote or in person

The Scottish Government | St Andrew's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh, EH1 3DG

E: DFMCSSEG@gov.scot

M: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)



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From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Sent: Wednesday, August 14, 2024 2:20 PM

To: Cabinet Secretary for Finance & Local Government <CabSecFLG@gov.scot>; Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Economy & Gaelic <DFMCSEG@gov.scot>

Cc: Ross Ingebrigtsen <Ross.Ingebrigtsen@gov.scot>; Colin McAllister <Colin.McAllister@gov.scot>; Jack Middleton <Jack.Middleton@gov.scot>; Emily Mackintosh <Emily.Mackintosh@gov.scot>; David Hutchison <David.Hutchison@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Cabinet Secretary for Finance & Local Government <CabSecFLG@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Subject: RE: For consideration: GERS follow up bids, Drivetime, Today. PM

Adding further comms colleagues for awareness. Thanks, Gareth

From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Sent: Wednesday, August 14, 2024 2:16 PM

To: Cabinet Secretary for Finance & Local Government <CabSecFLG@gov.scot>; Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Economy & Gaelic <DFMCSEG@gov.scot>

Cc: Ross Ingebrigtsen <Ross.Ingebrigtsen@gov.scot>; Colin McAllister <Colin.McAllister@gov.scot>; Jack Middleton <Jack.Middleton@gov.scot>; Emily Mackintosh <Emily.Mackintosh@gov.scot>; David Hutchison <David.Hutchison@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Cabinet Secretary for Finance & Local Government <CabSecFLG@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Subject: RE: For consideration: GERS follow up bids, Drivetime, Today. PM

Following steer from Redacted under Section 38(1)(b), grateful if DFM can consider bids for this evening and if Cab Sec can consider the Today programme.

Thanks,
Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Sent: Wednesday, August 14, 2024 2:12 PM
To: Cabinet Secretary for Finance & Local Government <CabSecFLG@gov.scot>
Cc: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Economy & Gaelic <DFMCSEG@gov.scot>; Ross Ingebrigtsen <Ross.Ingebrigtsen@gov.scot>; Colin McAllister <Colin.McAllister@gov.scot>; Jack Middleton <Jack.Middleton@gov.scot>; Emily Mackintosh <Emily.Mackintosh@gov.scot>; David Hutchison <David.Hutchison@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Cabinet Secretary for Finance & Local Government <CabSecFLG@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Subject: For consideration: GERS follow up bids, Drivetime, Today. PM

Good afternoon Cab Sec PO,
Copying DFMPO for awareness.
We have received a series of further bids on the back of GERS. Grateful for your consideration of the below and please let me know if you require further information,
Thanks,
Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
News | Media Manager – Finance, Local Government and Corporate
The Scottish Government, St Andrew's House, Edinburgh
Mobile: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b) | Portfolio Media inquiries: 0300 244 9027
www.gov.scot/news

WHO	OUTLET	TIME	LIVE/PRE-REC	INTERVIEWER	TOPICS	Recommendation	Other details
DFM	BBC Radio Scotland Drivetime	1705 if live, pre recorded at 1445 or 1530	LIVE	Andrew Black	GERS	Accept	https://bbc.zoom.us/j/3964997452 Meeting ID: 396 499 7452 AUDIO ONLY
DFM	BBC R4 PM Show	1730	LIVE	Evan Davis	GERS / Spending	Accept	WITHDRAWN
Cab Sec for		0800 (Thursday 15)	LIVE	TBC	freeze	Accept	Zoom, over the phone

Finance	BBC R4 Today show	August)			Spending controls	
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38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Communications Finance and Local Government <CommunicationsFinanceandLocalGovernment@gov.scot>

Subject: SpAd view - Sun - Scotland's £200 billion union dividend since indyref revealed

SpAds

Conor Matchet at the Sun has put in a late query on GERS, wanting a response to the below news release claiming the figures show a "£200 billion union dividend". Suggest taking the following from Cab Sec's quote from the GERS news release – grateful for SpAd view.

Many thanks

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Finance Secretary Shona Robison said:

"The GERS figures reflect Scotland status as part of the UK, whose economic model is driven by London and the South East of England. The UK Government retains control of 40% of expenditure and over 70% of revenues in Scotland. As an independent nation, we would have the powers to make different choices to best suit the needs of the people of Scotland."

Background

The ONS has published Country and Regional Public Sector Finances for the UK, with the latest year relating to 2022-23. This shows that only London and the South East have a positive fiscal position, with Scotland's fiscal position better than most other parts of the UK.

Country and regional public sector finances, UK - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)

Regional economic activity by gross domestic product, UK - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)

Scotland's £200 billion union dividend since indyref revealed View this email in your browser **NEWS FROM SCOTLAND IN UNION EMBARGO: IMMEDIATE** Scotland's £200 billion union dividend since indyref revealed The "union dividend" since Scots voted

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NEWS FROM SCOTLAND IN UNION

EMBARGO: IMMEDIATE

Scotland's £200 billion union dividend since indyref revealed

The "union dividend" since Scots voted to remain part of the UK in 2014 has been worth almost £200 billion to the country, new analysis has revealed. The difference between spending and expenditure puts Scotland in a stronger position every year.

In yesterday's Government Expenditure and Revenue Scotland (GERS) report, it was revealed that the gap between what Scotland spent and raised was nearly £22.7 billion last year.

Now it has emerged that, since 2014/15, the total deficit amounts to £195.4 billion.

However, because Scotland voted to remain within Britain, the deficit doesn't impact public services as the resources of the whole UK are pooled and shared.

Without the security of the union, a separate Scotland would be left to fill the black hole alone.

Scotland in Union, the largest pro-UK campaign group, said the figures highlighted again the importance of the union, and exposed the economic challenges posed by independence.

Scotland makes up 8.2 per cent of the UK population, but receives 9.1 per cent of UK public spending.

Alastair Cameron, chair of Scotland in Union, said:

"There are many reasons why we're still better together, and since 2014 GERS has highlighted the economic case for Scotland remaining secure in the UK.

"Thanks to the people of Scotland voting against the nationalists' divisive and destructive plans, the union dividend since 2014 is now nearing £200 billion.

"The SNP has never been able to explain how it would plug that enormous gap.

"All parts of the UK benefit from the pooling and sharing of resources and, when it comes to revenue and spending, the boost to Scotland is clear."

Notes to editors:

Below is the revenue, expenditure and deficit for each of the last 10 years:

2014/15 – Rev: £53.4 bn Exp: £68.4bn Gap: £15bn

2015/16 – Rev: £56.2bn Exp: £72.6bn Gap: £16.4bn

2016/17 – Rev £59.5bn Exp: £75.7bn Gap: £16.2bn

2017/18 – Rev £62.3bn Exp: £77.4bn Gap: £15.1bn

2018/19 – Rev £65.1bn Exp: £79.5bn Gap: £14.4bn

2019/20 – Rev £66.1bn Exp: £82bn Gap: £15.9bn

2020/21 – Rev £62.4bn Exp: £100.3bn Gap: £37.9bn

2021/22 – Rev: £73.1bn Exp: £96.9bn Gap: £23.8bn

2022/23 – Rev: £86.9bn Exp: £104.9bn Gap: £18bn
2023/24 – Rev: £88.5bn Exp: £111.2bn Gap: £22.7bn
10-year total – Rev: £673.5bn Exp: £868.9bn Gap: £195.4bn

To see the full GERS report, visit:
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/government-expenditure-revenue-scotland-gers-2023-24/>

Contact Adam Morris at press@scotlandinunion.co.uk or 0776 252 3928

Scotland in Union is the campaign for Scotland to remain in the UK. With 37,000 registered supporters it is the largest pro-UK campaign group in Scotland. More information can be found at www.scotlandinunion.co.uk



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Document 30 – Accountancy Daily

From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Sent: Friday, August 16, 2024 2:46 PM
To: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Cc: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Communications Finance and Local Government <CommunicationsFinanceandLocalGovernment@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Gary Gillespie <Gary.Gillespie@gov.scot>
Subject: RE: Media query - Accountancy Daily - GERS raw data

Thanks Redacted under Section 38(1)(b), I'll send that on

From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Sent: Friday, August 16, 2024 1:18 PM
To: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Cc: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Communications Finance and Local Government <CommunicationsFinanceandLocalGovernment@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Gary Gillespie <Gary.Gillespie@gov.scot>
Subject: RE: Media query - Accountancy Daily - GERS raw data

Hi Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

We publish a detailed database for the expenditure elements of GERS. This can be found using the following link:

Supporting documents - Government Expenditure and Revenue Scotland (GERS) 2023-24 - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)

The Supplementary Data Expenditure Database contains details of expenditure by all UK departments by Classification of Function of Government (COFOG), current and capital expenditure and the UK allocations to Scotland for years up to 2022-23.

Revenue figures and Expenditure for 2023-24 are based on a range of data from various sources together with numerous assumptions. The accounting adjustments and net fiscal balance calculations are all detailed within the GERS publication. The calculations are made using SAS programming code with outputs providing the tables for GERS. We do not have a specific database for these elements.

Details about the data sources, methodology and assumptions made are provided in detail in the Revenue Methodology and Expenditure Methodology documents – see Government Expenditure and Revenue Scotland (GERS): detailed methodology 2023-24 - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)

Hope this helps.

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Office of the Chief Economic Adviser
Scottish Government, St Andrew's House

e: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

t: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b) **m:** Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/scotgovocea>

From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Sent: Friday, August 16, 2024 12:15 PM

To: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Cc: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Communications Finance and Local Government

<CommunicationsFinanceandLocalGovernment@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Gary Gillespie <Gary.Gillespie@gov.scot>

Subject: Media query - Accountancy Daily - GERS raw data

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b), Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

As discussed separately, the Accountancy Daily website has called asking if we can send the raw data for the GERS figures - is that something we can provide?

Grateful for returns by 1330

Many thanks

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Senior Media Manager | Finance and Local Government

Scottish Government

3-W, St Andrew's House, Edinburgh, EH1 3DG

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Document 31 – John McLaren query

From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Sent: Thursday, August 15, 2024 2:15 PM

To: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Gary Gillespie <Gary.Gillespie@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Cc: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Communications Finance and Local Government <CommunicationsFinanceandLocalGovernment@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Alasdair Black <Alasdair.Black@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Social Security Policy/Programme Parliamentary Business Unit <socialsecurity_parliamentarybusinessunit@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Subject: RE: Media query - Times - Gers/John McLaren

With appreciation for comments received, please see an updated version below.

We'd appreciate any further thoughts prior to sharing with SpAds around 3pm.

With thanks,

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Lines

A Scottish Government spokesperson said:

“Ministers have long been saying that Scotland faces a deeply challenging financial situation, and the Scottish Government has been taking tough decisions on spending in response to higher inflation and cost of living pressures. We will continue to prioritise our resources in line with our key missions, foremost of which is eradicating child poverty.”

Background

The GERS figures show that the Scottish Government is investing record levels on health. The Scottish Budget provides over £19.5bn for the health and social care portfolio – a real terms uplift of £316m (1.7%) in the face of the former UK Government's austerity.

This includes £2bn investment for social care and integration – delivering on the Scottish Government's Programme for Government commitment to increase social care spending by 25% over this Parliament – two years ahead of the original target. The GERS figures show that the Scottish Government spend significantly more on education per person than the UK Government.

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Alasdair Black <Alasdair.Black@gov.scot>;
Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Social Security
Policy/Programme Parliamentary Business Unit
<socialsecurity_parliamentarybusinessunit@gov.scot>; Ellen Redacted under
Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section
38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Subject: RE: Media query - Times - Gers/John McLaren

No substantive comment from me but adding Redacted under Section 38(1)(b) for
the child poverty reference, which I have seen previously expressed as “eradicating”.

Thanks for adding me Redacted under Section 38(1)(b).

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

**Team Leader – Parliament and Legislation | Parliamentary Unit | Directorate
for Social Security | The Scottish Government | Redacted under Section
38(1)(b) | socialsecurity_parliamentarybusinessunit@gov.scot**

I work five days, with shorter days on Mondays and Fridays. When working from
home there may be occasional interruptions from other members of the family.

Keep up to date with the development of our new social security powers: W:
<https://beta.gov.scot/policies/social-security/> T: @SocSecScot & @ScotGovFairer

From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Sent: Thursday, August 15, 2024 1:51 PM

To: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted
under Section 38(1)(b); Gary Gillespie <Gary.Gillespie@gov.scot>; Redacted under
Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section
38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Cc: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted
under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Communications Finance
and Local Government <CommunicationsFinanceandLocalGovernment@gov.scot>;
Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under
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38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b);
Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Alasdair Black <Alasdair.Black@gov.scot>;
Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Social Security
Policy/Programme Parliamentary Business Unit
<socialsecurity_parliamentarybusinessunit@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section
38(1)(b); Ellen Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b);
Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under
Section 38(1)(b)

Subject: RE: Media query - Times - Gers/John McLaren

Thanks Redacted under Section 38(1)(b), your response looks fine to me. Looping in
other colleagues from across social security that also have an interest.

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Sent: Thursday, August 15, 2024 1:25 PM

To: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Gary Gillespie <Gary.Gillespie@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Cc: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Communications Finance and Local Government <CommunicationsFinanceandLocalGovernment@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Subject: Media query - Times - Gers/John McLaren

Colleagues

(Please expand copylist as necessary)

Kieran Andrews at The Times has approached us for a response to this column on GERS from the political economist John McLaren.

Kieran is particularly interested in the below section – the underlinings are his, which would suggest his top line will be: “Top economist criticises SG for prioritising social security spending over education and health”.

Can I first of all check that the analysis of the spending is correct, particularly the drops in health and education?

If so, I'd suggest something along the lines of...

A Scottish Government spokesperson said:

“Ministers have long been saying that Scotland faces a deeply challenging financial situation, and the Scottish Government has been taking tough decisions on spending in response to higher inflation and cost of living pressures. We will continue to prioritise our resources in line with our key missions, foremost of which is tackling child poverty.”

Grateful for views by 3pm.

Many thanks

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)

Query

And the worrying news doesn't stop here. GERS also contains breakdowns of where the money is spent. This shows that in 2022-23 there was a 12 per cent drop in spending on health in Scotland, compared to a two per cent drop for the UK. The Scottish figure bounced back strongly in 2023-24 but health spending remains below its 2021/22 level whereas it is over two per cent higher for the UK. Equally, spending

on “education and training” is 11 per cent higher in the UK (2023-24 vs 2021-22) but only four per cent higher in Scotland.

Such shortfalls are partly explained by higher spend on Social Protection policies, like additional child benefit payments. However, questions remain around the size and source(s) of such spending patterns, as well as over the relative merits of extra spending on benefits at the expense of the health and education budgets. Tricky. Unfortunately budget decisions often are.

All of the key findings discussed above are uncontroversial. They are repeated year in, year out by reputable bodies like the Fraser of Allander Institute and the Institute for Fiscal Studies. If the pro-independence argument is to move forward then the logjam around how to deal with these “difficult” numbers needs to be broken.

Until then the main purpose of GERS is to remind us of how moribund the SNP has become in putting together a coherent case on the economic and fiscal aspects of independence.

Document 32 – Transcript from the Sunday Show

Programme(s)	BBC Radio Scotland The Sunday Show
Date & time	Sunday 18 August 2024 10.11
Subject/Interviewee	Interview – Shona Robison
Duration	16:34

Graham Stewart, presenter: Let's speak to the Finance Secretary, Shona Robison. Good morning to you.

Shona Robison MSP, Finance Secretary: Good morning, Graham.

GS: You've no doubt heard what Mairi said there, that when it comes to the state of the nation's finances, this could all have been foreseen. You have to make assumptions when you plan budgets, and the suggestion here is that perhaps you made the wrong assumptions.

SR: Well, look, first of all, I obviously have a great deal of respect for the Fraser of Allander Institute, and we will want to continue to work with them and others around some of the issues that they raise, but we do place the utmost importance on planning accordingly to balance the budget each year, and of course, we have to balance the budget. But you pointed out earlier on some of the issues that we have been dealing with, the chaotic starting and stopping of the previous UK government around the spending reviews, regularly moving budget dates, giving us no information about the financial consequentials that we would expect to receive until very late in the year, all of which made it very difficult to land a pay policy around budget time. So, we were trying to find out and get further detail on the money we could expect to receive, and we were working with public bodies to try and plan accordingly. Now where we ended up with a public sector pay policy of 2% plus 1% was really what we could afford, and we made it very clear, and we're very open about this, that anything that went beyond that through the Pay Review Body recommendations had to be fully funded by the UK government, and of course, what's now transpired is that will not be fully funded, and that is in part the driver of, of course, the spending controls that I've had to now introduce a year.

GS: But you must have known that you were going to have to pay more than 2%, and there was always the chance that some of that would have to come from other budgets. There was always a chance it wasn't going to be fully funded from the UK government. So, wouldn't it have been prudent to have left yourself some headroom to have kept some money aside instead of perhaps launching new policies like cutting peak time rail fares, for example?

SR: Well, look, we have spent a great deal of time trying to foresee where we think – and there's a lot of financial modelling around where we think we'll land in terms of the positions through the year – of what consequentials we could expect to receive. But if you take health, for example, I mean, the consequentials for health and for pay, which is the biggest part of the budget and the biggest pay pressure, is very reliant on consequentials from the UK government, and of course, what we've now heard from the Chancellor is that only two-thirds of the Pay Review Body recommendations will be paid. The other third has to be paid through departmental cuts. Now, that was not expected, and we now are having to make sure we can find

the headroom in order to honour those Pay Review Body recommendations, and of course, that's on top of the £22 billion of cuts to public spending, which, again, as we highlighted during the election campaign, was a real and present threat, and here it is, and of course, that will have consequences for Scotland, and we're working through all of that and we'll set the consequences out fully transparently in due course.

GS: Your annual expenditure and revenue report (GERS as it's called) came out this week. It shows that Scotland enjoys higher public spending than the rest of the UK. Bearing that in mind, haven't you a bit of a cheek blaming the UK government?

SR: Well, look, GERS, of course, provides the notional fiscal position of Scotland within the UK, and 90% of the notional deficit, of course, relates to UK government decisions, not Scottish Government decisions, and as the report itself makes clear, that notional fiscal deficit is in no way a reflection on the finances of the Scottish Government or decisions that we've taken.

GS: But it doesn't take away from the fact that Scotland enjoys higher public spending than the rest of the UK.

SR: Well, of course, through the Barnett formula, which applies to Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland, there is a recognition of issues of poverty and rurality. All of that is true. But of course, we have the same spending challenges in the devolved administrations without the levers to be able to address them. So, this isn't just exceptional to Scotland here. In-year, and this is a position in-year, we're trying to manage these huge fiscal headwinds with the only lever we have, which, of course, is spending controls. The Welsh have the same. Of course, last year, they had to set out an emergency budget for the very same reasons in Northern Ireland. They had to do a reserve claim for the last two years. So, there is something inherently difficult about the fiscal flexibilities that the devolved administrations have that we really need to address to be able to deal with the headwinds, whether it's COVID, whether it's the cost-of-living crisis, 11% inflation after the disastrous mini-budget, and now, of course, the £22 billion of cuts. All of these things impact on devolved administrations, and the only lever we have in-year are spending controls.

GS: Isn't there an argument for saying that public spending is too high in Scotland? It's at historically high levels. As a share of GDP, it's 51%. That's around five percentage points higher than prior to the pandemic. It's about five percentage points more than the UK as a whole. Isn't it about time that you ran Scotland more efficiently?

SR: Well, we balance our budget each and every year as a legal requirement, and we have done that every single year since we came into power in 2007. So, I would contend that we are running our finances efficiently, and in fact, the figures from the Office for National Statistics show that Scotland is one of the better-performing parts of the UK in terms of public finances. Now, what is true is that we have a bigger and better-paid public sector, and of course, that does give us challenges because any consequential funding we get from the UK government is never enough to cover the whole of the public sector cost here in Scotland. So, that is a debate we will have to have about the size of the public sector going forward in terms of the sustainability and affordability of that, and of course, that is something we have been quite open about.

GS: You've been critical of the Labour government over the cuts to the winter fuel payment. But why should well-off pensioners receive a benefit like that when many younger people are really struggling at the moment?

SR: Well, look, we have of course supported younger people, supported children and families through the Scottish child payment, which is a game changer and something not available anywhere else in these islands. But of course, as one of your contributors said earlier on, it's not just the well-off pensioners. There are some many pensioners who will just miss out because they don't qualify for the qualifying benefits, and that will leave pensioners in a difficult position, and it has been an incredibly difficult decision for us to make, and I just do note that in one of the Sunday newspapers, the Secretary of State for Scotland seems to be talking about £150 million of available resources that he intends to bypass Holyrood to deliver on anti-poverty measures. Well, if there's £150 million available, that just happens to be about the amount of money that we were expecting from the UK government in order to deliver that winter fuel payment on a more universal basis. So, if that is new money, then there's definitely a question mark about why that money is not coming to the Scottish Government, given all of these funding pressures that we have.

GS: Do you feel that the Labour government is playing politics with this then; that restricting the Scottish Government's budget, making things difficult for you, and if this report is true that they're going to use £150 million to directly pay for anti-poverty measures, are they in your view, almost trying to make things difficult for you? And does this mean that this so-called closer relationship, this promise to work constructively, more constructively with the Scottish Government, that that actually all is false?

SR: So, let me say two things about that. To be fair to the Treasury, we have seen a real difference in approach since the new Labour government took over. Far more open, far more collaborative, a lot more information flowing, and of course their commitment to have a single fiscal event in the year, all of that is incredibly helpful and we welcome that. What I would say about the Secretary of State for Scotland's actions here is they're out of kilter with all of that and that is disappointing because we should not see a continuation of the previous government's bypassing of the Scottish Parliament. It was unhelpful, it was inefficient as well. It didn't lead to the best delivery of public finances to the right places, so what he's suggesting here is out of kilter with a very positive relationship that we're building with the Treasury and other ministers.

GS: There's also a story in the papers today suggesting that you're going to have to abandon the policy of freezing council tax rates and letting councils charge what they need. That's inevitable now, isn't it?

SR: Well, look, we will set out our position on that – the budget, that will be the place to set that out as part of our discussions with COSLA about the local government funding going forward. We recognise the importance of services provided by local government and we'll discuss that in the round with them as part of the budget negotiations.

GS: What about universal benefits? I mean, one of the arguments that the UK Labour government would make is that we have to make cuts somewhere, we know the state of the public finances, and the Scottish Government has been very enthusiastic about universal benefits, whether that's free bus travel, university tuition fees, free prescriptions. I'm not expecting you to write your budget. But do you need to think again about the principle and start targeting benefits at those who most need them?

SR: Well, look, we need to balance our budget, and we need to make sure going forward that the Scottish public finances are sustainable, and we will continue to look at how we ensure that happens. But there is a very important social contract here in

Scotland, where for the additional taxes that some people pay – I mean, still a majority of people in Scotland pay less tax than elsewhere in the UK, but for some, obviously they pay a bit more, and I think it is important that people feel that they have got a stake in society, that they get something back for the resources they put into—

GS: But you don't think that social contract is coming to an end. I guess what I'm asking is, is there going to be a shift in philosophy from the Scottish Government as a result of the harsh financial realities that you face?

SR: Well, look, we absolutely need to make sure that going forward, any decisions we make are putting the Scottish finances onto a sustainable trajectory going forward and we will continue to do that. We need to balance our budget every year and of course, we will do that. But when you look at some of the services – so the one that Mairi mentioned earlier on around prescription charges is a good example of firstly setting up a whole bureaucratic system around that would not be efficient, and also people having to choose medications, which they did have to do when it was means tested, is not something I think is a direction we would want to go in.

GS: While you're here, let me ask you about Israel because your MSP, John Mason, has had the whip removed after his comments on Israel. I wonder, is that fair given that he's being censured for making a mere comment when your ministerial colleague Angus Robertson didn't merely comment on the conflict, he had a meeting with Israel's deputy ambassador? Is that fair?

SR: Well, look, the action that's been taken against John Mason was because of what appeared to be a dismissal by him of the deaths of 40,000 people. Now you just can't have that and of course, it'll be up to the parliamentary group to decide what action they take against John going forward and that's for them to decide.

GS: What about Angus Robertson though?

SR: Well, so Angus Robertson's meeting of course has caused upset for a lot of people. I understand that as someone who has spent my entire adult life fighting for the right of the Palestinian people to a homeland—

GS: Was he wrong to have that meeting?

SR: —as part of a two-state solution. I can understand the upset, but, of course, the meeting was with the explicit aim, importantly, of telling the Israeli representative that the position of the Scottish Government was absolutely, first of all, an immediate ceasefire.

GS: But was it wrong? Was it wrong to have that meeting?

SR: Well, the meeting was held in order for Angus Robertson to convey the very strong position of the Scottish Government—

GS: So, it was right then?

SR: —that there should be an immediate ceasefire, that there should be a stop to the killing of innocent civilians—

GS: I'm just wondering if it was a mistake to hold that meeting?

SR: Well, look, there is a difficulty I think for governments around their interaction in terms of diplomacy. Angus Robertson was—

GS: Right. But it's a simple matter. I mean, it's either right or it's wrong to have a meeting with the Deputy Ambassador of Israel if you feel, if a lot of people in the SNP feel, that Israel's actions are unjustifiable.

SR: And I understand that. The purpose of the meeting was, and should have been, and should be clearly seen in the context of putting across the very strong principles position that the Scottish Government has had for a long time around the need for an immediate ceasefire.

GS: Is the problem, and is it actually true, as has been reported in the papers today, that the First Minister, John Swinney, sent Mr Robertson to that meeting with the Deputy Ambassador and that's why you feel you can't really comment on it?

SR: Well, look, the position is that Angus Robertson is the person who would accept meetings of this nature.

GS: Did John Swinney orchestrate this meeting? Did he send him into it?

SR: No, John Swinney did not orchestrate the meeting. The request for the meeting came into a number of ministers as I understand it. But it's Angus Robertson's job in government to host such meetings as requests come in. So, it was Angus Robertson who undertook the meeting, but the First Minister thought the meeting was necessary in order to raise the concerns. This was a meeting the purpose of which was clear: to raise concerns about the need for an immediate ceasefire, the stopping of the killing of innocent civilians, and, of course, political discussions being required to be undertaken in order to find a lasting peace with a two-state solution and, of course, the release of all hostages. Those were the points that were made in the meeting and that was the purpose of the meeting.

GS: Shona Robison, Finance Secretary, thank you very much indeed for joining us.

Ends

Document 33 – Email regarding a GERS pre-meet

From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Sent: Tuesday, August 13, 2024 10:49 AM
To: Cabinet Secretary for Finance & Local Government <CabSecFLG@gov.scot>
Subject: RE: 11:30 - 12:00 Pre-Meet: Comms Event: GERS

Thanks Redacted under Section 38(1)(b), Redacted under Section 38(1)(b) is on leave but I'll be there for comms

From: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b) **On Behalf Of** Cabinet Secretary for Finance & Local Government
Sent: Tuesday, August 13, 2024 10:48 AM
To: Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); Redacted under Section 38(1)(b); David Hutchison <David.Hutchison@gov.scot>; Gary Gillespie <Gary.Gillespie@gov.scot>; Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Cc: Cabinet Secretary for Finance & Local Government <CabSecFLG@gov.scot>
Subject: 11:30 - 12:00 Pre-Meet: Comms Event: GERS

Hi All,

Just for avoidance of doubt, Ms Robison would like all to attend the above meeting in person unless not possible.

Kind Regards,

Redacted under Section 38(1)(b)
Assistant Private Secretary to the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government – Shona Robison MSP
The Scottish Government | St Andrew's House | Regent Road | Edinburgh | EH1 3DG
E: CabSecFLG@gov.scot

