

Consultation: Scottish Government Resource Spending Review Framework

Response submitted to Scottish Government via Citizen Space

22nd March 2022

1. In Chapter 1 we have identified three priorities to guide the Resource Spending Review process. Setting these as priorities helps us consider where spend should be targeted and re-directed. Do you agree that our resource spending should focus on these? We welcome your view on these priorities for the Resource Spending Review.

Please give us your views.

EAUC Scotland supports the position that the Resource Spending Review focuses on the three identified priorities of:

- Supporting progress towards meeting child poverty targets
- Addressing climate change
- And securing a stronger, fairer, greener economy

We recognise that there are strong interlinks between the three priorities when viewed through a sustainable development lens. From a Resource Spending perspective, Scotland needs to significantly accelerate the green skills development of the present workforce alongside current and future students to ensure we have the skills and knowledge to deliver national net zero targets. This means we need more green skills courses, more people being trained through them, and more upskilled teaching staff. The Scottish college sector has a particularly crucial role to play within this sphere and additional staffing and training resource is needed to deliver this agenda. Alongside helping Scotland meet its net zero targets, growing the green skills workforce will directly support securing a stronger, fairer, green Scotland and increase employment opportunities, thus increasing household income and reducing child poverty.

As such, we would particularly welcome a sustainable development lens approach to delivering the Resource Spending Resource to ensure investment in services and projects mutually align and reinforce impact against these all three of these priorities where possible.

Q2. In Chapter 2 we have identified the primary drivers of public spending over the Resource Spending Review period including:

- **Changing demographics**
- **Demand on the health service**
- **Public sector workforce**
- **Inflation**

We welcome your views on these and any other public spending drivers you think we should consider.

Please give us your views.

With additional consumer / user and organisational focus on sustainability and climate change, and government climate change guidance requiring public sector to show alignment between their spending plans and climate action, a move to more responsible public spending could be a driver for change.

3. In Chapter 2 we identified the growth of the public sector workforce as a key driver of public spending. How can we use policy interventions to maximise the value achieved from the public sector workforce in the effective delivery of public services, while ensuring the sector is an attractive, rewarding place to work? We welcome your views on this.

Please give us your views.

Workforce Training and Development

With 22% of Scotland's workforce being employed within the Public Sector, this offers a significant opportunity for upskilling and improving knowledge and awareness around key topics such as Scotland's climate change legislation and wider sustainability commitments and actions. A policy commitment for all public sector staff to undergo basic training aligned to sustainable development and Scotland's contribution to a net zero and fairer future (covering the three Spending Review priorities), and/or to align staff reviews to these priorities, would help align the Public Sector workforce towards delivering these priorities where appropriate.

An example of a recent sector policy shift with regards to staff training and development has been the changes within the Further Education sector which have meant that college teaching staff are now covered by The General Teaching Council for Scotland's Professional Standards for Teaching. One of the impacts of these changes is that college teaching staff must have the opportunity to undertake and evidence continued professional development. There is now the policy lever and potential opportunity for large-scale training and development of college teaching staff in topics

such as Education for Sustainable Development or emerging green technologies, which align with the Spending Review priority areas.

Increased resource for sector support organisations

EAUC Scotland also advocates for increased support for public sector transition to net zero through organisations such as Sustainable Scotland Network (SSN), and individual sector support organisations such as Scottish Funding Council (SFC), COSLA and EAUC Scotland. These organisations bring exceptional added value to their relevant sectors, facilitating knowledge creation and exchange and sharing best practice across public sector workforces.

Increased resource funding for colleges and universities to support place-based agenda for sustainable development.

EAUC Scotland strongly recognises the important role Scotland's colleges and universities have as public bodies leading on addressing the three priorities identified in the Resource Spending Review through their operations. However, the knowledge-base and skills within our institutions are not fully available or utilised by the communities they are embedded within. Providing dedicated resource funding to institutions to support and co-develop localised community-led responses to challenges such as the Just Transition, improving wealth equality and the climate emergency is a cost-efficient and effective way to bring added-value to core institutional activities.

Q4. In Chapter 3 we have identified a number of ways in which we will be exploring how to get best value out of Scotland's public spending, including:

- **Improving cross-government collaboration**
- **Public service reform**
- **Prevention and invest to save initiatives**
- **The public sector workforce**
- **Better targeting**
- **Targeted revenue raising**

We welcome your views on these, and other ways to maximise the positive impact of public spending.

Please give us your views.

As above, EAUC Scotland advocates for increased support for public sector transition to net zero through organisations such as Sustainable Scotland Network (SSN), and individual sector support organisations such as Scottish Funding Council (SFC), COSLA and EAUC Scotland. These organisations bring exceptional added value to their relevant sectors, facilitating knowledge creation and

exchange and sharing best practice across public sector workforces. As such, these organisations enhance the capacity of their public sector partners in delivering Scottish Government strategic priorities in a cost-effective way.

5. In Chapter 3 we have shared that we will be conducting an equality assessment of the Resource Spending Review's findings. We welcome your views on any particular equality and human rights impacts which we should consider in the context of the priorities (question 1) and primary drivers of public spending (question 2) we have set out.

Please give us your views.

There should be a particular focus on the Just Transition, with a focus on communities particularly economically reliant on fossil fuel extraction or high-energy processes, and wider communities experiencing higher levels of poverty, as these communities are more likely to be affected by both inflation and the move to a net zero Scotland.

6. In Chapter 3 we shared that this Resource Spending Review is taking a consultative approach to ensure that we engage with people and organisations across Scotland as we develop multi-year financial plans. Our intention is to use the Resource Spending Review to continue the Scottish conversation on public spending going forwards. We welcome your views on how best to continue our engagement with people and organisations after the Resource Spending Review.

Please give us your views.

No response.