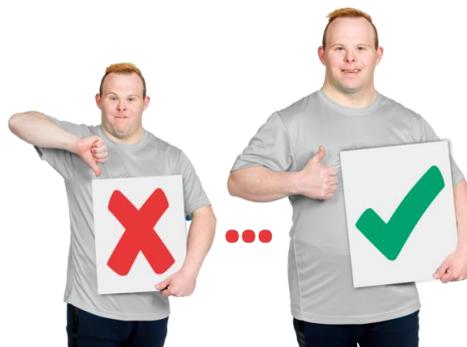


Easy read summary

How the Scottish Government spends money and how this needs to change





The Scottish Government needs to change how it spends money on **public services**.



Public services are services we all use like schools, hospitals and councils.

The Scottish Government cannot afford the things it wants to spend money on because:

- costs have gone up
- more people need public services.



The Scottish Government chose to:

- keep **council tax** the same

Council tax is a tax on the property you live in.



The money is used by your local council to pay for local services.



The Scottish Government chose to:

- spend more money on benefits
- spend more on pay deals in Scotland than in other parts of the UK.



All these things mean there is a lot of pressure on how money can be spent in 2024 and 2025.



Money decisions made by the UK Government also affect the amount of money the Scottish Government can spend.



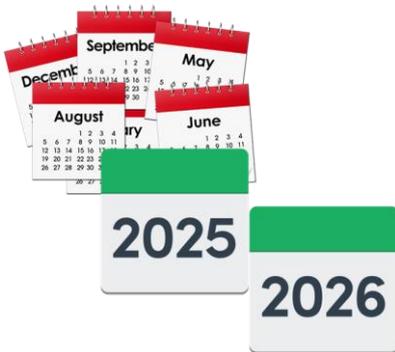
The Scottish Government needs to have ways to deal with this.



The recent UK Autumn budget gave more money to the Scottish budget.



It is still not clear if it is enough to cover the amount of money needed to pay for Scottish public services.

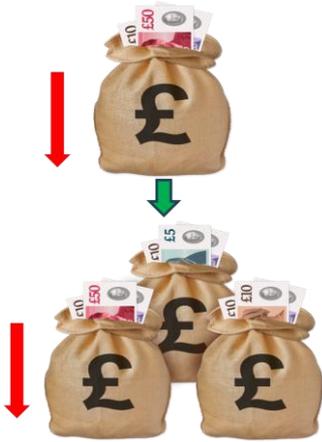


The Scottish Government has made **short term** decisions to make sure the amount of money spent is the same as the amount of money that is available.

Short term means decisions that will affect things soon rather than in the future.



This does not deal with the budget having 1 billion pounds less than it might need in 2024 to 2025.



This gap might go up to nearly 2 billion pounds by 2027 to 2028.



The Scottish Government knows that it faces big difficulties with how it will spend money in the future.

To meet this challenge it aims to:

- focus its spending on its 4 missions:



1. having no **child poverty** – this means children living in a household where there may not be enough money coming in from jobs or benefits to pay for housing and basic things like food, clothing or to stay warm



2. growing the **economy** – how the country produces and uses goods, services and money



3. dealing with climate change – the way the world’s weather and temperature are changing because people are using oil, gas and coal for their homes, factories and transport



4. improving public services – services we all use like schools, hospitals and councils.



- develop the way it deals with **tax** – money collected by the government that it spends on what the country needs.



Making public services better is one of the most important things it will spend money on.

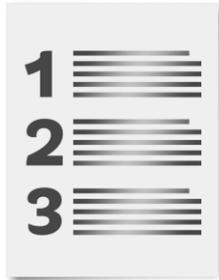


But the Scottish Government has not set out clear plans about how it will do this.



The Scottish Government has not explained:

- how much it will cost to make public services better
- how the work will be done and when it will be done by
- how much money it will save.



There is no monitoring framework in place.

This means there is no way to check the affect that the changes will have on services or different groups in society.



The Scottish Government must make public services better in a way that:

- treats everyone fairly
- protects human rights.



This would be good for everyone.



The Scottish Government now needs to show greater leadership of public services.

The Scottish Government must have a clear vision about how they want to change things.

This will help Government departments and public services to:

- work well together
- make sure they are working towards the same things.



To make changes in the future the Scottish Government will need:

- to be realistic about how costs will be met
- to spend more money
- to share more information with the public and Scottish Parliament about how it will spend the money it has.

