

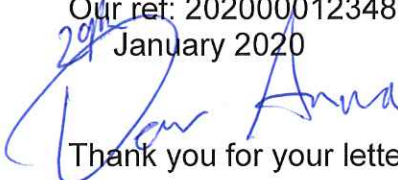


T: 0300 244 4000
E: scottish.ministers@gov.scot

Ms Anna Fowlie
SCVO

Via email: Anna.Fowlie@scvo.org.uk

Our ref: 202000012348
29th January 2020

 Thank you for your letter of 17th January 2020 regarding employability and skills funding.

I do fully understand the difficulties the delays to the Scottish budget are causing, not only in the Third Sector and voluntary organisations, but across all sectors and I appreciate the issues this causes to the organisations you represent.

I know you will recognise that these difficulties have been caused by the UK Government's decision not to bring forward a UK budget until 11 March 2020. Under normal circumstances the Scottish Government would wait until after the UK budget is agreed before announcing the budget for Scotland – with UK fiscal policy and the block grant award having a significant bearing on the budget available to Scottish Government.

Recognising the impact this delay on setting budgets would have on public services, including the Third Sector, in Scotland, the Finance Secretary, has brought forward the date of the draft Scottish Budget to Thursday 6 February 2020. I know that this will still leave uncertainty for organisations across Scotland, and I am committed to minimising the impact this may have.

In the spirit of the "Principles for Positive Partnership", I have asked my officials to work closely with SCVO to share the budget arrangements with you as soon as we can. I am keen that we work together to give the third sector organisations working in employability and skills as much certainty as we can as we go through the budget process.

I am aware you are meeting Gavin Gray from the Employability Division next week, and I have asked him to pick up this discussion with you to consider how best to achieve this over the coming weeks.


JAMIE HEPBURN

Scottish Ministers, special advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See www.lobbying.scot

