

For the benefit of people across Scotland, COSLA expects a UK government, working with their devolved governments, to respect the democratic mandate of Councillors and put the **LOCAL** back into Local Government by:

Working collectively across the spheres of government to accelerate work to tackle the causes and effects of poverty, particularly the impact on children.

The impact on our communities: tackling inequalities

- To eliminate poverty in Scotland, we must better understand the connection between poverty and inequality, particularly gender inequality. The Scottish Government and COSLA have updated our Equally Safe strategy to prevent and eliminate violence against women and girls (VAWG). This strategy acknowledges that women, who are more likely than men to live in poverty, and that violence, against women and girls sustains this.
- Women's limited access to well-paid, secure work, reliance on social security, and increased caring responsibilities often lead to poverty. Domestic abuse and violence against women and girls (VAWG) further limit their economic resources and opportunities. The gender pay gap and undervaluation of women's work, especially for single mothers who make up over 90% of single parents in Scotland, exacerbate these issues. Lack of child maintenance payments and high living costs further strain their finances.

Our ask for the incoming UK Government:

- COSLA urges a newly elected UK Government to work with devolved and local government to ensure that all policy reviews and developments include a strong commitment to gender analysis at both a national and local level. By taking this approach and empowering local government this will help mitigate these challenges, reduce the risk of women and children falling into or deeper into poverty, and support their recovery from the harmful impacts of VAWG. A strong well-funded and empowered local government working with local partners can take a preventative approach to ensuring women and children are lifted out of poverty and live free from fear and violence.
- COSLA specifically re-states our strong opposition to the current UK Government's policy of restricting benefits to 2 children and the subsequent requirement on women to disclose they have been raped to access further benefits.