

From: Peter Hawkins **Date:** 13 November 2009 16:05:08 GMT

To: sarah boyack <sarah.boyack.msp@scottish.parliament.uk>

Subject: budget 2010-11

Dear Sarah,

With discussions ongoing on the budget, I would like to ask for more money to be found for promoting cycling - and less for trunk roads.

We all know that cycling ticks all the boxes, and it is disgraceful that current Government spending on it amounts to less than 1% of the transport budget.

One aspect of the benefits of cycling which isn't often aired are the economic benefits. It has been calculated that a spend of £100,000 yields a net benefit if it leads to only 11 people cycling regularly, and regularly is generously defined as 'at least 3 times a week'.

These benefits come from the reduction in congestion, where cycling takes place in towns and cities - just imagine if all those cyclists on Edinburgh's streets were each in their own car - and from reduced absenteeism at work, as well as better work performance, and from the reduction in costs to the Health Service.

To offset an increase for cycling I would suggest a cut in the spending on trunk roads. If Scotland is committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 42% by 2020, transport will have to take its share. At present, emissions from transport are rising. New roads would mean even more cars, more people driving, and driving longer distances; and hence more congestion. The economic benefits of trunk road building have never been clear either. Of all the new roads in the programme, I don't believe a single yard can be justified, when environmental costs are taken account of.

In particular, MSPs should take a hard look at the extent to which the Additional Forth Crossing can be justified, and negotiate to shelve it indefinitely.

Along with a reduction in the trunk road programme, Transport Scotland could also be cut down to size, which would lead to more savings, and more money available for socially worthwhile causes.

I would be grateful if you could pass on these views to your Party Spokespersons on Transport and on Finance, and ask them to make this a condition for supporting the budget.

Yours sincerely,

Peter Hawkins