

SCOTLAND'S  
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# THE SCOTSMAN

O'Neill 'honoured'  
to be back at Celtic  
after Nancy sacked

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Why is Police  
Scotland  
losing so  
many officers?

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## Funding demand as struggling Scots colleges face going bust

◆ Colleges boss warns ministers should provide long term solution of additional £120-£150m

### EXCLUSIVE

Catriona Stewart  
Education Correspondent

Scotland's colleges boss has warned the Scottish Government it must stop treating colleges like a "Cinderella sector" and provide sustainable investment in the forthcoming budget.

Gavin Donoghue, chief executive of Colleges Scotland, said Finance Secretary Shona Robison should heed warn-

ings about the parlous financial state of colleges and provide a long term funding solution of between £120 million and £150m additional investment. He claimed out of touch politicians have "no experience" of colleges and so overlook the sector in favour of universities and schools.

However, with recent reports outlining a real-terms 20 per cent funding cut for colleges and the threat of 11 colleges running out of cash this year, Mr Donoghue said the situation has never been more urgent.

"We've had the Audit Scotland

report and the Scottish Funding Council reports, which make it abundantly clear that a 20 per cent real terms reduction has a significant impact on headcount of staff, but also has left 30,000 students unable to get the course choice that they want at a college," Mr Donoghue told The Scotsman.

"We've been liaising with the officials and ministers and the cabinet secretary behind the scenes to make sure that that case has been made and I think we're getting a sympathetic hearing."

The budget submission from

Colleges Scotland sets out four scenarios, ranging from a flat cash scenario through to a long-term sustainable investment.

Should the finance secretary opt for a flat cash settlement – the same sum as last year – in her January 13 statement, Colleges Scotland predicts 11 institutions could run out of cash in the coming academic year.

Instead, it is lobbying for between £120 and £150 million of revenue, that would give colleges sustainable investment

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Maduro protests against capture and pleads not guilty in US court

Amy Watson

A defiant Nicolas Maduro declared himself the "president of my country" as he protested against his capture and pleaded not guilty to the federal drug-trafficking charges that the Trump administration used to justify removing him from power.

"I was captured," Maduro said in Spanish as translated by a courtroom reporter before being cut off by the judge.

Asked later for his plea to the charges, he stated: "I'm innocent. I am not guilty. I am a decent man, the president of my country."

The courtroom appearance, Maduro's first since he and his wife were seized from their home in a middle-of-the-night military operation, kick-starts the US government's most consequential prosecution in decades of a foreign head of state.

The criminal case in Manhattan is unfolding against the diplomatic backdrop of an audacious US-engineered regime change that President Donald Trump has said will enable his administration to "run" the South American country.

Maduro, wearing a blue jail uniform, was led into court along with his co-defendant wife just before noon for the brief, but required, legal proceeding.

Both put on headsets to hear the English-language proceeding as it is translated into Spanish. The couple

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Snowed  
under

People in Dufftown in Moray clearing cars yesterday as heavy snow blanketed parts of Scotland. Fresh weather warnings have been issued after hundreds of schools in northern Scotland were shut yesterday and travel was disrupted while the Met Office extended a yellow weather warning which now covers the entire country

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