

**Keeping the promise – halfway to 2030**

This is an open letter to children and young people with care experience in Scotland from Cllr Tony Buchanan, COSLA Children and Young People Spokesperson

Wednesday 5 February 2025

Dear Children and young people with care experience in Scotland,

I am writing to you as the COSLA spokesperson who leads on areas which affect Children and Young People. I was asked to speak directly, on behalf of Local Government, on the 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the promise being published and halfway point of Scotland's commitment to keep the promise by 2030. I want to make clear that Local Government across Scotland continues to be fully committed to keeping the promise by 2030.

In the last 5 years, people at all levels across Local Government have been working to improve the experiences of children and young people who are supported by our care services. There is great work happening across councils to ensure that you take part in planning your support and that your voice is included in designing services. Councils across Scotland have worked hard to transform services and ensure that children, young people and families get the right support, in the right place, at the right time. This includes progressing new ways to deliver support early, thinking about the things you need as you grow up and become an adult, and changing how and where your 'care' is provided. For example, keeping more children and young people with their families, helping you at school and supporting unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.

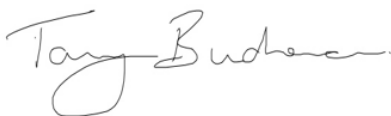
COSLA continues to work nationally so that the supports you access locally are there when you need them. The Local Government Promise Programme Board oversees and drives the delivery of the collective work required of Local Government. The board has people from different services (including education, housing, employability, children's services, finance) to help everyone work together. We know that no one service will be able to keep the Promise on their own and we also have to work with partners in other organisations as well, such as health and police.

COSLA's Promise Leads Network brings together people, known as promise leads, from all councils to share learning and experiences of work happening locally to keep the

promise. The people on this network are incredibly passionate and knowledgeable, and hearing from them is incredibly useful to the work of the Local Government Promise Programme Board. Our Promise leads ensure the experiences and voices of children, young people and families are kept at the centre of any discussion and provide insight into what it is like to support people. We know that positive relationships with the people who support you are really important and there is a huge amount happening locally to help them give you the right support. However, we know more needs to happen nationally to create the conditions needed for them to provide the right support in the right way at the right time to families.

We know that a lot of progress has been made in the last 5 years, but to keep the Promise by 2030 more needs to happen and at a faster pace. While nobody could have predicted some of the challenges we have seen since 2020 and the impact of these, Local Government remains ambitious, determined and hopeful about what can be achieved in the next 5 years. Thank you for continuing to work with us, for holding us to account and telling us what we could do better. We will continue to listen to you and keep you at the centre of our minds in all our work to keep the promise.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tony Buchanan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial 'T'.

Councillor Tony Buchanan

COSLA Children and Young People Spokesperson