

Scottish Secretary of State says budget will bring “era of growth” for Scotland

The UK Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rachel Reeves, will present her first budget on Wednesday, and many details have already been leaked.

Ms Reeves said at last week’s meeting of the International Monetary Fund that there will be more money – as much as £50 billion – for investment in infrastructure projects after an overhaul of fiscal rules.

The chancellor also said that she will not use all the extra funds in this, the government’s first budget.

Ian Murray said the Chancellor’s statement on Wednesday will confirm no return to the austerity policies of the Conservative governments. He said that any additional funding for public services in Scotland must reach the frontline – not be lost. He repeated Dame Jackie Baillie’s claim that the SNP have wasted £5 billion over the past 17 years, including an alleged repayment of £450 million to the EU. But The Scottish Government’s information body, SPICE, [queried this sum](#) (which requires match funding from the government. In addition The Deputy First Minister said in parliament: ““The programme is not yet complete. By the end of the programme, most of the funding will be spent. The claims that other parts of the United Kingdom will achieve specific levels of spend are also wrong, because their schemes have not closed either. We do not expect Scotland to be markedly different from the level that was achieved in previous schemes.”



12/7/2024 Secretary of State for Scotland, The Rt Hon Ian Murray, in his Edinburgh Office in Queen Elizabeth House PHOTO Alan Simpson

Secretary of State for Scotland, Ian Murray, said: “This budget will herald an era of growth for Scotland, after years of damaging austerity from the Tories, made even worse for Scottish public services by the incompetent SNP.

“No one should be in any doubt about the scale of the challenge the Labour government inherited when it comes to the public finances – the Tories left us a £22 billion black hole, emptying the reserves meant for disasters and emergencies three times over by July. Eighteen months on from crashing the economy they were ready to do it all over again.

“While Labour cleans up fourteen years of Tory mess, the SNP created a mess of their own making, having wasted £5 billion over their years in office due to their own buy now, pay later

policies. For three consecutive years services have endured emergency in-year cuts from the chaotic SNP.

“Labour will end this short term, populist politics and fix the foundations for the long term. There will be no return to austerity.

“The SNP must ensure any additional funding for public services reaches the front line, bringing down waiting lists in the NHS and raising attainment in our schools – it can’t be used to plug the gaps. Scots rightly expect results.”