



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Local Government, Housing and Planning Committee

Rory Steel
Scotland Political Officer
GMB

22 August 2025

Dear Rory,

The Local Government, Housing and Planning Committee will focus on public service reform as part of its pre-budget scrutiny of the 2026-27 Scottish Budget. It hopes to explore the following key questions:

1. How have local authorities been reforming public services in recent years?
2. What is preventing councils from achieving “transformative change”?
3. Given local government’s claims that efficiencies have been achieved over the past 15 years, what impacts have these had on service users and the local government workforce?
4. What support is available to councils looking at ways of reforming how they deliver services?
5. To what extent would multi-year funding packages help local authorities make changes to how they deliver services?
6. What scope is there for local authorities to shift resource from 'corporate functions' to 'frontline workforce'? To what extent could more shared services between councils help reduce non-frontline staff numbers?
7. Given the reduction in satisfaction with a range of council services, what more should be done to include the public in the redesign, delivery and improvement of public services?
8. To what extent does the current legislative framework prevent local authorities from transforming the way they deliver public services?

The Committee understands that GMB may not be able to answer all of these questions. However, we would appreciate responses to those questions you feel are relevant to your remit.

Contact: Local Government, Housing and Planning Committee, The Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh, EH99 1SP. Email localgov.committee@parliament.scot. We welcome calls through Relay UK and in BSL through Contact Scotland BSL.

I would be grateful to receive your response no later than 29th September.

Yours sincerely,

Ariane Burgess MSP
Convener