

Finance Committee reports on draft budget



Finance Committee welcomes focus on outcomes in Draft Budget

The Scottish Government's emphasis on outcomes has been welcomed by the Finance Committee in its [report](#) on the draft budget 2014-15 published today.

The Committee highlights the National Performance Framework (NPF) as being an internationally recognised exemplar of an outcomes-based approach to measuring government performance.

Despite this, the Committee points out that the framework is not well known in Scotland which means potential benefits are not being fully utilised.

The Committee also continues to monitor the shift towards preventative spending and concludes that there is some evidence of progress despite a challenging fiscal environment.

However, the Committee is also concerned that not all public bodies are making the difficult decision to cease funding some existing services in order to unlock money and resources essential for a preventative approach.

Finance Committee Convener Kenneth Gibson MSP said:- "The Finance Committee very much welcomes the NPF and we applaud the emphasis on an outcomes based approach by the Scottish Government which will support financial scrutiny and accountability.

"However, it also appears that the NPF is not well known outside policymakers' circles and we believe that the public should be made aware of its importance.

“In terms of preventative spend, we recognise it is a challenging fiscal environment and welcome the example set by Highland Council and NHS Highland where there is real evidence of the necessary cultural and structural change in the way public services are delivered.

“However, progress would appear to be much slower in other areas, which is why we have asked the Government to identify the main barriers to realising change and what actions it is taking to address these.”

The National Performance Framework states that the Scottish Government’s Purpose is “to focus government and public services on creating a more successful country, with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish, through increasing sustainable economic growth.” The National Performance Framework is underpinned by five strategic objectives and 16 national outcomes describing what the Government wants to achieve over a ten year period. Fifty national indicators “track progress towards the achievement of National Outcomes and ultimately the delivery of the Purpose”.

The website [Scotland Performs](#) is a primary source of information about the Scottish Government’s performance.

The Stage 1 debate on the draft budget 2014-15 will take place on Thursday 19 December.