



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Social Justice and Social Security Committee

Sally Loudon
Chief Executive
COSLA

Via email only

Social Justice and Social Security
Committee
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

Email: SJSS.committee@parliament.scot

22 June 2023

Dear Sally Loudon,

Kinship Care

The Committee is following up on the progress being made on its recommendations regarding local authority/COSLA action and Kinship Care.

COSLA gave evidence along with other stakeholders on [24 February 2022](#). This was followed by evidence from the then Minister for Children and Young People, Clare Haughey, on [31 March 2022](#). The Committee [reported](#) its findings in relation to Kinship Care and received a response from the Scottish Government on [23 November 2022](#).

The report noted the Committee's disappointment that some local authorities may be using a narrow interpretation of what 'at risk' of being looked after means when deciding if a kinship carer is entitled to local authority support, essentially requiring a family to be in crisis rather than taking a preventative approach. The Committee recommended that the Kinship Care Collaborative should work as a matter of urgency to clarify guidance on this matter so that the interpretation of the provisions aligns with the Scottish Government's

stated policy aim of getting it right for every child. The Committee would like to know whether this issue has now been addressed. (Paragraph 34 of the report)

It would also be useful to know what progress local authorities have made with ensuring information about kinship care is easily available to the public, including if and how entitlements differ between different types of kinship arrangement. (Paragraph 49)

The Committee notes that COSLA was working with the Scottish Government on the introduction of a Scottish Recommended Allowance with a focus on resolving any outstanding issues, including resourcing. The Committee would welcome an update from COSLA on how these discussions are proceeding. (Paragraph 50)

Also, it would be helpful to know what action has been taken to ensure local government staff advising kinship carers on benefits or allowances are aware of the range of different kinship care arrangements and have access to clear, easy to follow guidance. (Paragraph 63)

Further to this, the Committee would like confirmation that there is now clear guidance for local authorities on the holistic support that should be available to all kinship care families and that the guidance recognises that as well as support for children, carers themselves may need support in dealing with the impact on their own wellbeing of their kinship care role. (Paragraph 75)

The Committee would welcome a response by 24 July, so that it can take decisions on its forthcoming work programme.

This letter is also copied to Natalie Don MSP, Minister for Children, Young People and Keeping the Promise.

Yours sincerely,



Collette Stevenson MSP
Convener
Social Justice and Social Security Committee