



BRIEFING

Budget — Stage 3 debate

Wednesday 8 February 2012

1 Unless amended, the Budget will lead to the SNP reneging on its manifesto promise to increase investment in sustainable transport.

- 1.1 The SNP was elected in May 2011 with a manifesto promise to increase investment in sustainable transport: "[we] will continue to increase the proportion of transport spending that goes on low-carbon, active and sustainable travel."¹
- 1.2 But in September 2011, only four months later, the Draft Budget 2012-13 announced cuts for sustainable transport. The budget lines for buses, rail, ferries are all cut in real terms. However the Government reserved its most severe cuts for investment in walking and cycling (the 'active travel' modes). The Government intends a vindictive budget cut for these healthiest and most sustainable forms of transport of around 33%.²

2 It is entirely the Scottish Government's decision to cut investment in sustainable transport — not the UK Government's.

- 2.1 The Scottish Ministers' standard response is that it's the UK Government's fault in imposing budget cuts on Scotland. This is just rubbish. The overall Scottish transport budget is scheduled to go **UP** between 2011-12 and 2012-13 (from £1803.7m to £1838.2m).³
- 2.2 Cuts to investment in sustainable transport are therefore directly the result of Scottish Government decisions: *It is misleading for the Scottish Ministers to claim that it is the fault of the UK Government.*

3 We don't need more policy statements or warm words from Scottish Ministers. We need them to fund their existing plans for reducing climate emissions and increasing active travel.

- 3.1 In its inquiry report on the Budget, the Scottish Parliament's transport (ICI) committee accepted the case for increased spending on active travel. And the Parliament's environment (RACCE) committee agreed in its report that the Government's climate change plans should be fully funded. *So the Parliament's subject committees did their job. So please ask Mr Swinney why he has ignored the recommendations of the Parliament's committees and is still intent on pushing through hugely damaging cuts to investment in the most sustainable forms of transport.*

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¹ See p.35 of SNP manifesto.

² Calculations courtesy of Spokes, the Lothian Cycle Campaign — <http://www.spokes.org.uk>

³ Draft Budget, Table 13.02, first 6 rows.