



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Finance and Public Administration Committee

Maree Todd MSP
Minister for Social Care,
Mental Wellbeing and Sport
Scottish Government

By email

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Dear Maree

Congratulations on your appointment as Minister for Social Care, Mental Wellbeing and Sport.

You will be aware that the Finance and Public Administration Committee published our report on the Financial Memorandum (FM) for the National Care Service (NCS) Bill on 1 December, expressing our significant concerns regarding the lack of detail in the original FM and requesting an updated FM, at least two weeks before the Stage 1 debate. We have since corresponded with the former Minister on a number of occasions regarding the information we requested in this report.

The Committee notes from your letter to the Deputy Convener of the Health, Social Care and Sport (HSCS) Committee of 17 April that the Scottish Government now intends to seek Parliament's approval for a further extension to the Bill's Stage 1 deadline beyond June.

As you may be aware, the former Minister for Mental Wellbeing and Social Care wrote to the Committee on 28 February 2023, stating his intention to wait until all the Committee reports on the Bill have been completed before responding to the FPAC report. Our response of 9 March records our disappointment at this delay in receiving the updated FM and requested details of the full financial implications of the delay, a

breakdown of how much has been spent on the project to date, how any unspent funding will be reallocated, and how future spending will be reprofiled in light of the delay. Limited information was provided in the former Minister's response of 23 March, which the Committee considered at our meeting on 18 April.

We are becoming increasingly concerned at the lack of information available on the financial implications of the Bill and frustrated that we have still not received the updated FM we requested back in December last year, particularly given that the Scottish Government had argued that the original FM needed no amendment. We do not accept that the Scottish Government needs to wait until the HSCS Committee published its report before it can provide an updated FM to this Committee for scrutiny. Usually, FPAC would feed into the Lead Committee, not the other way around.

The Committee therefore repeats its call for a revised FM, which takes into account the recommendations listed in our report of 1 December, to be provided at the earliest opportunity, and **no later than Friday 12 May**. We also seek within the same timeframe, a detailed breakdown of spend to date on the NCS, including those costs arising directly as a result of the provisions in the Bill and those which result from the wider NCS programme. The Committee further requests clarification of the new timetable for completion of Stage 1 proceedings on the Bill.

To support our effective scrutiny of the financial implications associated with the creation of the NCS, we also invite you to give oral evidence to the Committee on **Tuesday 23 May 2023**.

We look forward to working with you in your new role.

Yours sincerely

Kenneth Gibson MSP
Convener
Finance and Public Administration Committee