



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Finance and Public Administration Committee

Collette Stevenson MSP
Convener
Social Justice and Social Security Committee

11 November 2025

Dear Collette

Wellbeing and Sustainable Development (Scotland) Bill – Financial Memorandum

The Finance and Public Administration Committee (the Committee) is responsible for scrutinising Financial Memorandums (FMs) to Bills. As such, the Committee ran a call for views on the FM for the Wellbeing and Sustainable Development (Scotland) Bill. The call for views closed on 25 August 2025 and received two responses. The two responses have been [published on Citizen Space](#).

According to the policy memorandum, the Member introduced the Bill because she believes that “too often, the decisions of public bodies are driven by short-term goals” and that “short-term wins are too often prioritised in policymaking [...] rather than sustainable decisions”.

Part 2 of the Bill makes provision for the creation of a Future Generations Commissioner for Scotland. The FM notes that the function of the Commissioner is to promote the interest of “future generations by promoting sustainable development by public bodies in all aspects of their decisions, policies and actions”.

As you are aware, the Committee undertook an inquiry into [Scotland's Commissioner Landscape: A Strategic Approach](#) between December 2023 and September 2024, prompted by our concerns at the potential for, and implications of, this landscape growing exponentially over this parliamentary session and beyond. This led to a dedicated Committee being established to look into the issue in more depth. The SPCB Supported Bodies Landscape Review Committee was established in December 2024 and reported in June 2025.

The [SPCB Supported Bodies Landscape Review Committee found in its report](#) that—

“The evidence is clear that this proliferation of proposed advocacy type SPCB supported bodies this parliamentary session is being largely driven by a failure or perceived failure in public service delivery. Rather than addressing the root causes of these systemic shortcomings, the creation of a new

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commissioner is, in some instances, perceived as a quick win for the Government, or a vehicle for an individual MSP to promote a cause they champion”.

The report went on to say that “there are other effective ways of addressing such issues” and that “the tendency to seek to create an SPCB body to address such concerns is not sustainable and should not continue”.

Based on the SPCB Supported Bodies Landscape Committee’s findings, unanimously agreed, the Scottish Parliament agreed motion S6M-18936 on 18 September 2025 which included the recommendation that “the SPCB supported body landscape should not be expanded to include new advocacy-type SPCB supported bodies”. The proliferation of new Commissioner roles is also a concern for the Committee in the context of our work on the sustainability of Scotland’s finances.

While it is not for the Committee to consider the merits of creating individual Commissioner roles, we invite the Social Justice and Social Security Committee to consider the issues above as part of its wider scrutiny of the Bill.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kenneth J Gibson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kenneth Gibson MSP
Convener