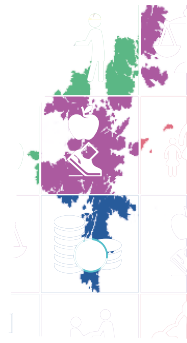


Social Care



Post-Budget Briefing

#FundLocallyBenefitNationally



The Facts

The 2025/26 Budget contains £289 million of additional uncommitted core revenue funding and £48 million of uncommitted capital funding for Local Government.

However, this Budget fails to recognise the scope and scale of the unprecedented financial challenges being faced by our councils and Health and Social Care Partnerships, and the damaging impact this continues to have on social care services.

The 2025/26 Budget:



Fails to provide sufficient funding to improve social care and social work capacity:

to ensure our councils and partner providers can attract and retain a skilled and supported workforce and sustain key local services, vital to the health and wellbeing of both individuals and communities.



Represents a missed opportunity:

to tackle key issues across the whole system and recognise the individual, community and national benefits of upstream investment in social care and social work support.



Does not offer sustainable capital funding:

to allow our councils to respond to changing demographics and more complex care needs, such as through the construction of appropriate housing and residential care facilities.



Urgent Need for Greater Funding

Our councils have increased real terms spend on social care by 29% since 2010/11 at the expense of other preventative, non-statutory services. However, rising operational costs, escalating demand for services, and high inflation mean that the need for greater funding is more urgent than ever.

Unprecedented Challenges

The level of funding provided in the 2025/26 Budget will not resolve the unprecedented challenges being faced in local social care services:

Higher Demand and Growing Levels of Unmet Need:

6120 people currently waiting for social care assessments

Workforce Recruitment and Capacity:

97% of councils are operating with staff shortages in social care services

Funding Gaps:

£357m funding gap for IJBs in 2023/24 – an increase of 187% from 2022/23 projections

Health Inequalities:

25 year gap in healthy life expectancy between Scotland's most and least deprived areas

Delayed Discharge:

shared national efforts to reduce delayed discharge numbers and reduce pressure on public sector partners continually constrained by reduced resources.

This is a difficult budget for social care



Vital Community Services

Our councils provide vital community services across Scotland every single day, ensuring that 97% of those in hospital can return home without delay.

With fair and flexible funding, we could build upon exceptional local initiatives:



East Renfrewshire have set up Talking Points, led in partnership with the third sector, in order to re-direct, signpost, and support individuals at the front door of hospitals, reducing pressure on health and social care services locally. This has resulted in 85% of initial referrals received being redirected to more appropriate services.



Dumfries and Galloway established physical activity pathways which enables all health and social care professionals to refer any adult not meeting the physical activity and/or muscle strengthening guidance to a physical activity programme. With only 37% of adults aged 75+ meeting the recommended levels of physical activity, this initiative increases mobility and prevents deconditioning and frailty, while community classes encourage social connection



North Lanarkshire increased levels of breastfeeding in communities from one of the lowest in the UK. Through introducing breastfeeding champions to work and breaking down barriers to breastfeeding, rates improved in the most deprived communities which historically have been challenging to shift.

Additional investment 'upstream' in community services

Councils can provide sustainable services and meet rising demand

Councils able to meet shared goals such as reduced delayed discharge numbers

Health and wellbeing benefits for individuals and communities

Reduced demand for services provided by partners such as the NHS

Nationwide public sector benefits

Alongside additional funding, it is crucial that we also re-think how we provide funding for social care. It is time we moved away from channelling resources into 'downstream' services and instead provide additional investment 'upstream' in community services.

It is vital that we start providing investment for the social care system of the future. With Scotland's population aged 75 and over expected to rise to **774,000 by 2045,**

it is crucial that the Scottish Government provide fair and sustainable funding in 2025/26.



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