FINANCE COMMITTEE

AGENDA

1st Meeting, 2002 (Session 1)

Tuesday 15 January 2002

The Committee will meet at 10.00 am in the Chamber, Assembly Hall, The Mound, Edinburgh to consider the following agenda items:

1. **Items in Private:** The Committee will consider whether to take agenda item 5 in private.

2. **Budget (Scotland) (No.3) Bill:** The Committee will consider a paper by the Clerk.

3. **Financial Scrutiny:** The Convener will lead a discussion on possible developments in financial scrutiny.

4. **Schedule of Committee Meetings:** The Committee will consider the proposed schedule of Committee meetings.

5. **PFI/PPP Inquiry:** The Committee will consider a paper on possible case studies.

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The papers for this meeting are:

**Agenda item 2**

Paper by the Clerk

**Agenda item 4**

Schedule of Committee Meetings

**Agenda item 5**

Paper by the Clerk
Budget (Scotland) Bill

Paper by the Clerk

Purpose

The Budget (Scotland) (No. 3) Bill is likely to be introduced in the Parliament on 17 or 18 January. This paper is intended to inform members as to how the Finance Committee should handle the Bill.

Budget Bills

Most members will now be familiar with handling Executive legislation. Budget Bills, however, fall into a category of their own and procedures relating to them are governed separately by Rule 9.16 of standing orders.

Under that rule, the Bill is handled by the Parliament within strict timescales. In particular, it has to be passed by the Parliament no later than 30 days after the date of introduction. This in practice means that Stage 3 has to take place this year no later than 14 February. It is therefore suggested the Committee take Stage 2 at its meeting on 29 January.

Stage 2

At Stage 2 of a Budget Bill, amendments can only be lodged and moved by a member of the Scottish Executive. No amendments were lodged to the first Budget Bill in 2000 and only one amendment was lodged last year.

Proceedings on amendments to Budget Bills are identical to those for other Bills. If it is the case that no amendments are lodged to this year's Bill, the Committee is still required to agree each section and schedule of the Bill as well as the long title. As with other Bills, where sections and schedules to which no amendments are proposed fall to be considered consecutively, a single question can be put on those sections or schedules.

It is worth pointing out that it is not possible leave out a section or schedule of the Bill by disagreeing to it. The *Guidance on Public Bills* states:

Paragraph 4.77
The Question on a section or schedule is only put if there is no amendment to leave out the section or schedule. In other words, any substantive decision on whether the section or schedule should remain in the Bill is taken on an amendment.

Paragraph 4.78
If no amendment to leave out the section or schedule has been lodged in advance, any member lodge a manuscript amendment to leave it out. So long as such an amendment is admissible, the convener should always consent to it being taken.
Since the standing orders only allow amendments to a Budget Bill to be moved by a member of the Scottish Executive, Committee members would have to persuade the Minister to move a manuscript amendment to leave out the section or schedule in question. As it is unlikely that the Minister would agree to do so, the end result is that there is no alternative for the Committee but to agree to the sections and schedules. The Parliament does, of course, have the option at Stage 3 of voting down the whole Bill.

Preparation

As the formal proceedings on Stage 2 may consequently be very brief, it is intended that the Minister is asked to speak to the Budget Bill and the budget documents before Stage 2 is taken. This will afford members the opportunity of questioning the Minister on the draft legislation before formal proceedings on the Bill begin. It is also possible for the Committee to discuss individual sections and schedules before agreeing to them during Stage 2 proceedings.

David McGill
January 2002
## FINANCE COMMITTEE SCHEDULE OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS (as at 8 January 2002)
### January – June 2002

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Committee Business</th>
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| **Tuesday 15 January**  
(Chamber)  
(18 Jan Bids to CLG deadline) |  
- Handling of Budget Bill  
- Discussion on schedule of Committee meetings  
- PFI/PPP Inquiry – Consideration of case studies  |
| **Tuesday 29 January**  
(CR 1) |  
- Holyrood – Quarterly report?  
- Budget Documents  
- Stage 2 Budget Bill  
- Paper on possible future inquiries  |
| **Tuesday 12 February**  
(CR 2) |  
- External Research – Consideration of report by Norman Flynn  
- Standards Commissioner Bill (Committee Bill) – Financial Memorandum  
- Possible briefing from Arthur Midwinter  
- (*possible consideration of spring budget revisions SSI)  |
| **W/C 18 February** | Recess |
| **Tuesday 26 February**  
(CR 1) |  
- *Preferable date for consideration of spring budget revisions SSI  |
| **Tuesday 12 March**  
(CR 2) |  
- PFI/PPP – Possible report back by Reporter Groups  
- Budget 2003/04 – consideration of options paper on meeting outside Edinburgh as part of stage 1 of budget process  |
| **Tuesday 26 March**  
(CR 1)  
(29 March Bids to CLG deadline) |  
- 2003/04 Budget – Consideration of SPCB budget submission  |
| **W/C 1 April** | Recess |
| **W/C 8 April** | Recess |
| **Tuesday 16 April**  
(CR 2) – Extra Meeting |  
- Possible Briefing from Scottish Executive officials on AER and 2002 Spending Review  |
| **Tuesday 23 April**  
(CR 2) |  
- 2003/04 Budget – Evidence taking from SE officials on Scottish Executive budget proposals  |
| **Tuesday 7 May**  
(CR 1) |  
- PFI/PPP – Possible consideration of issues paper  |
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday 21 May (Hub)</td>
<td>• 2003/04 Budget – Consideration of subject committee reports</td>
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<tr>
<td>(7 June Bids to CLG deadline)</td>
<td>• PFI/PPP – Consideration of draft report</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday 27 May (Shetland)</td>
<td>• 2003/04 Budget - Possible Meeting outside Edinburgh</td>
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<tr>
<td>W/C 27 May</td>
<td>Parliament sitting in Aberdeen</td>
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<td>Monday 3 and Tuesday 4 June Public Holidays</td>
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<td>Tuesday 11 June (CR 2)</td>
<td>• 2003/04 Budget – Consideration of draft report</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday 12 June (Provisional Evening meeting?)</td>
<td>• 2002/04 Budget – Possible further consideration of draft report</td>
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<td>Tuesday 18 June (CR 1)</td>
<td>• To be confirmed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday 25 June (CR 2)</td>
<td>• To be confirmed</td>
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**Notes**

SPCB in year expenditure reports expected – first one due now.

**Inquiries**

PFI/PPP – The present assumption is that the Committee will conclude its inquiry by end of May.

The Clerks will produce a discussion paper on possible future inquiries for consideration on 29 January.