1. The Scottish Government is committed to equality proofing both the budget and the policy making process and made a public commitment to this effect in the Equality Strategy, published in November 2000.

2. As part of this work, the Scottish Government is working with the Equality Proofing the Budget and Policy Advisory Group (EPBPAG) to map the pathway between evidence, policy and spend. The Group has been advising the Government since 2000. The group’s remit hitherto has been to:

- Improve the presentation of information about equalities issues in the Scottish Government's budget documents
- Raise awareness about the need to mainstream equalities into both policies and budgets
- Investigate ways of monitoring Government expenditure on different equality groups.

3. In order to provide clarity for policy makers and external interests, the Group agreed that the term ‘equality proofing’ should have the following specific meaning in Scotland:

“Equality proofing the Scottish budget is the mechanism for linking the mainstreaming of equality in the policy process with the appropriate distribution of resources.”

**Membership of EPBPAG**

Scottish Government Equality Unit  
Scottish Government Expenditure Policy Division  
Equality and Human Rights Commission (previously there has been representation from the Equal Opportunities Commission and the Commission for Racial Equality)  
Scottish Women’s Budget Group  
Equality Network  
Advisor to the Scottish Parliament Finance Committee

**Mainstreaming Equality**

4. As set out in the Equality Strategy, the Scottish Government is committed to mainstreaming equality across all of its policies and practices. This means embedding an equality perspective into the everyday work of government, involving policy makers, as well as equality specialists and external partners.
The Government’s commitment to mainstreaming includes developing mechanisms for equality impact assessment of budgets and spending plans.

Gender Impact Analysis and the Scottish Budget Sport and Health Pilots

5. In 2005, the Government commissioned work to help develop appropriate tools for an equalities analysis of the budget through pilot work with the Scottish Government’s then Health Department and the Sport Division in the Education Department (where Tourism, Culture and Sport was located). The report of this work, *Gender Impact Analysis and the Scottish Budget Sport and Health Pilots*, was published in October 2006.

6. Three independent researchers, Rona Fitzgerald, Dr Ailsa McKay and Kay Simpson, undertook this work. They worked with Scottish Government officials to try to find a method to assess the equality impact of mainstream spend and then to devise a method which could be tailored to fit existing Government practice, with a view to using that method to assess the equality impact of spend on all equality groups.

7. The report should not be read as an analysis of smoking cessation or sports policy; these policy areas agreed to be the methodological focus for this work in order to explore the broader issues relating to gender sensitive budgeting and equality matters. The report, as published, does not necessarily reflect the current state of play in these two policy areas.

8. The pilot had three phases:

- **Phase One**: Two brief literature reviews identified gender differences relating to smoking in young people and sport and young people. In parallel - the mapping of policy and spending processes in Health and Education to identify the link between policy and spend within these departments.

- **Phase Two**: Work with policy and spending officials determined how gender equality impact analysis could be integrated into existing policy and spending processes.

- **Phase Three**: A report with recommendations, action plan and guidance.

9. The work undertaken to develop tools for gender analysis of the budget has helped the Scottish Government to finalise the developments of its equality impact assessment tool for policy and practice.

Equality Impact Assessment Toolkit

10. Race, gender and disability impact assessment is required by law and enshrined in the race, disability and gender equality public duties. In order to meet both our legislative and voluntary commitments to progressing the equality agenda and tackling discrimination, the Scottish Government equality impact assessment tool was launched in October 2006. The tool is a ten step process to support Scottish Government staff to consider how their policy (by
policy we mean activities, functions, strategies, programmes and services or processes) impacts, either positively or negatively, on different sectors of the population. It covers race, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation and religion and belief.

11. Guidance is available at each step of the tool and staff must complete the relevant sections of the online database, which has been set up to record the process. As part of this process, staff are asked to consider:

- the resources that will be (or which have been) allocated to deliver the work; and
- whether the potential costs of this work have been set in a way which will help them achieve the best outcomes for the diverse communities that the policy will engage with.

12. If the EQIA process highlights that the policy could fail to meet the needs of specific groups or has discriminatory outcomes, the policy developer must consider what changes they will make to mitigate the adverse impact.

13. This process will help to ensure that policies take into account the different needs of equality groups in their development and delivery, support them to proactively address discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and deliver positive outcomes. A word version of the Scottish Government’s EQIA tool is available on the Scottish Government website at http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/People/Equality/18507/EQIAtooldoc.

The Equality Proofing the Budget and Policy Advisory Group (EPBPAG)
31 October 2007