



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Economy, Energy and Tourism Committee

Malcolm Roughead OBE
Chief Executive
Visit Scotland
Ocean Point One
94 Ocean Drive
Edinburgh
EH6 6JH

3 June 2014

Dear Mr Roughead,

DRAFT BUDGET 2015-16

The Economy, Energy and Tourism Committee has agreed its approach to scrutiny of the Scottish Government's draft 2015-16 budget.

www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/CurrentCommittees/77643.aspx

Essentially there are two elements to this. First, its primary focus will be on the NPF national indicator to 'increase exports'. Second, it will pursue issues highlighted in its 2014-15 budget report.

The Committee has today issued its call for evidence on both elements. With regards 'element two' (those issues raised in last year's budget report) I have today written to the Cabinet Secretary for Finance, Employment and Sustainable Growth seeking an update from the Scottish Government. That response is due 11 July 2014. It will then be published and we will invite external bodies to respond to what the SG has said.

You will recall from last year's report we also invited VS to provide updates on a number of issues as part of its 2015-16 draft budget submission. For ease I am attaching a list of these issues. Essentially the Committee is seeking updates on specific actions taken by VS since we reported last year (and your January 2014 response), what improvements these actions have brought, and an update on figures (where appropriate) for both 2014-15 and 2015-16. **The deadline for the provision of this information, which will be alongside your 'normal' draft budget proposal, is 24 October 2014.**

On 'element one' (the increase exports indicator) we have issued a general call for evidence.

The Committee hopes that through this approach it will be in a more informed position when it commences oral evidence sessions in October (it may be helpful if you could pencil in the afternoon Monday 3 November to give oral evidence).

I am happy to discuss any aspect of this approach with you or, should your officials have any questions, our clerks are happy to discuss this approach with them.

The Committee looks forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Murdo Fraser', written in a cursive style.

Murdo Fraser MSP
Convener

ECONOMY

Social enterprises [paragraphs 108-113]

1. The Committee requests that VisitScotland outlines what actions it will take to improve its engagement with social enterprises operating in the tourism, hospitality and leisure sectors.

TOURISM MATTERS

Opportunities for SMEs in 2014 [paragraphs 183-188]

2. The Committee recognises that 2014 is a significant year for VisitScotland and that it would appear to have some plans in place for the opportunities on offer and how to engage with Scotland's business community. However, we would welcome further information on how VisitScotland will share across all sectors the information which it gathers to allow all of Scotland's businesses to consider what opportunities this profiling may offer.

3. The Committee gives notice that it intends to return to this subject area early in 2014 for a progress report from all of the relevant public sector bodies involved as to the detail, and the success to date, of the plans for engaging Scotland's business community with the opportunities on offer from 2014 and its legacy.

Beyond 2014? [paragraphs 189-191]

4. The Committee requests that VisitScotland, in its draft budget submission for 2015-16, details what funding has been allocated to EventScotland, the Business Tourism Unit and the Conference Bid Fund, and what returns have been secured as a result of previous budgets with regards visitor number and visitor spend.

VisitScotland's marketing budget [paragraphs 192-194]

5. The Committee invites VisitScotland to indicate the projected return on the £50.11 million marketing budget in terms of rate of return, visitor numbers and spend compared with visitor numbers and spend for 2012-13 and 2013-14.