Dear Cllr Aitken

The Committee took evidence from the Accounts Commission on its report entitled *Local government in Scotland: Challenges and performance 2019* at its meeting on 8 May 2019. During the session, the Committee explored several matters relating to local government funding and performance in order to inform its ongoing budget scrutiny. You can read the Official Report of the session here:


During this evidence session, reference was made to paragraph 121 of the Accounts Commission report which states that—

“The Scottish Housing Regulator reported in March 2018 that Glasgow City Council had failed to offer temporary or emergency accommodation to 40 per cent of the 5,377 applications it had for assistance in 2016/17. It had also provided settled accommodation to just over half of the households it had a duty to provide to.”

This finding reflects a key theme to emerge from our 2017/18 inquiry into homelessness: that local authorities were not always able to fulfil their statutory duty to provide secure accommodation to those presenting as homeless. This issue remains a concern to the Committee, which, although the inquiry has now concluded, has agreed to keep a watching brief on homelessness.

On behalf of the Committee, I would be grateful if you could provide an update on Glasgow City Council’s performance in providing temporary or emergency accommodation to individuals presenting as homeless.
In their discussion of the evidence after the 8 May meeting, the Committee also noted recent reports that Glasgow City Council have made the decision to reduce funding to third sector organisations which provide services to homeless people by £2.6 million.

We noted that this reduction accompanies implementation by the Council of a “housing first” policy towards homeless - a policy strongly advocated by the Committee in our report. We would welcome further information on the Council’s decision to implement these changed funding arrangements, and of how it fits into the Council’s overall vision for addressing homelessness in the city, and meeting its statutory requirements in this area. The Committee would also welcome further information on what action you propose to take to mitigate the impact of these changed funding arrangements on the affected organisations and those working for them.

I would be grateful if you could provide a response to this letter by close on 24 June 2019. If you have any questions about these, then please do not hesitate to contact the Clerks on the contact details provided above.

Kind regards,

James Dornan MSP
Convener of the Local Government and Communities Committee