

Reporting on 100 Days:

Moving Scotland forward

Reporting on 100 Days

Foreword – First Minister

There is no doubt Scotland can be more successful. That belief was a driving force in the SNP's election campaign and it is also now central to our approach in Government.

Before the election we said to Scotland that it was now time to move forward and in our programme for the first 100 days of an SNP Government we set out many of the actions we would take to set our nation on a more ambitious path.

Now, as we approach the 100th day of this first SNP Administration I am proud to be able to report back to the people of Scotland on the progress we have made.



First Minister launches National Conversation

We have pursued a three-fold approach to governing Scotland, based on competence, consensus, and offering a vision for the country.

We have taken some important first steps including action to reduce class sizes, abolish student fees, remove the iniquitous tolls on the Forth and Tay bridges, save vital accident and emergency units, and establish a Council of Economic Advisers to help boost Scotland's economy – the right choices for future success.

We have met the challenges of terrorist attack on Glasgow Airport and the Foot and Mouth outbreak in Surrey. I believe there is general agreement that the government has responded to these events calmly and with authority.

These issues put Scotland to the test and the country has not been found wanting.

And, with the publication of our white paper on Scotland's future, we have started a conversation with our nation, which asks every Scot to pause and reflect on the kind of country we are and to look forward to the kind of country we could be and should be.

Scotland has so much potential and with the right approach I have no doubt our nation can achieve so much more.

Alasdair Gray reminds us – ‘Work as though you lived in the early days of a better nation’. My commitment to Scotland is this – we will continue to work as we have done in our first 100 days, and these are the early days of a better nation.

Alex Salmond

First Minister of Scotland

Introduction

We have set out a clear purpose to focus Government and public services on creating a more successful country, with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish, through increasing sustainable economic growth. We have structured government to drive progress on this purpose with an overarching set of strategic objectives, aiming for a Scotland that is wealthier and fairer; healthier; safer and stronger; smarter and greener. This document reports on first steps to deliver that purpose.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES:

WEALTHIER & FAIRER – Enable businesses and people to increase their wealth and more people to share fairly in that wealth

HEALTHIER – Help people to sustain and improve their health, especially in disadvantaged communities, ensuring better, local and faster access to health care

SAFER & STRONGER – Help local communities to flourish, becoming stronger, safer places to live, offering improved opportunities and a better quality of life

SMARTER – Expand opportunities for Scots to succeed from nurture through to life long learning ensuring higher and more widely shared achievements

GREENER – Improve Scotland’s natural and built environment and the sustainable use and enjoyment of it



First Cabinet meeting

First Minister

In the first 100 days of Government we have delivered a smaller, more effective Ministerial team, with 6 Cabinet Secretaries (including the First Minister), 10 Ministers and the Lord Advocate and Solicitor General, the two non political law officers. A new structure for Scotland's Government has been put in place, transforming the Departmental structure, moving from 9 Heads of Department, to a Strategic Board with the Permanent Secretary and 5 Directors General (DG), with each DG having responsibility for driving one of the Government's strategic objectives. Directors General focus on the performance of the whole organisation against the Cabinet's agenda. The new structure means that the old Scottish Executive Departments no longer exist. Instead, each DG supports and manages a number of Directors, with these Directorates leading, presenting and developing policy for Ministers.

We have started discussions with the Presiding Officer and Parliament about how best to strengthen joint working on the future of Scotland between the Parliament Futures Forum and Scottish Government.

We have published a White Paper on Independence and further responsibilities for the Scottish Parliament, including a draft Bill for a referendum, and started a national conversation about the future of Scotland's Parliament and Government.



Statement to Parliament on Memorandum of Understanding with Libya

We are working on proposals for new management and monitoring arrangements for government and agencies, learning from other administrations like Virginia, USA. Key figures from Virginia have been working with the Scottish Government, advising on their approach.

We have begun early discussions on the creation of a wholly devolved Scottish civil service on the same model and basis as the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS). As a starting point, there have been discussions with colleagues in the NICS to identify what the parallels and differences are between our current situation and the model which exists in Northern Ireland. The Permanent Secretary has also had preliminary discussions with the Head of the Home Civil Service and other Permanent Secretaries with an interest and with Trade Unions representing Scottish Executive employees.

We will discuss proposals to bring Scottish Parliament closer to the people of Scotland with other parties and the Procedures Committee on the return of the Scottish Parliament

in September. We will write to both the Convener of the Procedures Committee, as the Committee most concerned with these matters, and to the Parliamentary Conveners' Group, to capture the whole range of Parliamentary views, seeking a meeting to take this forward. This will include looking at greater support for appropriate backbench legislative proposals, and opportunities to address matters of significant public concern, for example public petitions which could bring forward constructive legislative opportunities, where these are achievable within the Government's overall programme.

We are seeking meetings to begin discussions with the UK Government on options for the transfer of responsibility for our oil and gas resources to the Scottish Parliament. We are also investigating the arrangements that the Northern Irish Government has on energy powers.

Cabinet has been discussing how to make more of Scotland's National Day and the creation of a new Winter Festival stretching from St Andrew's Day through Hogmanay to Burns Night, as a focus for increasing tourism levels in Scotland during the winter months. We are working with agencies and local councils to map events and will make an announcement on the detail of the first Winter Festival after Parliament returns from recess. It has been decided that, for this year, staff in the core Scottish Executive Directorates, can choose to exchange their existing September weekend half-day holiday for a half-day holiday on St Andrew's Day. We expect this will give a lead to other organisations, particularly in the public sector. Senior management are discussing arrangements for future years with the Trade Unions.

We have confirmed our commitment to increasing Scotland's International Development budget by 100% and full details will be set out as part of the Strategic Spending Review. We are working up a number of options for the future direction of the International Development policy and how best to utilise the increased International Development Fund. This includes consideration of both Africa and countries with current and historic links to Scotland. Meetings are being set up with key stakeholders to seek views on the future priorities of the international development policy.

We have raised with the UK Government the issue of Scotland taking the lead in EU negotiations on fisheries. A formal request has been put to the UK Government and officials are developing options. This issue will be raised at forthcoming meetings of the Joint Ministerial Committee (Europe). The Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Environment attended the June Fisheries Council, and the First Minister met Commissioner Borg on 12 July.

In addition to these commitments from the 100 Days document, we have also:

- Taken positive and constructive steps to pursue an effective working relationship with the UK Government; this included taking a robust stance to promote Scotland's best interests in matters such as the prisoner transfer agreement with Libya.
- Signed an agreement with the Northern Ireland Executive to enhance mutual understanding, friendship and prosperity between our two countries.
- Contributed to saving Dumfries House and its historic collections for the nation.
- Announced that a Scottish Broadcasting Commission with the goal of defining a strategic way forward for television production and broadcasting is to be created.
- Contributed £250,000 aid to Darfur.



First Minister signs joint agreement with First Minister and Deputy First Minister of Northern Ireland at Stormont

Wealthier and Fairer

As part of our commitment to open, transparent government the Budget Review report 'Choices for a Purpose' (also known as the Howat report) was published on 24 May. This report by an independent, external group examined how budgets were meeting priorities across the Executive. We will consider its recommendations as part of our preparation for the Strategic Spending Review.

We are considering ways in which we can accelerate take up of the national e-Procurement Scotland service to ensure that selling to the public sector is made easier for Scottish suppliers and to deliver savings at all levels of government. We are also working towards the establishment of a national Scottish internet portal advertising contract opportunities in the Scottish public sector. We expect to award a contract for its development in October.

We have begun work on simplifying the delivery landscape. We are in advanced discussions to simplify the enterprise landscape and are developing our proposals in other areas. We have already tasked nine key organisations working in rural affairs and environment to draw up proposals to deliver a single rural and environmental service by summer 2008.



Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Sustainable Growth visits JP Morgan in Glasgow

We announced the remit and membership of the Council of Economic Advisers on 28 June to provide independent advice to increase Scotland's sustainable economic growth rate.

We are working on our proposals for fairer local taxation. We have made clear our intention to work with Local Authorities to deliver a freeze in council tax at 2007-08. We will set out our proposals to replace council tax with a local income tax based on ability to pay in the autumn.

We will set out proposals in the Strategic Spending Review during the autumn to reduce the rates bill for small businesses in Scotland. Our commitment to lower business rates was confirmed to Parliament on 30 May.

We have begun consulting stakeholders on developing the role of community councils, including identifying pilots for supporting community councils to play a greater role in

Community Planning, and also for allowing them to have some control over existing spending in their area to meet specific local priorities.

To support innovation we have announced an annual Saltire prize with a focus on meeting the technological challenges of renewable technologies and carbon capture, aiming for Scotland to become a world leader in the export of these technologies. We have begun discussions with stakeholders, and will announce further arrangements for the first prize in the autumn.

Work is in progress on the creation of a Scottish Futures Trust, which will obtain better value funding, including bond issues, to finance future infrastructure projects. This work will be reported to Cabinet in the autumn.

We are currently carrying out a review of the governance of the EARL project and will report findings back to Parliament in September. We have suspended work on the EARL project until the review is complete. As we made clear on 27 June, Transport Scotland are also pressing forward with consideration of alternatives as part of a wider rail improvements initiative and will report back to the Government on this matter in September.

Plans for signalling improvements to allow increased capacity on the Forth Rail Bridge are now being taken forward by Network Rail, followed by second phase improvements in 2009.

We have included fast-track proposals to improve track and signals to allow a substantial cut in journey times from Aberdeen and Inverness to Edinburgh and Glasgow and to increase capacity and ease the commute on the main routes into our major towns and cities in the first ever Scottish High Level Output Specification for the rail network. This £3.6 billion blueprint for Scotland's rail services was published in July.



Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Sustainable Growth launches roadshow on new Forth crossing

Parliament endorsed our plan to abolish tolls on the Forth and Tay bridges in June. Work is in hand to prepare the required legislation with the aim of completing the Bills parliamentary passage by the end of 2007.

We are taking forward fast-tracking the replacement Forth Crossing. We are working to ensure the Parliamentary and planning process pulls together to deliver this nationally important project on time. Over the summer Transport Scotland are holding public information events to present the evidence

from the Study Reports and to hear the views of people affected by the proposals. Further work to refine the funding, procurement, legislative mechanism and project governance structure will take place in parallel to allow Ministers to make decisions in the autumn.

We have commissioned a study into the use of Road Equivalent Tariff to set ferry fares, to ensure that the benefits of an improved transport network extend to all parts of Scotland. This study will report by end 2007 on the options for implementing such arrangements. It will also provide an initial assessment of the potential impact on the economies of the Western and Northern Isles and will set out the most appropriate form for our pilot project.

In addition to these commitments from the 100 Days document, we have also:

- Outlined plans for the Strategic Spending Review.
- Engaged Scotland's public sector and business leaders on how we can work together to focus government, public services and business on creating a more successful country.
- Begun to renew our engagement with the Third Sector which we see as playing a vital part in a more successful Scotland.
- Consulted with stakeholders on the reform of the Enterprise networks, with the aim of putting together proposals to agree a sharper focus for their work and better joint working with Visit Scotland.
- Reviewed governance arrangements for the procurement reform programme established following John McClelland's Report on Public Procurement in Scotland (published in March 2006). We will build on work underway to implement the recommendations and are considering ways in which we can accelerate the pace of change.
- Enhanced the role of the industry-led Regulatory Review Group to ensure the regulatory environment helps promote sustainable growth and Better Regulation practices are adhered to throughout the Scottish Government.
- Addressed the challenge of foot and mouth prudently but dynamically with a view to minimising damage to the industry and restoring Scottish exports as soon as possible.

Healthier

We are progressing proposals to give greater patient and community involvement in the delivery of local health services, including through direct elections to Scotland's Health Boards. These proposals will be published this autumn and – subject to consultation – will form the basis of a Local Healthcare Bill.

We have confirmed our proposal to phase out prescription charges in Scotland. Options for doing so are in the first stages of consideration and a decision will be brought to Parliament during the autumn.

We have announced our intention to establish a third dental school in Aberdeen.



Cabinet Secretary for Health and Wellbeing meets staff at Beatson Oncology Centre

We have announced our commitment to an 18-week waiting time guarantee. The implementation of this commitment will be one of the areas discussed in our planned consultation on a new health and wellbeing strategy in the autumn.

We have also announced that we will abolish hidden waiting lists by the end of 2007.

We have made clear to NHS Boards that we expect them to deliver the 62 day cancer target from December 2007.

We are implementing our commitment to introducing health checks based on assessed need in schools in the most disadvantaged areas. We are discussing funding to increase healthcare capacity to schools in our most deprived communities.

We have established the Sutherland Review to look at the funding of free personal care. The review aims to report in March 2008, with an interim report due in the autumn.

We have also announced that payments for personal and nursing care will increase in line with inflation from April 2008.

We have begun negotiations with the UK Government to attempt to recover up to £40 million in Attendance Allowance that was lost as a result of the Department of Work and Pensions response to the introduction of free personal care. This will also form part of the Sutherland Review.

We have set up a meeting with Scotland's sports stakeholders on 23 August, and among wider proposals to deliver greater success for Scottish sport, discussions will include future Olympic representation. The next steps will be determined following the outcome of the summit.

To make Scotland stronger we need our young people to commit to a future in Scotland. To help young Scots make their first step on the housing ladder we have announced that we will develop a Scottish Housing Support Fund to help first-time buyers meet their aspirations for home ownership. We are considering the proposal for a first home grant as part of that process. We have set up a Housing Supply Task Force to tackle the blockages which prevent the building of new houses. We will bring forward a further, comprehensive series of measures on housing in the autumn including proposals for reform of the social housing sector so that it is better placed to meet the needs of tenants.

In addition to these commitments from the 100 Days document, we have also:

- Announced the continuation of A&E services at Ayr and Monklands hospitals. In the future there will be independent scrutiny of NHS service change proposals.
- Started discussions with General Practitioners about more flexible access to primary care services.
- Announced the raising of the age for buying tobacco from 16 to 18 from October 2007.
- Commissioned Audit Scotland to undertake an audit of international recruitment procedures in five Health Boards to ensure that existing requirements are being adhered to and conform to best practice. This is being done to check if improvements can be made to international recruitment following on from the incident at Glasgow airport. The report will be available early autumn 2007.
- Committed to convening a short-life task force to refresh our approach to health improvement and tackling health inequalities.
- Implemented in full the NHS pay award from July this year, ahead of England and endorsed a proposed package which, if accepted by the trade unions, will result in a further investment of over £1 million on pay for the lowest paid workers in the NHS.
- Committed to introduce the HPV vaccine against cervical cancer.
- Announced steps to improve the position of carers in Scotland.
- Given our wholehearted support to Glasgow's 2014 Commonwealth Games Bid. Consultation on the Bill to deliver the games started on 28 June.



A&E closures reversed

Smarter

We have made a commitment to providing additional funding for a phased 50% increase in free nursery provision, delivering a full half-day for 3 and 4 year olds. The programme for delivering this will be set out in the Strategic Spending Review. We have started working towards this by announcing an increase in entitlement from this summer term.

We have taken the necessary first steps to start driving down class sizes in Primary 1 to 3 and to provide access to a nursery teacher for all children targeting those in the most deprived areas first. As well announcing funding for an extra 300 teachers and 250 more teacher training place from August, we have allocated an additional £40 million in capital funding for school buildings to enable councils to plan investment.



Cabinet Secretary for Education & Lifelong Learning, Minister for Children & Early Years and Minister for Schools and Skills

The Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning is about to start discussions with CoSLA about education spending, from both a local and national perspective. These discussions will reinforce the need for openness and clarity in handling the resources for education and there will be a particular focus on resource for recruitment to new teaching posts.



Graduate fee scrapped

We have begun the reform of student funding and confirmed, as a first step, the abolition of the graduate endowment fee and the consultation paper on the Bill has been published. We are actively pursuing proposals for implementing other student support measures and these will be considered in the context of the Strategic Spending Review.

In addition to these commitments from the 100 Days document, we have also:

- Announced the development of a new skills strategy which will be published in the coming weeks.
- Secured additional financial support for Crichton Campus in Dumfries following the publication of a new Academic Strategy by the Scottish Funding Council (SFC).
- Launched a process to develop a long term early years strategy covering child care, development and education.

- Set up a pilot of free school meals for all primary 1 to 3 children in selected local authority areas (Borders, East Ayrshire, Fife, Glasgow, West Dunbartonshire) from October
- Announced funding of £4 million to provide: increased training opportunities for foster and kinship carers; a national information and advice service for kinship carers through Citizens Advice Scotland; and the introduction of a national framework for the assessment and approval of kinship carers.
- Recognised our obligations under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child to ensure that all children in Scotland have the same right to care, protection and education. From autumn 2007, asylum children who have been here for at least 3 years will have the same access as Scottish children to full-time further and higher education. We are also working with Glasgow City Council to ensure the provision of nursery places for all 3 and 4 year old children of asylum families.

Safer and Stronger

We have begun negotiations with Westminster on the transfer of responsibilities for firearms legislation to the Scottish Parliament, to enable us to lay a framework for a consolidated Firearms Act designed for Scottish needs and circumstances. This will free us to take whatever further measures may be needed to deal with the problem of air weapons. The First Minister has raised this issue with the Lord Chancellor, and the Cabinet Secretary for Justice has raised it with the Home Secretary.



Cabinet Secretary for Justice meets
Lothian & Borders Police

We are committed to working with Police Forces to increase policing capacity by the equivalent of 1000 additional police officers, providing a visible and identifiable presence in Scotland's communities. The Cabinet Secretary for Justice will make an announcement on additional police recruitment once the results of the Strategic Spending Review are known.

We have announced plans to make early progress on reforming and revitalising community sentences, working across the political spectrum and with all key criminal justice interests. We want tough community sentences, with a new Criminal Justice Bill if necessary, to protect the public, improve reparation and rehabilitation outcomes for persistent offenders, to drive up quality and to help change attitudes to community sentences. We also want to see greater consistency and transparency in the sentences of our courts and will hold further consultation and dialogue with key interests, principally the judiciary, on how to achieve this outcome, including the arguments for the creation of a statutory Sentencing Council.

To enable better rehabilitation and better value for money, we have put arrangements in place for Mandatory Supervised Attendance Orders from 1 September to reduce the number of those imprisoned who don't pay their fines.

We have begun meeting with stakeholders to begin consultation on a new role for communities in the process of applying for anti-social behaviour orders and in reviewing the anti-social behaviour strategy to see where it can be strengthened and improved.

An announcement will be made shortly about setting up an inquiry into the Shirley McKie case.

In addition to these commitments from the 100 Days document, we have also:

- Begun the process of developing a national consensus around a new drugs strategy by publishing 5 significant reports on methadone and other key aspects of drugs policy.
- Committed to extending the most successful elements of Drug Treatment and Testing Orders to lower level offenders to help break the link between addictions and crime.
- Started discussion with key players such as the Airborne initiative as we seek new ways to deal with young men who commit a lot of crime.
- Announced that we will take a new approach to reinvesting the proceeds of crime to make a real difference to young people's lives, making a visible impact where it is most needed. Further details will be announced in the autumn, when around £8 million of recovered assets will become available.
- Lifted the ban on alcohol at Murrayfield Stadium.
- Announced that the new Scottish Legal Complaints Commission will be based in Edinburgh.
- Started a review of the law to ensure that alcohol is not seen as a mitigating factor in crimes.
- Taken forward proposals on a cross-party basis to strengthen controls on sex offenders.
- Begun discussions with the legal profession on reforms to ensure it can compete in a global market, while providing access to a full range of legal services for Scots.

Greener

We have made clear our opposition to plans for new nuclear power stations in Scotland.

The First Minister has written to the European Commission to make the case for bringing an EU-wide green energy centre to Aberdeen.

The First Minister held initial discussions with the European Commission on taking forward proposals for North Sea super-grid. He will meet the Norwegian Government in the autumn to take forward those proposals connecting Scotland's huge offshore renewable generation capacity to electricity markets across Europe. Officials are already engaged in a range of work on grid and subsea connections. A study on links to Ireland is underway and a study on a North Sea connection is being scoped.



Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Environment and Minister for Environment help volunteers build a sensory garden

We will set out plans to treble current funding for community and micro-generation in the Strategic Spending Review. We have commissioned further evidence, which will be available later in August and will inform the design of the scheme.

The Scottish Government is discussing with HM Treasury how it can access the funds held by Ofgem from the fossil fuel levy to support Scottish renewable projects.

We have established an expert panel, including representatives from Norway, Denmark and Austria to report on the changes needed to develop a strategy for low carbon buildings and improve building regulations to increase energy efficiency standards to those that exist in Scandinavia. This will allow householders to significantly reduce their energy use and bills. The strategy will be published before the end of the year and the increased standards will be introduced as soon as practicable afterwards.

We have begun discussions with local authorities on maximising recycling in Scotland. All local authorities, together with representatives of other key delivery agents were invited to a workshop on 13 August to develop a strategy for increasing recycling to 40% by 2010. We will be following this up with a broader waste summit of all interested parties, including local authorities, to explore the key options for moving forward towards a zero waste society.

We have initiated a new entrants scheme for farming. This has been taken forward in the Scotland Rural Development Programme, announced on 31 May, which includes investment of almost £1.6 billion investment for agriculture, forestry, environment and community projects across rural Scotland.

In addition to these commitments from the 100 Days document, we have also:

- Made a commitment to set a target of cutting emissions by 80% by 2050. We will be drafting a Climate Change Bill to take this forward.
- Amended the Habitats Regulations in response to concerns about ship-to-ship oil transfers in the Firth of Forth. We have made firm representations to the UK Government, with the unanimous support of the Scottish Parliament, to use their powers to stop these proposals.
- Launched a review of the implementation of inshore fisheries policy, in order to accelerate the introduction of Inshore Fisheries Groups across Scotland.
- Announced a commitment to Scottish marine legislation on 19 June.
- Created a dedicated Food Industry Unit in the Scottish Executive, committed to dialogue with supermarkets, and placing a new emphasis on healthy, sustainable, local food.
- Started working more closely with the fishing industry and environmental representatives to bring forward innovative Scottish solutions on fisheries, such as the pilot project for "real time closures" of fishing areas to protect juvenile cod.
- Announced £10 million investment for the Gateway Visitor Centre at the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (RBGE)
- Ensured that every Emergency Strategic Co-ordinating Group throughout Scotland has reviewed their current contingency preparedness for flooding.
- Announced on 21 June our intention to reform the current legislation on flooding. The reform of the Flood Prevention (Scotland) Act 1961 will allow a modernised and sustainable approach to flood prevention with streamlined decision making. We will be consulting widely on how best to achieve this and a flooding summit in Perth on 10 September with invited stakeholders will begin that process.
- Held a number of Ministerial meetings in rural venues across Scotland to hear at first hand about issues that are important locally.
- Begun working with our partners – including local authorities, public bodies and the National Health Service – to become environmental exemplars, developing and publishing a detailed programme to improve the Scottish public sector's environmental and sustainability performance.
- Committed to publishing a green procurement action plan later this year. The action plan will guide public bodies on how to assess and improve sustainability in their procurement while delivering value for money.

- Committed to develop plans by spring 2008 to deliver the next phase of the Scottish biodiversity strategy, and to look closely at how we should best approach the commitment to halt biodiversity loss by 2010.
- Announced provision of £250,000 per annum over the next 3 years to assist the environmental volunteering sector increase the quality of the environmental volunteering experience and its benefits to our communities.
- Challenged the organisations delivering on behalf of the Rural Affairs and Environment portfolio (including SEPA, SNH and Forestry Commission Scotland) to produce a proposal for a single rural delivery service. The objective is to shift the costs of dealing with multiple organisations away from the customer and reduce the opportunity cost of the inspection regime through increased co-ordination. This is to be achieved by employing the existing flexibility in organisational roles and responsibilities. The proposal will be submitted in September and assumes implementation in summer 2008.

