

# **Annex B:**

## **Analysis by portfolio**

## **Constitution, External Affairs and Culture**

### **Budget purpose**

Enhance Scotland's international relationships and reputation to support delivery of the Scottish Government's domestic priorities, including to increase prosperity and wellbeing. Promote and support our ambition for Scotland to be a good global citizen, through international development and humanitarian response work. Protect Scotland's place and interests in Europe. Promote Scotland as a great place to live, visit, work, study, and do business. Committed to delivering a feminist approach to all of our international work. Ensure everyone can realise their own creativity and have access to and enjoy culture.

### **National Outcomes**

#### **Primary**

- Communities
- Culture
- International
- Economy
- Children and Young People

#### **Secondary**

- Poverty
- Education
- Fair Work and Business
- Health
- Environment
- Human Rights

### **Human Rights**

- Right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.
- Right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.
- Right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.

- Right to freely participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.
- Right to the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production of which he is the author.

### **Summary of how our budget impacts on Equality and Fairer Scotland**

Ensuring all groups are able to more equally participate in, enjoy and access careers in our diverse culture, heritage and events sectors is at the heart of the Constitution, External Affairs and Culture portfolio. The budget enables funded organisations to deliver an active programme of cultural activity, outreach and events that take into account the preferences and circumstances of groups who experience structural disadvantage and those from lower income groups.

The Scottish Government is committed to a dual approach to the UN Sustainable Development Goals: to tackle poverty and inequality at home in Scotland and to help developing countries to grow in a fair and sustainable manner. International development is a crucial element of Scotland's global contribution and a demonstration of our commitment to being a good global citizen. At the forefront of our efforts is our 'International Development Fund' to support and empower our partner countries, and a 'Humanitarian Emergency Fund' to respond to international humanitarian crises.

## **Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Gaelic**

### **Budget purpose**

To boost fair, green, economic growth that helps achieve our four priorities and promotes the wellbeing of all Scotland's people.

This portfolio's budget supports industry and businesses, as well as entrepreneurs, workers and those seeking work; attracts investment, improves the trading environment based on the principles in the Vision for Trade, and drives innovation; extends and enhances Scotland's digital infrastructure and promotes industrial decarbonisation and diversification; and supports science advice and engagement.

The portfolio budget also supports the adoption and implementation of community wealth building, regional economic development, and delivery of place-based regeneration, working with local government, public sector agencies and communities to stimulate economic, social and environmental opportunities through development of assets and infrastructure, revitalising town centres and supporting sustainable communities. Through our place-based activity and interventions we recognise the need to be sensitive to the linguistic position of the place and people, ensuring protection for Gaelic and Scots.

The portfolio provides a strategy function, supports policy and leads cross-government delivery; supports democracy through funding elections and provides funding in relation to a number of independent statutory public inquiries.

### **National Outcomes**

#### **Primary National Outcomes**

- Economy
- Fair Work and Business
- Poverty
- Environment
- International
- Communities
- Health

#### **Secondary National Outcomes**

- Children and Young People
- Education
- Human Rights

The National Strategy for Economic Transformation (NSET) sets out a ten-year vision to create a fairer, greener, wealthier society that delivers prosperity for all of Scotland's people and places under the Economy outcome. A thriving economy is essential to the mission of eradicating child poverty. By delivering the actions within NSET, this portfolio's activity boosts fair, green economic growth, and, in doing so, helps to tackle poverty, realise our ambitions on net zero and invest in public services.

Purposeful economic growth creates opportunities for people to participate in our economy and valuable, skilled employment that brings fulfilment to individuals and those they support. Tackling structural inequalities goes hand in hand with a more productive and resilient economy in the long term. In addition, high quality work contributes to improving health and healthy life expectancy, and good health supports an active labour market.

Under the Fair Work and Business outcome the portfolio's interventions encourage and support entrepreneurs and innovators to start and grow successful businesses in Scotland; make sure the conditions are right for businesses to thrive and grow sustainably; and support people to enter, sustain and progress in good jobs, recognising and addressing barriers to employment experienced by many in our society. Aligned to this and to the international outcome, we seek to attract responsible private investment and grow our international presence in key priority markets through trade promotion and export support for business.

In relation to the Environment outcome, the Green Industrial Strategy aims to maximise the economic opportunities of a just transition to net zero. Delivery of this strategy is supported through the investments of the Scottish National Investment Bank and Enterprise Agencies, with the bank's investments guided by its mission to address the climate crisis.

In support of our national outcome on Communities, the portfolio's actions support regeneration and sustainable and inclusive growth across all parts of Scotland, including through Regional Growth Deals and a range of place-based and communities funds and programmes. The community wealth building approach seeks to address economic and wealth inequality by supporting the retention of more wealth in local and regional economies, and is a key action in our ambitions to tackle child poverty through the creation of more Fair Work opportunities. The portfolio also seeks to support Gaelic and Scots and ensure that there is support and provision for the languages to be maintained, developed and used by speakers, with a particular focus on the social and economic opportunities for Gaelic, Scots and their speakers.

## Human Rights

Key human rights:

- Right to freedom from forced and compulsory labour.
- Right to respect for private and family life.
- Right to work, and to just and favourable conditions of work.
- Right to an adequate standard of living (including adequate food and housing).
- Equality and non-discrimination.
- Rights for women (Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)), ethnic minority groups (Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD)), disabled people (Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)), and children (Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)).
- In states with linguistic minorities, right of a child belonging to such a minority to enjoy his or her own culture (UNCRC, Article 29 – education, cultural identity, language and values and Article 30).

Our No One Left Behind approach to employability support offers an all age, flexible, joined up and person-centred model across Scotland. Supporting people into fair, sustainable jobs helps to realise people's right to work, and to just and favourable conditions of work. Through prioritising those facing complex barriers to accessing the labour market, the portfolio's interventions support the right of all people to enjoy these rights equally and without discrimination, as set out in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Culture Rights, as well as in the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD), and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). Parental employability support is a key pillar of our overall approach to achieving our child poverty targets, and we remain committed to scaling the reach and effectiveness of our services for parents.

Scottish Ministers have been clear on their determination for our employability services to be voluntary, seen as an opportunity not a threat, and with the principles of dignity, fairness and respect at their heart. The Scottish Government approach does not seek to push people into poor quality work as quickly as possible, but rather to work with them to support a move into the right job, at the right time, with the aim of increasing sustainability of employment in the long term. Devolved employability services have been developed through a participatory process and stakeholders have been consulted at every stage. This has included a lived experience panel; a Supported Employment Review Steering Group chaired by the Scottish Commission for People with Learning Disabilities and involving people with lived experience of disability, third sector representative disability organisations, local government, and social enterprise; as well as six National Discussion events.

Promotion of Fair Work, including flexible working and the payment of at least the real Living Wage and real Living Hours, through implementation of the Fair Work Action Plan and using the leverage of public sector spend, supports the right to an adequate standard of living. Portfolio activity also includes work to embed inclusive growth through Regional Growth Deals so that the associated employment and regeneration benefits are shared widely, and that those furthest from work are able to benefit from the employment, training and other opportunities the investments bring.

The portfolio's activity to stimulate innovation and expand opportunities in entrepreneurship, including by widening access for under-represented groups, also supports the realisation of people's rights to work and to an adequate standard of living. Social entrepreneurship, where examples of female entrepreneurs are significantly higher than in traditional business models, also supports the right for all people to enjoy these rights equally and without discrimination.

Regeneration activity, such as the Investing in Communities Fund, supports the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living, including adequate food and housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions. It also supports equality of opportunity to good work and, more broadly, empowering people to have a voice in decisions that affect them and the places they live.

The portfolio also includes work to improve digital connectivity, which will help people to communicate with service providers, form friendships and interact with family and carers. As well as reducing isolation, this will contribute to more effective and person-centred delivery of services, supporting people in their homes and reducing the costs of goods and services to the individual. This will contribute to people's enjoyment of the rights to an adequate standard of living and to private and family life, as well as disabled people's rights contained in the CRPD, such as to live independently and be involved in the community.

Interventions to support Gaelic Medium Education and Scots in education support realisation of the right to education (European Convention on Human Rights, Article 1, Protocol 2; United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 29, 30, 31; Council of Europe Charter for Regional and Minority Languages, which has reported recently for the UK on Gaelic and Scots). The Scottish Government has funded free to access language courses, such as SpeakGaelic, to ensure that everyone can access Scotland's minority languages as learners.

### **Summary of how our budget impacts on Equality and Fairer Scotland**

The National Strategy for Economic Transformation (NSET) has a vision of a wealthier, fairer and greener country, and our Programme for Government (PfG) commitments will help tackle inequalities, reduce child poverty, and allow people across our communities to participate in and benefit from a fair, green and growing economy.

Through funding for Employability and Fair Work, we will enable more people to participate in the labour market with a person-centred approach to employability support – including through support to meet the needs of parents or carers, and specialist support for disabled people – and create more diverse and inclusive workplaces and workforces representative of their communities through promotion of Fair Work. This includes flexible working, which is particularly important for disabled people and people with caring responsibilities (predominantly women), and can have greater impact on workers in low-income households such as ethnic minorities, who experience the highest level of relative poverty among all the child poverty priority groups.

As well as the No One Left Behind approach to employability services, the Budget provides support for trade union activity to advance Fair Work, enhance worker voice, improve equality representation within the trade union movement and provide development opportunities across all sections of Scotland's workforce. Our funding for Peer Works is aligned with the strategic aims of NSET and increases knowledge sharing across public, private and third sectors to boost productivity and implement progressive business practices that contribute to staff wellbeing.

The portfolio budget will open up opportunities to enter entrepreneurship for women and other under-represented or under-supported groups, such as ethnic minorities and disabled people, by taking forward recommendations in the 'Pathways' report on Women in Entrepreneurship<sup>1</sup>. In line with our approach to regional economic development, through activity funded by the budget we seek to ensure that the employment and regeneration benefits associated with Green Freeports, Investment Zones and Regional Growth Deals are shared widely, including through promotion of Fair Work

opportunities. In addition, the community wealth building approach seeks to address economic and wealth inequality by supporting the retention of more wealth in local and regional economies. The portfolio's funding for place-based regeneration programmes targets Scotland's most deprived and fragile rural communities, revitalising towns and high streets, and supporting the development of sustainable communities where people have equality of opportunity and can live healthy lives. By linking the portfolios of Gaelic and Economy there is a particular focus on the social and economic opportunities for Gaelic and Scots and their speakers.

## References

- 1 <https://www.gov.scot/publications/pathways-new-approach-women-entrepreneurship/>



## Education and Skills

### Budget purpose

The Education and Skills budget ensures that people are able to engage in learning and skills development throughout their lives, to reach their full potential. Addressing inequality by equipping people with the knowledge and expertise they need to thrive, is at the heart of investment in Education and Skills.

### National Outcomes

Primary national outcomes:

- Education
- Children and Young People
- Economy
- Poverty

### Early learning and school age childcare

Our vision is that, through access to rich and nurturing experiences through both early learning and childcare, and school age childcare, children, families, and their communities are enabled to reach their full potential and the poverty-related outcomes gap narrows. To realise this vision, we have developed three outcomes based on the best available evidence to describe the way in which we expect all our early learning and school age childcare policies to make a difference for children, parents, carers and families in Scotland. These are that:

- Children’s development improves and the poverty-related outcomes gap narrows.
- Parents’ and carers’ opportunities to take up or sustain work, training and study increase.
- Family wellbeing improves.

The contribution of early learning and school age childcare to delivering these outcomes will vary, depending on the individual circumstances and preferences of each family (including the ages and stages of their children) and the wider economic and social support available to them.

### Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC)

We are committed to achieving equity in education and ensuring every child and young person has the same opportunity to succeed, no matter their background or shared protected characteristics, with a particular focus on closing the poverty-related attainment gap. This is in keeping with the National Performance Framework outcome for Education: “we are well educated, skilled and able to contribute to society”.

### Additional Support Needs (ASN)

We are committed to improving the experience and outcomes of children with ASN. There is a link between ASN, attendance, attainment and exclusions. There is also a link between higher levels of ASN amongst those pupils living in areas of greater deprivation. Improving outcomes for children with ASN will contribute to reducing child poverty by improving educational outcomes and experiences for all.

**Anti-Racism in Education Programme (AREP)**

The overarching aim of the AREP is to ensure that all children, young people and teachers from ethnic minority backgrounds have an anti-racist experience of education, contributing to the achievement of the following National Outcomes: “We grow up loved, safe and respected, so that we realise our full potential” and “We are well educated, skilled and able to contribute to society”.

**Learning Estate Investment Programme (LEIP)**

The LEIP aligns strongly with the four outcomes. Both LEIP and the previous Scotland’s Schools for the Future (SSF) Programme (which delivered 117 projects and was completed in 2021) have been useful vehicles for influencing the wider learning estate and other parts of the wider public sector estate. For example, the innovation in the LEIP energy target has led to this standard being adopted for other school projects. The effect has also influenced national discussions around future standards for energy efficient housing. SSF and LEIP have also delivered, and continue to explore, co-location of public services. This ability to innovate and disseminate learning is a key value of the established programme approach.

**Glow**

We continue to fund the national online learning environment, Glow, ensuring all learners and teachers in Scotland, regardless of geography, have access to a range of digital tools and services that support delivery of learning and teaching. We are currently considering the make-up of Glow services to ensure they continue to meet the digital needs of the education system.

**Attendance**

We are committed to ensuring children and young people get the support that they need to reach their full learning potential. We are implementing support to help improve attendance, including improved data collection, guidance, professional learning, networking and exemplification.

**Post-School Education and Skills**

Through the funding for our colleges and universities, skills budget lines and Higher Education Student Support lines we will ensure that there is a post-school education and skills system that will support people to fulfil their potential. We want the system to be more responsive to our economic and social needs and ambitions and deliver better value for money across a simpler, more sustainable system.

Through our reform of the Post School Education and Skills system, we will ensure people at all life stages have the opportunity and means to develop the skills, knowledge, values and attributes to fulfil their potential and to make a meaningful contribution to society. The initial steps we will be taking as part of this reform include leading on skills planning at the national level, strengthening regional skills planning, simplifying the funding body landscape, and leading work to ensure apprenticeships better reflect the skills needs of the economy, public sector and learners. This will ensure that our education and skills system is more responsive to Scotland’s long term strategic needs, including the need for green skills. We will also seek to encourage provision in the private sector.

## Student Financial Support

With free tuition, various packages of support including a higher education student support package of £11,400 targeted at the most vulnerable students, bursary support for further education students and provision of Education Maintenance Allowance targeting 16-19 year olds from low-income families, we ensure that funding is targeted towards those who need it most. By doing so, we are helping children and young people access and remain in education, particularly those that may otherwise disengage with the system, ensuring they continue with their learning journey thereby increasing their life chances and economic outcomes.

## Human Rights

### Key human rights:

- Right to education.
- Right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.
- Right to an adequate standard of living.
- Right to take part in cultural life.

### Budget Bill: Child Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA)

New duties in section 17 of the United Nations Convention on Rights of a Child (UNCRC) (Incorporations) (Scotland) Act 2024 mean that Scottish Ministers must prepare and publish a child rights and wellbeing impact assessment (CRWIA) on the Budget Bill. This will assess the likely effects of the Bill on the rights and wellbeing of children and will be published alongside the introduction of the Budget Bill.

### Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC)

Articles of the UNCRC have been embedded in the operational guidance of Strategic Equity Funding (SEF), Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) and Care Experienced Children and Young People Funding (CECYP). We recognise that poverty can have a significant impact on the attainment of, and opportunities for, children and young people. The Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC) programme seeks to look to mitigate the impact of poverty on children and young people's education with interventions to provide all children and young people with equity in education, which specifically relate to Article 28, the right to education and Article 29, the aims of education. SAC also seeks to support children and young people's health and wellbeing, which relates to Article 31, the right to leisure, play and participation in cultural and artistic activities.

### The Promise

Keeping the Promise is fundamentally about ensuring improvements are felt day to day in the lives of the children and families who have and are experiencing care. It fits firmly within our ambition for Scotland to be the best place to grow up where children are loved, safe and respected so that they can reach their full potential. Our aim for Whole Family Wellbeing Funding is that every family that needs support gets the right family support at the right time, for as long as it is needed, to fulfil children's rights to be raised safely in their own families.

### **Whole Family Wellbeing Funding Programme (WFWF)**

One of the Whole Family Wellbeing Funding Programme core components for Holistic Whole Family Support is that children and families are at the centre of design which underpins the UNCRC right of the child to be heard and have their opinion considered. Improved family wellbeing is one of the long-term outcomes of WFWF. This aligns to multiple outcomes and indicators of the Children, Young People and Families Outcomes Framework, which complements the National Outcomes, with its holistic approach grounded in GIRFEC (Getting it Right For Every Child). The Framework has children's rights at its core and is consistent with international definitions of child wellbeing.

### **Learning Estate Investment Programme (LEIP)**

LEIP projects are being delivered across Scotland in varying socio-economic areas, including Primary, Secondary, and Special schools. Our latest school estate statistics, published in September, show that the proportion of schools in "good" or "satisfactory" condition has increased from 62.7 per cent in April 2007 to 91.7 per cent in April 2024, and our investment through the Learning Estate Investment Programme will build on this remarkable progress. Every local authority which submitted a bid through the Learning Estate Investment Programme has been awarded funding for a school project in Phases 1, 2 or 3.

### **Glow**

Glow ensures all learners and teachers in Scotland, regardless of geography, have free access to a range of digital tools and services that support delivery of learning and teaching, including industry standard productivity suites from Microsoft and Google. That provision enables learners who for any reason are unable to physically attend school to stay connected to their learning, school, teachers and peers.

### **Student Financial Support**

Various packages of support, including free tuition, based on the ability to learn and not the ability to pay, continue to enable learners, particularly from the lowest income households, access and benefit from further and higher education.

## **Summary of how our budget impacts on Equality and Fairer Scotland Duties**

### **Early Learning and Childcare (ELC)**

We will ensure access to affordable, high-quality funded early learning and childcare services for all three and four-year-olds, and two-year-olds who need it most, by continuing to invest almost £1 billion per year. We will work with local authorities to increase take up of funded early learning and childcare for eligible two-year-olds, with a particular focus on boosting uptake among the families most at risk of poverty. We will continue to invest, through our Early Adopter Communities, in work to build a system of school age childcare, taking a community-based approach to offering the support priority families need to take up work or increase their hours. We will also prioritise funding to increase the pay of workers in the ELC sector delivering funded hours, so that they are paid at least the Real Living Wage from April 2025.

## **The Promise**

The Promise Implementation update, published in September 2024, set out our Whole Family Wellbeing investment approach to improve holistic family support so that families get the right support, in the right way and at the right time. This investment is a critical part of how we will Keep the Promise by ensuring families can access the support they need, where and when they need it. The funding will focus on the system changes required to shift investment towards early intervention and prevention activities, to ensure families can access support before they reach crisis point.

## **Free school meals**

Currently available to all children in Primaries one to five, all special schools and those with eligibility in P6 to S6. The Scottish Government is committed to the next phase of the programme to those in receipt of the Scottish Child Payment (SCP) in Primaries six and seven.

## **Scottish Attainment Challenge**

We will accelerate progress in closing the poverty-related attainment gap, through the Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC), and by intensifying action to deal with the ongoing impacts of the pandemic on children's progress.

## **Additional Support for Learning (ASL)**

We are committed to improving the experiences of children and young people with additional support needs. The Scottish Government will provide additional funding to develop the ASL education workforce along with an enhanced national offer in support, spanning all stages of the curriculum from the early years to the end of secondary.

## **Learning Estate Investment Programme (LEIP)**

The £2 billion LEIP is being delivered in partnership with local authorities and will deliver 47 school projects, benefitting tens of thousands of pupils across Scotland by the end of 2027-28. The Scottish Government will support local authorities through an outcomes-based revenue funding model which links funding to keeping the new facilities in good condition, and to other key outcomes related to low carbon, digital connectivity and economic growth to deliver the best possible long-term value.

## **Teachers**

We remain committed to protecting teacher numbers and will offer local authorities increased funding for that purpose, as well as providing a contribution towards the cost of agreed teacher pay settlements.

## **College and University Funding through the Scottish Funding Council**

Scotland's colleges and universities receive over £2 billion of public funds administered by the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) on behalf of the Scottish Government to deliver further and higher education learning, teaching, research and further education student support. The SFC has developed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC)<sup>1</sup> to enhance the SFC's leadership and oversight in tackling persistent inequalities across the tertiary system and to support colleges and universities achieve the aspirations of the Public Sector Equality Duty.

In addition to core funds, there are some specific SFC programmes<sup>2</sup> that directly support school pupils who would be less likely to go to university, as well as adult returners and other under-represented groups like carers, veterans and estranged students to access higher education.

### **Higher Education Student Support budget**

The Higher Education Student Support budget will provide bursaries, student loans and free tuition, supporting young people and adult learners to access educational opportunities and transition to future employment. The budget includes an uplift to the higher education student support package, making it equivalent to the Student Living Wage for students from the lowest income households for academic year 2024-25. Investment in our tertiary education and skills system will provide lifelong learning opportunities linked to the future needs of the economy and society.

### **References**

- 1 <https://www.sfc.ac.uk/student-interests/access-equality-diversity/>
- 2 <https://www.sfc.ac.uk/student-interests/fair-access/>

## **Finance and Local Government**

### **Budget purpose**

The portfolio is responsible for ensuring that the Scottish public finances are sustainable and balanced, delivering the annual budget, public spending decisions, leading cross-government delivery and supporting our partnership with local government.

### **National Outcomes**

The Scottish Government has increased the local government settlement to £15 billion in 2025-26, representing an increase of £970.5 million – equivalent to a 6.9 per cent cash terms increase or 4.4 per cent real terms).

However, the Scottish Government's policy towards local authorities' spending is to allow local authorities the financial freedom to operate independently. As such, the vast majority of funding is provided by means of a block grant. It is then the responsibility of individual local authorities to manage their own budgets and to allocate the total financial resources available to them, on the basis of local needs and priorities, having first fulfilled their statutory obligations and the jointly agreed set of national and local priorities.

Ultimately, it is for locally elected representatives to make local decisions on how best to deliver services to their local communities.

### **Human Rights**

As noted above, this is a matter for individual local authorities who allocate funding based on local needs and priorities.

### **Summary of how our budget impacts on Equality and Fairer Scotland**

Local government provides a wide range of services and plays a major role in local Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs) that are essential to the delivery of the outcomes that matter to the people of Scotland.

The funding provided by the Scottish Government represents the vast majority of local authorities' income and it is allocated using a relative needs-based formula. This methodology takes account of demographics, disadvantage and various other considerations including age, disability and levels of deprivation. However, each local authority decides how to spend its total available finances on the basis of further understanding of local needs and priorities, and guided by a set of national and local outcomes. The Equality Act 2010 and associated specific duties published in May 2012, provides a framework to help local authorities pay due regard to equality issues.

The vast majority of the funding provided to local authorities in 2025-26 has no terms and conditions attached to it. The remaining funding is provided for specific key Scottish Government policy initiatives, including the Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) and criminal justice social work.

In addition, the Scottish Government is committed to the use of participatory budgeting. Participatory budgeting is recognised internationally as a way for local people to have a direct say in how, and where, public funds are spent. Supporting allocation of public money in this way is anticipated to ensure it goes to where it is needed most, impacting positively on inequality of outcomes.

Local government equality considerations focus on general expenditure by Scotland's 32 local authorities, funded through the local government settlement. Other portfolios are responsible for assessing the impacts of any changes in grants that are ring-fenced for spending on a particular type of activity.



## Health and Social Care

### Budget purpose

The overarching aims of the Health and Social Care portfolio focus upon prevention, early intervention and improving population health. Key to our ambition for our health and social care services and tackling health inequalities is ensuring that people have access to high-quality services when they need them. We will also ensure services are easier to navigate and understand, so people can get the help, support, and treatment they need.

### National Outcomes

#### Primary

- Health
- Children and Young People
- Communities
- Human Rights

#### Secondary

- Culture
- Economy
- Education
- Environment
- Fair Work and Business
- International
- Poverty

### Human Rights

- Article 2: Right to life.
- Article 8: Right to respect for your private and family life, home and correspondence.
- Article 9: Right to Freedom of thought, belief and religion.
- Article 11: Right to Freedom of assembly and association.
- Article 12: Right to marry and start a family.
- Article 14: Right to protection from discrimination in respect of these rights and freedoms.
- Article 23: A right to work

### Summary of how our budget impacts on Equality and Fairer Scotland

The social and economic causes of health inequalities are complex. Access to the right kind of support is essential if we are to improve outcomes and reduce inequalities in population health. As such, accessibility is a key element of reform within the vision for our wider health and social care system and we are committed to providing equitable access to NHS health and social care services and treatment.

Primary Care reform has a well-established programme of work on inequalities. Health inequalities will be addressed throughout the development of the Route Map for Primary Care, underpinned by evidence-based learning from GIRFE. We will increase capacity and access to Primary Care, shifting the balance of care to preventative and community-based support.

Reduction in national waiting times and backlogs through new ways to support pathways will improve patient outcomes and remove variation to ensure equity and parity of treatment for patients, this is especially important for groups experiencing health inequalities. We are improving timely access to cancer services by opening a further Rapid Cancer Diagnostic Service, bringing our national total to six. Over 2,500 patients have used these services since their launch, accessing a fast tracked diagnostic pathway for people with symptoms raising non specific suspicion of cancer, such as weight loss and fatigue.

In social care, the introduction of the National Care Service (NCS) will provide strategic direction and make it easier to address inconsistency of access to care and quality of services, shifting the focus towards preventative care and intervention, ensuring quality, fairness and consistency of provision that meets individuals' needs.

## Justice and Home Affairs

### Budget purpose

The Justice and Home Affairs portfolio keeps our communities safe and secure, and resilient and also has responsibility for the civil, criminal and administrative justice systems. It supports our vital emergency services of police and fire services, prisons, courts and tribunals, the legal aid system and justice social work services. It builds Scotland's resilience by improving preparedness against a range of hazards and threats, including terrorism, and sponsors relevant public inquiries. It ensures an environment where individual and collective rights are supported, where disputes are resolved fairly and swiftly, and there is access to justice for all.

The Vision for Justice in Scotland, published in February 2022, sets out the Scottish Government's vision to deliver a just, safe resilient Scotland. This will see us living in safer, more tolerant and inclusive communities, free from inequality and hate.

The vision covers five aims which span the full journey of criminal, civil and administrative justice, with a focus on creating safer communities, reducing and preventing crime and reoffending, and shifting societal attitudes and circumstances which perpetuate crime and harm. The vision is built on the four principles of equality and human rights, evidence-based, embedding person-centred and trauma informed practices, and collaboration and partnership.

### National Outcomes

#### Primary

- Communities
- Human Rights

#### Secondary

- Children
- Health
- International
- Poverty
- Economy
- Fair Work and Business
- Environment
- Education

#### Human Rights

- Right to liberty and security of person.
- Right to a fair trial.
- Right to freedom from punishment without law.

## **Summary of how our budget impacts on Equality and Fairer Scotland**

The portfolio is committed to advancing equality and addressing the causes of inequality, including tackling gender inequality and preventing violence against women and girls. It helps to create an inclusive and respectful society in which all people and communities live in safety and security. Our violence prevention programmes target our least advantaged and most vulnerable communities. Through our funding of justice partners, we are investing in a range of system-wide measures to prevent and reduce crime and re-offending and ensure an effective system of civil law, as well as supporting victims and witnesses of crime. Over 80 per cent of the portfolio's budget is allocated to justice partners, who are required under the Public Sector Equality Duty and the Fairer Scotland Duty to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination and advance equality of opportunity when taking strategic decisions.

## Net Zero and Energy

### Budget purpose

Net Zero and Energy (NZE) is responsible for coordination of net zero policy and climate adaptation to ensure Scotland's economy is successful in achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2045 and climate resilience in response to the climate emergency, protecting and enhancing our environment and natural resources, and promoting and driving our transition to a green and circular economy. NZE is also responsible for energy systems (and efficiency) including oil and gas and maximising offshore wind supply through investing in planning and consenting for offshore renewable energy. To support a greener and fairer Scotland, tackle biodiversity loss and create a net-zero and climate resilient economy, NZE is undertaking a range of measures, including funding decarbonisation of buildings, developing nature targets, modernising waste and recycling services and funding work to improve resilience to flooding and coastal erosion.

### National Outcomes

Primary national outcomes towards which the NZE portfolio contributes:

- **Communities:** we live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe. The NZE budget supports several measures relating to this outcome, including sustainable development, flood prevention and coastal erosion, improving environmental and water quality (including drinking water quality) and improving heat and energy efficiency measures at household and community scales.
- **Economy:** we have a globally competitive, entrepreneurial, inclusive and sustainable economy. Several measures under the NZE budget specifically support progressing towards a circular economy in Scotland and the long-term development of related employment and skills creation opportunities, including the Green Industrial Strategy.
- **Environment:** we value, enjoy, protect and enhance our environment. The budget provides various schemes and activities to tackle the climate crisis through mitigation and adaptation.
- **International:** we are open, connected and make a positive contribution internationally. The NZE budget supports engagement on climate change at international levels and key measures including climate change policy and the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy contribute to addressing the global climate and biodiversity crises.

### Human Rights

Key human rights:

- Right to an adequate standard of living.
- Right to a healthy environment, including right to benefit from healthy ecosystems that sustain human wellbeing.

## **Summary of how our budget impacts on equality and Fairer Scotland**

Climate change can have a disproportionate impact on equalities groups (who may be more sensitive to the impacts and have less capacity to adapt), through the direct consequences of climate change or from actions taken to achieve Net Zero. Just Transition Policy, including sectoral Just Transition Plans, ensures these inequalities are tackled. Co-design and engagement with vulnerable communities is integral to that process. The third Scottish National Adaptation Plan sets out measures to support communities in creating climate resilient, healthy and equitable places, including developing community climate action hubs. Funding measures for flood resilience and coastal erosion will also benefit vulnerable groups.

Domestic energy costs and fuel poverty disproportionately affect those on lower incomes, and groups such as disabled people, older people, and lone parents. The Heat in Buildings programme will drive decarbonisation of heat and boost the energy efficiency of homes and buildings, helping to address these inequalities.

The transition to a circular economy may result in impacts which disproportionately affect certain groups (including costs relating to charges or bans on single use items or measures that add producer-related costs to prices), or opportunities which are not evenly distributed. The Circular Economy and Waste Route Map addresses these inequalities, including through support for low-income households for waste collections, designing recycling interventions to ensure all communities have access, and developing reuse projects. The Green Industrial Strategy also emphasises skills development and job creation to support the transition to a circular economy. Work being undertaken to improve environmental quality and develop nature targets will also deliver benefits across society, including cleaner air and water and opportunities to experience nature.

## Rural Affairs, Land Reform and Islands

### Budget purpose

Rural Affairs, Land Reform and Islands (RALRI) is a diverse portfolio which includes farming and food production, animal health and welfare, forestry, peatland restoration, rural and island communities, food and drink, crofting, fisheries and aquaculture. The budget seeks to support the long-term challenges and opportunities that Scotland's rural and coastal areas, and island communities are facing. It has a vital role in maintaining certainty across the rural economy through direct cash injections - addressing issues around rural disadvantage through supporting traditional rural industries, and through direct funding to community groups to support rural development across Scotland.

To support a greener and fairer Scotland, tackle biodiversity loss, and create a net-zero and climate-resilient economy and communities, RALRI has launched a process of reform and transformation. The foundations for transformation will be set in the next few years in agriculture, land use and marine sectors, alongside supporting economic transformation and offshore renewables development.

### National Outcomes

#### Environment

The budget provides various schemes and activities to tackle the climate crisis through mitigation and adaptation.

#### Communities

The RALRI portfolio addresses issues around rural disadvantage through supporting traditional rural industries, and through direct funding to community groups to support rural development across Scotland.

#### Economy / Fair Work and Business

Agricultural support schemes help to support wider rural communities and businesses and ensure thriving rural businesses.

#### Human Rights

- Right to protection of property.
- Right to an adequate standard of living, including:
  - right to adequate housing;
  - right to adequate food;
  - right to protection against poverty and social exclusion; and
  - right to take part in cultural life.
- Right to a healthy environment, including right to benefit from healthy ecosystems that sustain human wellbeing; the rights of access to information, participation in decision-making and access to justice.

## **Summary of how our budget impacts on Equality and Fairer Scotland**

Rural and coastal communities face a range of challenges including access to services, higher living costs, and population change. The RALRI portfolio addresses issues around rural disadvantage through supporting traditional rural industries, and through direct funding to community groups to support rural development across Scotland. While most spend in these areas is not focused on reducing inequality for groups with protected characteristics or those from socio-economically disadvantaged groups, there are specific schemes for supporting women in agriculture and aquaculture.

The Scottish Government has committed to creating equality of opportunity within agriculture, and to ensuring the sector is more diverse and representative. Agricultural, forestry and peatland schemes help to support wider rural communities and businesses and ensure a healthy and productive landscape. Research is underway as a part of the Strategic Research Program E1 topic line on Rural Economies to help us understand the impact of changes to agricultural support payments in rural areas and the role of local food economies in creating an affordable and sustainable national food system.

More broadly, there is little evidence on the direct and indirect impacts of the RALRI budget on groups with protected characteristics and, aside from age and gender, there is little available data.



## Social Justice

### Budget purpose

The purpose of the Social Justice portfolio's budget is to create a fairer Scotland, tackle poverty and especially child poverty, deliver affordable housing, and promote equality and human rights.

### National Outcomes

The Equality Evidence Finder<sup>1</sup> provides a breakdown of data on protected characteristics from the National Performance Framework (NPF) national indicators, as well as from other Scottish Government data sources.

#### **We live in communities that are connected, inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe**

Embedding equality and human rights within government policy and funding equality organisations directly via both the Equality and Human Rights Fund and Delivering Equally Safe Fund, tackles inequalities through action and intervention. We have put in place a number of indicators to track progress. These can be broken down by age, gender, disability, ethnicity, religion, Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation, and urban/rural location to help us measure and evidence progress.

The budget delivers a range of work within communities that supports the inclusion of refugees and people seeking asylum. This work is taken forward by communities themselves, in a variety of ways that seek to bring people together and address their personal and social needs.

#### **We respect, protect and fulfil human rights and live free from discrimination**

One of the key principles within the New Scots Strategy is to commit partners and others to ensure we take a human rights-based approach to the work we progress and deliver. The key activity to ensure this is undertaken effectively is through the ongoing meaningful engagement of the people we are seeking to support, which is directly delivered in a range of ways through the available budget.

#### **We tackle poverty by sharing opportunities, wealth and power more equally**

Best Start, Bright Futures is designed to bring a holistic strategy across government to address the key causes of child poverty, namely lack of income from employment, cost of living, and income from social security. Continuing to support funding for income maximisation and welfare advice services improves household financial situations and helps to reduce poverty through increasing incomes (including income from benefits). Social Security also supports households facing increased costs through disability, loss of income for carers, and funeral costs.

The New Scots approach is to ensure, as far as it is possible to do so within devolved competence, that refugees and people seeking asylum receive the same rights and entitlements as any other citizen. The budgets allocated to the New Scots Delivery Plan, the Refugee Support Service and the Ending Destitution Together Strategy support this approach by funding organisations to enable this access.

## Human Rights

The key human rights supported by the Social Justice portfolio include:

- Article 8: Respect for your private and family life, home and correspondence.
- Article 9: Freedom of thought, belief and religion.
- Article 14: Protection from discrimination in respect of these rights and freedoms.
- An adequate standard of living.
- Social security.
- Freedom of thought, religion and expression.
- Equality and non-discrimination.

Funding to deliver the New Scots Delivery Plan, the Ending Destitution Together strategy and grant funding for third sector refugee organisations is delivering Scotland's goal of welcoming and integrating refugees, people seeking asylum and people facing destitution to remove barriers and reduce discrimination for these marginalised groups, which directly protects and promotes their human rights.

## Summary of how our budget impacts on Equality and Fairer Scotland

We will invest almost £7 billion in Scottish Government benefits and payments in 2025-26, supporting over 1.4 million people, including the Carer Support Payment, a benefit which will help tackle inequalities around sex, and the Scottish Child Payment, improving the lives of well over 300,000 children in low-income families across Scotland in 2025-26, and keeping an estimated 60,000 children out of relative poverty in 2024-25.

Our disability benefits help mitigate the additional daily living or mobility costs that disabled people may have as a result of a disability or long-term health condition.

Social Security investment is almost £1.3 billion more than the UK Government gives to the Scottish Government for social security, demonstrating our national mission to end child poverty and our commitment to help low-income families with their living costs, support carers, and enable disabled people to live full and independent lives.

The budget will also support the implementation of our second Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan, Best Start, Bright Futures, supporting families at greatest risk of poverty, including our Fairer Futures Partnerships and innovative Child Poverty Practice Accelerator Fund. Our Cash First Programme will help reduce the demand for emergency food parcels. The budget will also support income maximisation and welfare advice services, including advice services embedded in education, health, and community settings.

The budget will support Discretionary Housing Payments, which are a vital tool to safeguard tenancies and prevent homelessness among low income households.

We will invest £767.7 million in affordable housing in 2025-26, helping to deliver more affordable homes towards our 110,000 homes target, of which at least 70 per cent will be available for social rent and 10 per cent will be in rural and island communities. Increasing affordable supply is key to addressing housing need and keeping social rents lower than market rents benefits approximately 140,000 children in poverty each year.

Equality and Human Rights expenditure includes £35.1 million grant funding and £9.7 million on staffing, supporting scrutiny bodies and fulfilling the Equality Act 2010, Equality and Human Rights Mainstreaming, development of human rights legislation, steps to more effectively implement human rights, and strategies to address inequality, including Race Equality Framework for Scotland, Gypsy Traveller Action Plan, Fairer Scotland for Disabled People, Non-Binary Action Plan, Equally Safe Strategy and Delivery Plan – Violence against Women and Girls, National Advisory Council on Women and Girls, Hate Crime Delivery Plan, Faith and Belief Strategy, and New Scots Refugee Integration Delivery Plan.

The Equality and Human Rights Fund provides £8 million annually to 48 organisations and aligns to seven policy areas – age, disability, gender, race, LGBT, British Sign Language (BSL) and human rights. Intersectionality is a priority for the fund, to support and champion the rights of people facing disadvantage due to multiple and interconnected inequalities.

The 48 organisations deliver direct services to individuals who share protected characteristics, building the capacity of other organisations, and strategic work with local and national policy makers.

The Delivering Equally Safe Fund works to prevent and eradicate violence against women and girls. The £19 million annual payments are currently helping 119 projects from 110 organisations that focus on early intervention, prevention, and support services.

## References

- 1 <https://scotland.shinyapps.io/sg-equality-evidence-finder/>

## Transport

### Budget Purpose

Transport Scotland's activities and budgets are focused on maintaining and operating Scotland's transport system. Keeping Scotland's transport system effective, efficient, and resilient in the face of the realities of climate change is crucial to supporting Scotland's people and businesses every day, whether it be to travel to work or education, visit family and friends, access services or run our businesses. Within this, the portfolio continues to focus on making our transport system more accessible, available, and affordable through the delivery of the National Transport Strategy's four strategic priorities: Reduces Inequalities, Takes Climate Action, Helps Deliver Inclusive Economic Growth and Improves our Health and Wellbeing.

### National Outcomes

The Scottish Government's purpose is to focus on creating a more successful country with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish through increased wellbeing, and sustainable and inclusive economic growth. This means creating a society that offers equal opportunity and ensures the benefits from a stronger economy are shared fairly. Inclusiveness and equality are key ingredients of the National Transport Strategy which drives what we do. The Transport portfolio and budgetary decisions taken to deliver the work of this strategy therefore contributes to a number of the National Outcomes. In particular, these are the National Outcomes on Environment; Communities; Economy; and International.

Transport plays a key role in achieving the statutory Scottish Government target of net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2045. Budget decisions around setting a route map for enabling the delivery of approximately 24,000 additional public electric vehicle charge points by 2030 to support the ongoing move to electric vehicles; and to progress our ambition of a 20 per cent reduction in car use by 2030, will contribute to the National Outcomes on Environment and Communities.

Continuing work to provide access to free bus entitlement for children and young people, in addition to continuing to provide financial support for public transport, contributes to a range of National Outcomes, including Communities, and the Environment.

Making our transport system available, affordable, and accessible for all and ensuring our motorway and trunk road network is safe, resilient, and efficient contributes to the National Outcomes on Communities, Environment, International, and the Economy.

### Human Rights

Transport plays a key role in enabling people to realise their human rights. It is an essential requirement in enabling people to realise human rights such as the right to education, the right to work, the right to take part in cultural and public life, the right to an adequate standard of living and the right to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health. Budget decisions are underpinned by the National Transport Strategy which supports a rights-based approach to transport. This is in line with the National Performance Framework and Scotland's international human rights obligations. The Strategy is using this underlying principle to deliver Scotland's transport system for the next 20 years.

## **Summary of how our budget impacts on Equality and Fairer Scotland**

The Transport budget and activities outlined in this year's Programme for Government support the First Minister's four priorities: eradicating child poverty, building prosperity, improving our public services, and protecting the planet – which very closely align with the priorities of the National Transport Strategy.

We will work with local authorities to ensure as many children as possible can access their free bus entitlement – cutting travel costs and making sustainable travel a more attractive option.

We will provide nearly £2.5 billion to support public transport in 2024-25, making our transport system available, affordable, and accessible for all – and £1 billion in ensuring our motorway and trunk road network is safe, resilient, and efficient.

In addition, we are also going to deliver three of the six new major ferries currently under construction; progress the Scotrail fleet replacement programme; upgrade and reconfigure rail power supplies to support existing and future electrification of our railway; and progress work on improving our road transportation infrastructure.

In 2024-25, we will set a route map for enabling the delivery of approximately 24,000 additional public electric vehicle charge points by 2030 to support the ongoing move to electric vehicles; progress our ambition of a 20 per cent reduction in car use by 2030, with a route map including a timeline for implementing 'demand management'; and make it easier for people to walk, wheel, or cycle on everyday journeys through our Active Travel Infrastructure Fund, the National Cycle Network, and People and Place Programme.