



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

## EDUCATION AND CULTURE COMMITTEE

Rob Gibson MSP,  
Convener,  
Rural Affairs, Climate Change and  
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24 September 2013

Dear Rob,

### **Mainstreaming climate change scrutiny of the Scottish Government's draft budget**

Thank you for your letter suggesting ways in which the Education and Culture Committee, and other committees, could consider climate change issues when scrutinising the draft budget.

The Education and Culture Committee has an extremely tight timetable for scrutinising the Scottish Government's spending proposals (details of our [remit](#) are available here) and it is not practical to undertake meaningful scrutiny of climate change issues in the time available.

At best, the Committee would only be able to request information from the Scottish Government in line with the various suggestions outlined in the annexe to your letter. We would not be able to discuss any information received with other witnesses, who will be appearing in front of the Committee to talk about youth employability. This is a very substantial topic in its own right, and there is therefore a risk that any discussion of climate change would be tokenistic.

Ultimately, the Committee considers that our writing to the Scottish Government would not achieve anything substantially different from your committee contacting the Scottish Government directly. Indeed, we made similar comments in our report on last year's draft budget—

“The Education and Culture Committee wrote to both the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning and the Cabinet Secretary for Culture and External Affairs for further information on how climate change considerations

had been taken into account in the 2013-14 Draft Budget. The Committee will forward the responses to the RACCE Committee and invite it to consider whether, in future years, there would be more merit in it writing to relevant Cabinet Secretaries directly, rather than asking other committees to perform this role.”

We are, of course, fully aware of the importance of climate change issues but consider that we would not be able to contribute in any meaningful way to the discussion at this stage.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stewart', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

**STEWART MAXWELL MSP  
CONVENER**