

Minister for Local Government Empowerment and Planning submission of 13 February 2024

PE2074/A: Increase local government funding to help protect the vulnerable elderly population and prevent the closure of care homes

Please accept my apologies for providing a response to this petition at such a late date. There was a delay in this being passed to my officials for consideration.

I can advise you that this is not a matter that the Scottish Government can intervene in. In a challenging Budget settlement, the Scottish Government has increased the Local Government Settlement's share of the discretionary budget; delivered record funding of over £13.9 billion; and made available a further £144 million to support reaching agreement with councils to freeze council tax.

As long as they act lawfully, it is up to each democratically-elected council how it manages its day-to-day business and decision-making processes including the spending of discretionary budget allocations. It is indeed the view of Scottish Ministers that locally elected representatives are best placed to prioritise the needs of local communities.

High quality community health and social care support helps creating thriving communities and a thriving economy across Scotland. We have heard repeatedly from people with lived experience that the current adult social care system must change to drive up standards to a consistent level across the country. We remain committed to delivering a National Care Service to improve quality, fairness and consistency of provision that meets individuals' needs. To achieve this we will continue working with people with lived experience of social care and community healthcare, as well as councils and trade unions, as we build the National Care Service.

Once again, please accept my apologies for the delay in providing this response. I do hope, however this reply is of some assistance.

JOE FITZPATRICK