

Criminal Justice Committee
Wednesday 26 November 2025
32nd Meeting, 2025 (Session 6)

Scottish Government: Pre-Budget Scrutiny 2026/27

Note by the Clerk

Introduction

1. Each year, subject committees in the Parliament carry out pre-budget scrutiny in advance of the publication of the Scottish Government's budget for the forthcoming financial year.
2. The aim is for the committees to collect evidence on spending priorities and make recommendations to the relevant Cabinet Secretary before the Scottish Government finalises its budget.
3. The Committee held its first 2026/27 Pre-Budget Scrutiny oral evidence session on [5 November](#) when it took evidence from Police Scotland and the Scottish Police Authority.
4. At its evidence session on [12 November](#) it took evidence from the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service, the Scottish Courts and Tribunal Service, and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.
5. At its evidence session on [19 November](#) it took evidence from the Scottish Prison Service.
6. At this evidence session the Committee will conclude its oral evidence on Pre-Budget Scrutiny by hearing from:
 - **Angela Constance MSP**, Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs,
 - **Cat Dalrymple**, Director of Justice, Scottish Government, and
 - **Don McGillivray**, Director of Safer Communities, Scottish Government.
7. Thereafter, the Committee will produce a report with its recommendations.

Supplementary written evidence

8. The following organisations who have previously given oral evidence to the Committee, have provided supplementary written evidence on various issues which arose during their evidence sessions. The submissions received to date are from-
 - [Scottish Courts and Tribunal Service](#) (PDF, 2 pages);
 - [Scottish Fire and Rescue Service](#) (PDF, 3 pages);

- [Scottish Police Authority](#) (PDF, 4 pages).
9. Further supplementary written evidence from those who provided oral evidence will be published online, in due course, when it is received.

Focus of the Pre-budget Scrutiny

10. As with last year, the focus of the Criminal Justice Committee is a general one on the financial pressures on organisations in the criminal justice sector.
11. Of particular interest to the Committee is the pressure on capital budgets and investment in policing, the fire and rescue services, prisons, courts, community justice, criminal social work and the third sector.

Action

12. Members are invited to discuss the Pre-Budget evidence they have received and put questions to the witnesses at today's meeting.

Clerks to the Committee
November 2025