

Education, Children and Young People Committee

6th Meeting, 2023 (Session 6), Wednesday 22 February 2023

Scottish Budget 2023-24

Introduction

At its meeting on [18 January](#), the Committee took evidence from the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills, Shirley-Anne Somerville MSP, regarding the Scottish Budget 2023-24.

Following that meeting, the Committee received a letter from COSLA regarding school staff and the budget dated [7 February](#).

Also on 7th February, the Cabinet Secretary made a [statement](#) to the Chamber, explaining that the Scottish Government planned to “withhold or recoup” monies from local authorities should the agreed outputs on teacher numbers not be met.

The Committee agreed to write to the [Cabinet Secretary](#) and to [COSLA](#) to seek additional information. The Committee also agreed to invite the Cabinet Secretary to give further evidence in person.

The Committee’s letters to the Scottish Government and COSLA, and the subsequent responses, are annexed to this paper.

Committee meeting

At this morning’s meeting, the Committee will take evidence from—

- Shirley-Anne Somerville MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills; and
- Sam Anson Deputy Director Workforce, Infrastructure & Digital, Scottish Government.

Supporting information

A SPICe briefing, prepared for this session, is included in [Annexe A](#) of this paper.

The Committee’s letters to COSLA and the Scottish Government, and the subsequent responses, are included at [Annexe B](#).

[COSLA has written separately to the Local Government, Housing and Planning Committee](#). Although this letter duplicates much of the information contained in COSLA’s correspondence to the Education, Children and Young People Committee, page 3 includes examples highlighting the potential impact of budget cuts on other areas of local government spending and is therefore provided for your information at [Annexe C](#).

**Education, Children and Young People Committee Clerking Team
17 February 2023**

The logo for SPICe, featuring the letters 'SPICe' in a white, sans-serif font on a dark purple background.The logo for The Information Centre, featuring the text 'The Information Centre' and 'An t-Ionad Fiosrachaidh' in white, sans-serif font on a dark blue background.

Education, Children and Young People Committee

22 February 2023

Budget 2023-24 – Teacher numbers

Introduction

The Scottish Government published its budget and accompanying documents on 15 December 2022. The Committee heard from the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills and the Minister for Children and Young People on [18 January 2023](#).

On 13 December 2022, the Scottish Government also published [Schools in Scotland 2022: summary statistics](#). This includes the first tranche of data from the 2022 teacher and pupil censuses.

The teacher census showed a small year-on-year drop on the number of FTE teachers. This is in the context of the Scottish Government seeking to increase the number of teachers and classroom assistants and providing additional money to local authorities to achieve this.

The Committee explored this issue with the Cabinet Secretary on 18 January, during which Ms Somerville said she was “exceptionally disappointed” that the statistics showed a small decrease in numbers of teachers and that there had been a lack of progress in the proportion of permanent teachers. Ms Somerville told the Committee—

“I very much hope to see an improvement in that picture this year, so that there is an agreement between us and local authorities to deliver on the money that we have for recruitment. The £145.5 million remains in the budget. We are providing greater flexibility to councils to use that funding, because I appreciate that there are recruitment and retention issues and challenges. We are trying to be as flexible as possible, but, to be blunt, if we have an agreement at the start of the year that the money should be used for recruitment, my expectation is that it will be. I am very keen to see whether we can reset and see some shared understanding following the meetings that will take place on the matter.” ([OR 18 January 2023](#), col 11)

The Cabinet Secretary gave a statement to Parliament on [7 February](#) that the Government planned to “withhold or recoup” monies from local authorities should the agreed outputs not be met. Following this statement, the Committee agreed to invite the Cabinet Secretary to give further evidence to the Committee on the Budget.

Additional teachers

The SNP Manifesto committed the current Government to—

“Recruit at least 3,500 additional teachers and classroom assistants - over and above the 1400 teachers recruited during the pandemic - allowing teachers more time out of the classroom to prepare lessons and improve their skills.”

This pledge was re-iterated by the First Minister in [a speech to Parliament in May 2021](#) and by the [Cabinet Secretary in a speech on 12 June 2021](#).

On [18 August 2021, the Scottish Government announced](#)—

“Temporary COVID recovery funding of £80 million that helped to recruit 1,400 teachers and 250 support staff is to be made permanent.

From April 2022, the sum will be allocated annually to the local government settlement. This will allow local authorities to offer sustained employment of additional teachers and support staff, while meeting local needs and benefitting Scotland’s children and young people.

This is in addition to the £65.5 million permanent additional funding announced on 9 August for local authorities to recruit a further additional 1,000 teachers and 500 support staff. It will also be allocated annually from 2022 onwards.”

Adding together the sums £80m and £65.5m gives us the figure of £145.5m. As noted above, these sums were added into the general grant for local authorities. That is, not specifically ringfenced. The nominal allocations to each local authority in the current financial year are set out in Annexe 1 of this paper.

The 2021-22 Programme for Government said the plan was to recruit “at least 3,500 additional teachers and 500 classroom assistants” over the course of the Parliament. The target increased from the manifesto (and earlier speeches) commitment of 3,500 teachers and classroom assistants. This increase reflected the text of the Scottish Government and Scottish Green Party Shared Policy Programme, [published on 20 August 2021](#).

Of the £145.5m, £65.5m is to begin to increase the number of teachers by 1,000 towards the overall goal of 3,500 as well as for 500 support staff – the total of the target set out in the 2021-22 Programme for Government.

National modelling and determining a baseline

[The Teacher Workforce Planning Advisory Group](#) (“TWPAG”) provides advice to Ministers on a variety of matters, notably targets for intakes to Initial Teacher Education (“ITE”) programmes.

[In October 2021 TWPAG published its modelling assumptions](#) to meet the new target. The move to an absolute increase in FTE teachers was a departure from how the group had worked up to then which focused on Pupil Teacher Ratios (“PTR”) and particular subjects where additional supply was required. The modelling paper acknowledged this and said—

“Workforce planning model has historically been based upon the assumption of maintaining pupil teacher ratios across each sector. With pupil numbers projected to fall overall by 2025, the modelled requirement for teachers would be 52,700 by 2025 if PTRs were matched.

“Instead of this approach, the statistical modelling has looked at the ITE students required to meet the PfG targets by 2025.”

The paper estimated that the baseline for the additional teachers would be 53,600 teachers. The paper quoted a target for FTE teachers of 57,100 – that is an increase of 3,500 teachers. This represents a 7% increase in teachers over the five-year period.

As noted in the quote above, pupil rolls are expected to fall overall by 2025. This is expected to be a longer-term trend, however, rolls will fall first in primary school before those smaller cohorts move into secondary school. In the period 2020-2025, rolls in Primary schools are expected to fall by 9%, while rolls in secondary schools are expected to increase by 2%. TWPAG set out a number of scenarios of intake targets in ITE courses with various levels of weighting towards secondary school teachers.

TWPAG is concerned with longer term planning and the lead in times for changes in teacher numbers are measured in years (but will differ depending on the route taken, e.g. undergraduate or PGDE). TWPAG set out two options for 2025-29, one was to maintain the number of FTE teachers and the other was to maintain PTRs. A [third option was considered in a paper presented at the March 2022 meeting of TWPAG](#): to maintain ITE intake targets.

The changes in school rolls will likely not be uniform across Scotland. Local level planning to meet these targets has not been set out. The [minutes of TWPAG from March 2022](#) (the latest available) stated that COSLA was undertaking a needs analysis to “highlight the different needs across local authorities and hopefully capture where vacancies are going unfilled.” In relation to meeting national targets for intake into ITE courses, these minutes also stated—

“It was noted that there are significant challenges for universities in all of the modelling scenarios that are being considered. Universities also face challenges in introducing new programmes within a short timeframe. Any failure to meet this year’s targets will add to the numbers needed in future years.

“In terms of what can be done to help recruitment, it was suggested that more flexibility is needed around entry requirements. The Memorandum on Entry

Requirements to Programmes of Initial Teacher Education can be updated at any point in time and it was agreed to consider how to modify them without lowering standards.”

Summary school statistics

Summary school statistics are based on a number of data collections, including the annual teacher and pupil censuses. Initial results of these data collections are published in December with more detailed statistics released the following March. Schools in Scotland 2022: summary statistics was published on [13 December](#).

The annual teacher and pupil census showed that, as of September 2022, there has been a small year-on-year drop on the number of FTE teachers. The Government’s statistical bulletin stated—

“Teacher numbers increased in most sectors (secondary, special schools, centrally employed and ELC) but the decrease in the primary sector was large enough to result in a reduction in teacher FTE overall. Furthermore, the decrease in primary teachers was proportionally higher than the decrease in primary pupils meaning there were more pupils per teacher and consequently the primary PTR increased from 15.1 to 15.3.”

The proportion of teachers in temporary posts was 13% which is the same as in 2021.

There was a large drop in the percentage of Teacher Induction Scheme teachers who were in teaching posts in a publicly funded school in Scotland in the year following their probation. This fell from 80% for the 2020/21 cohort to 70% for the most recent TIS cohort (2021/22). The statistical bulletin noted that “teachers not in a post in a publicly funded school may be teaching elsewhere (including abroad or in the independent sector), in non-teaching employment, or they may be unemployed.” The reason for the 10 percentage point year-on-year fall is not clear at this stage.

The Summary statistics also set out the number of FTE teachers employed by each local authority and the pupil teacher ratios. A lower PTR means on average more teachers per pupil. Annexe 2 reproduces this data. The range of the data for the pupil teacher ratio is from the low of Shetland at 10.0 to the high of East Lothian at 14.7. The table in Annexe 2 shows some of the complexity of considering this data and local authorities will have different starting points. For example, Aberdeen City increased its teachers between 2021-2022 by 4.0%, but its PTR is the third highest of the 32 local authorities. Conversely, the number of FTE teachers in North Ayrshire reduced by 2.8%, and while this increased its PTR, in 2022 it is the sixth lowest of the 32 LAs.

The number of support staff are published in [an annual dataset normally released](#) in March. The most recent data is for 2021. The release has a national level time series from 2018-2021 which shows that FTE “Pupil Support Assistants” increased from 13,803 in 2018 to 16,299 in 2021.

COSLA’s letter to the Committee on 7 February stated—

“We understand that the teacher census can be viewed as a useful snapshot of progress and it does demonstrate a substantial increase since 2019, with an

additional 2,040 teacher in the system. However, it does not present the full picture, nor was it agreed that it would be used to monitor Local Government's use of the £145.5m. Instead we agreed, through the Scottish Government and COSLA's joint governance process for funding, that we would jointly design a simple collection exercise."

Purpose of the additional resource

COSLA's letter to the Committee on 7 February 2023 said—

"We believe, at the core, there is a difference in the expectation between the Scottish Government and Local Government on the additionality that the £145.5m provides in terms of teaching and, importantly, support staff. One of the key challenges with this additional funding has been its iterative allocation, with different pots of funding being provided over a three-year period with a number of different stated policy intents."

COSLA's further letter on 16 February set out its understanding of a number of elements of additional funds for teachers since 2008/9 and the purpose of these funds.

This Parliamentary session, the Scottish Government's messaging on what the additional staff would achieve has not been consistent, with different reasons being highlighted at different times.

The SNP manifesto framed the increase in the number of teachers in the context of reducing contact time. It was to allow "teachers more time out of the classroom to prepare lessons and improve their skills".

The news release in August 2021 highlighted the permanence of the funding and how this would allow local authorities to employ staff on permanent contracts. The [covid education recovery plan published in October 2021](#) reiterated this; it said—

"This additional funding will allow local authorities to plan their future permanent workforce requirements, which will be vital in ensuring that learners get the support they need to recover from the impacts of the pandemic."

In response to [a question in April 2022](#), the Cabinet Secretary linked the planned additional teacher to giving "more time for teachers to plan high quality learning and teaching by reducing their class contact by 1.5 hrs per week." An [answer to a parliamentary question in June 2022](#) did not mention contact time but said that the £145.5m would "ensure sustained employment of additional teachers, while meeting local needs and benefitting Scotland's children and young people."

In her statement to Parliament on 7 February, the Cabinet Secretary said—

"Local authorities have historically received funding every year to maintain the pupil teacher ratio and teacher numbers and to provide places on the teacher induction scheme for all probationers who need one. We also provide a further £145.5 million each financial year to fund teacher numbers and pupil support staff. That combined funding was made available to, and agreed with, local authorities to deliver on three specific aims: maintaining teacher numbers at their current levels in the year ahead; maintaining the number of school support staff at their current levels in the year

ahead; and continuing to ensure that there are places available on the teacher induction scheme for probationer teachers who need them.

“In the year ahead, where those criteria are not met by a local authority, we will withhold or recoup funding that has been given to local authorities for those purposes. I know that that decision may not be welcomed by local government, but I have a clear commitment to improve Scottish education, on which we are making good progress, and I am firmly of the view that we will not do that by having fewer teachers or support staff, or having pupils spend less time in school.”

COSLA’s letter to the Committee dated 16 February wished to focus more on the outcomes of young people and that supporting outcomes goes beyond the teaching staff and classroom assistants. It said—

“We believe that focusing solely on inputs and outputs as opposed to outcomes for children and young people – as set out by the National Performance Framework - can create a number of challenges and perverse incentives ...

“improving attainment requires councils drawing on a wide range of local services, in line with the Getting It Right for Every Child model, in order to support the diverse range of needs of children and young people in our communities. We place immense value on our teachers and their crucial role in realising our ambitions, but there are a broad range of services we need in order to provide the best support to children and young people and enable improved attainment and achievement ...

“we remain seriously concerned that a focus purely on the number of school staff results in very limited choices and therefore a significant impact on other vital services including but not limited to social work support, early intervention programmes for children and families, early years, school transport, breakfast and after school clubs, all of which have been crucial components of our collective plans to tackle the poverty-related attainment gap.”

Next steps

On 7 February, the Cabinet Secretary also told the Parliament—

“The measures that I have outlined today demonstrate the Government’s unyielding commitment to closing the attainment gap and making Scotland the best place in the world in which to grow up. I will be writing to COSLA today, and to each individual council in the coming days, to set out the details on protecting teacher and support staff numbers, and the next steps on learning hours.”

The letter to COSLA is not (at the time of writing) published on the Scottish Government’s website, however, it has been shared with the Committee and is annexed to this paper. The letter was signed jointly by the Cabinet Secretary and the Deputy First Minister. The key points were:

- A focus on delivering excellence and equity for all and the need to “ensure there is no reduction in the fundamentals of education delivery, including the number of teachers and support staff, and the amount of time children spend learning in schools”

- Set out three expectations on local government:
 - Teacher numbers and the number of pupil support assistants are at least maintained at their current levels in the year ahead, as we continue to work towards our aim to increase teacher numbers by 3,500 and support staff by 500 by the end of this Parliament
 - Places remain available for probationer teachers who need them through the Teacher Induction Scheme
 - There is no reduction in the number of pupil learning hours delivered by teachers in the school week.
- The Government set out that local authorities receive £88m per year to (i) maintain teacher numbers and (ii) provide places on the Teacher Induction Scheme for all probationers who need one (£37 million of the £88m is allocated for this specific purpose). And that the further £145.5m each year to fund additional teacher numbers and pupil support staff.
- These monies will from next year be “conditional upon” each local authority maintaining: teacher numbers at 2022 census levels; pupil support staff numbers at 2022 census levels (to be published in March); and to ensure places remain available for probationer teachers who need them through the Teacher Induction Scheme.
- £151m will be distributed as part of the 2023-24 Local Government Order which will remain with local authorities, contingent on them delivering the first two of the expectations listed in the previous bullet. A further £45.5 million will also be distributed following confirmation that those conditions have been met in full. The remaining £37 million will continue to be distributed depending on the number of teachers that receive a place on the Teacher Induction Scheme in August 2023 which has been the case in previous years.

COSLA’s letter of 16 February expressed disappointment about plans for “financial sanctions. It said—

“COSLA Leaders believe this approach:

- is short-sighted and counterproductive with regard to improving attainment and addressing inequality across Scotland’s 32 Council areas.
- Does not recognise the extremely positive actions undertaken by Councils since 2015/2016 to exceed the pupil-teacher ratio targets requested by the Scottish Government.
- Does not respect the principle of subsidiarity and the devolution of powers and responsibilities to democratically elected spheres of Government.”

The letter from the Government to COSLA also discussed plans to commence powers that would allow the Government to prescribe the number of teaching hours per year. The [last survey of the number of teaching hours across local authorities, that SPICe is aware of, was](#)

[conducted by Reform Scotland in 2015](#). This found some significant variance in the number of hours across Scotland. The Government sought updated information from local authorities.

Local government funding

In [his Budget statement](#), the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Covid Recovery informed Parliament that the Government was “increasing the resources available to Local Government next year by over £550 million”. This increase refers to “core” revenue and capital allocations plus funding transferred to local government from other portfolios in-year (for an explanation of these terms, see [recent SPICe Briefing](#)). The following table shows that the total local government settlement, also set out in this week’s Finance Circular will be £13.2 billion in 2023-24. This represents a cash increase of 5.1%, or a real-terms increase of 1.8%, when comparing Budget 2023-24 to Budget 2022-23.

Local Government funding from Scottish Government (cash)

	2022-23 (£m)	2023-24 (£m)	Cash change (£m)	Cash change (%)
General Revenue Grant	7,094.60	7,133.90	39.3	0.6%
Non-Domestic Rates	2,766.0	3,047.00	281.0	10.2%
Specific Resource Grants	752.1	752.1	0.0	0.0%
General Capital Grant	510.50	607.60	97.1	19.0%
Specific (ring-fenced) capital grants	139.0	139.00	0.0	0.0%
Local Government settlement	11,262.2	11,679.6	417.4	3.7%
<i>Plus</i>				
In-year transfers from other portfolios (rev+cap)	1,332.1	1,551.8	219.7	16.5%
Total	12,594.3	13,231.4	637.1	5.1%

The total increase of £637.1m compares Budget 2023-24 to Budget 2022-23 and is a real terms increase of 1.8%. This figure is complicated due the inclusion this year of the resource support for school meals, which was not included in the comparable tables last year. Last year the planned resource to support meals in the holiday was £21.75m, and £42.2 million resource to support the expansion of free school meals. Including these amounts in last year’s settlement would reduce the increase in the table above, but it would still be “over £550 million”.

In-year transfers from other portfolios amount to 12% of total allocation in 2023-24. There is always some debate about how much flexibility local government has over these transfers. The Scottish Government’s position has been that the funding is provided to support specific policies; however, it does not have terms and conditions attached (so is not ring-fenced). The Government states that the transferred revenue funding is included in the weekly General Revenue Grant payments and councils have autonomy to allocate the GRG based on local needs and priorities.

During a [recent evidence session](#), the Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing and Local Government told the Local Government, Housing and Planning Committee that "councils have autonomy over 93% of their funding". This would suggest that - in the Government's view at least - the only parts of the local government settlement with conditions attached are the specific resource and capital grants elements, which the above tables show accounts for 7% of total allocation. However, as the current debate about teacher number shows, even if a pot of funding is included in the General Resource Grant, there are still expectations linked to this money.

[COSLA has argued in the past](#) that revenue funding transferred from other portfolios is "ring-fenced for achieving a prescribed policy intention":

"Revenue from other portfolios' describes a situation where a Scottish Government Directorate (the portfolio) holds the budget responsibility for funding of a particular policy. Where it is agreed that Local Government will implement or deliver that policy, the funding is transferred from the relevant Scottish Government Directorate to Local Government...All ring-fenced funds come to Local Government with conditions and reporting requirements which are often time consuming and bureaucratic - particularly in relation to funding from other portfolios."

COSLA stated to the [Local Government, Housing and Planning Committee recently](#) that "currently, about 60 per cent of our [local government] budget is directed spend". The Accounts Commission's [recent Financial Bulletin](#) sets out their interpretation of the ring-fencing issue, concluding (see page 10) that the proportion of funding to LG which is ring-fenced and directed or provided for specific services is around 23%.

In their [press release published in December](#), COSLA spoke about cuts to local government's "core" budget, i.e. the combination of General Revenue Grant, Non-Domestic Rates income and Specific Resource Grants. This amounts to £10.9 billion in 2023-24, representing a cash increase of £320 million over the year (+3%), or a slight real-terms decrease of £22 million (-0.2%):

COSLA are disappointed at the budget, believing that local government has not been prioritised. Acknowledging the Government's claim of a cash increase for local government, COSLA calculates that, in their view, the actual cash increase will be a much smaller £71 million once the costs of previous policy commitments are accounted for. Perhaps the most pressing and highest-profile issue facing local authorities in 2022 has been the pressure of meeting the pay demands of their 260,000 strong workforce. With teacher strikes still ongoing, the issue is far from being resolved, even within this current financial year. Local government is by far the [largest public sector employer](#) in Scotland, with [COSLA and Directors of Finance estimating](#) that between 60 and 70% of the local government budget is used to pay for workforce costs.

COSLA's letter to the Committee on 7 February highlighted [a recent IFS paper](#) that stated there have been long term increases in spend on education, and particularly in relation to ELC. However this has led to decreases in other areas of spend, such as planning, housing, transport and culture.

COSLA's 7 February letter also highlighted increasing spend (and planned spend) on both teaching and school non-teaching staff in recent years. It said—

“Information on Local Government expenditure on teachers from Local Financial Returns (LFR) and Projected Outturn Budget Estimate (POBE) clearly shows the significant amount of council budgets spent on teachers and highlights increasing spend year on year, for example a £181m increase between 19/20 and 20/21 – it should be noted that part of the increase will be as a result of pay awards.”

Ned Sharratt, Senior Researcher (Education, Culture), SPICe Research

16 February 2023

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The Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh, EH99 1SP www.parliament.scot

ANNEXE 1

Allocations to each local authority of £145.5m

2022-23	£m
Aberdeen City	4.943
Aberdeenshire	7.360
Angus	3.066
Argyll & Bute	2.170
Clackmannanshire	1.371
Dumfries & Galloway	4.013
Dundee City	4.005
East Ayrshire	3.326
East Dunbartonshire	3.301
East Lothian	2.944
East Renfrewshire	3.345
Edinburgh, City of	10.474
Eilean Siar	0.724
Falkirk	4.452
Fife	10.340
Glasgow City	16.412
Highland	6.448
Inverclyde	2.111
Midlothian	2.707
Moray	2.453
North Ayrshire	3.807

North Lanarkshire	10.027
Orkney	0.641
Perth & Kinross	3.610
Renfrewshire	4.774
Scottish Borders	2.954
Shetland	0.755
South Ayrshire	2.941
South Lanarkshire	9.353
Stirling	2.592
West Dunbartonshire	2.554
West Lothian	5.526
Scotland	145.500

Annexe 2: Teacher numbers and PTR by LA

Local Authority	Pupil teacher ratio (PTR) by local authority (all sectors excluding ELC)			Teachers in schools by local authority (FTE, all sectors excluding ELC)		
	2021	2022	% Change	2021	2022	% Change
Aberdeen City	13.9	13.9	-0.4%	1,745	1,815	4.0%
Aberdeenshire	13.4	13.5	0.7%	2,731	2,724	-0.3%
Angus	12.9	13.1	1.5%	1,172	1,145	-2.3%
Argyll and Bute	11.7	12.3	4.7%	860	815	-5.2%
City of Edinburgh	14.5	14.6	0.4%	3,615	3,672	1.6%
Clackmannanshire	12.1	12.1	-0.3%	556	553	-0.6%
Dumfries and Galloway	13.2	13.5	2.9%	1,421	1,370	-3.6%
Dundee City	13.4	13.7	2.1%	1,375	1,353	-1.6%
East Ayrshire	12.9	13.1	2.0%	1,263	1,230	-2.6%
East Dunbartonshire	12.7	12.8	1.2%	1,374	1,360	-1.1%
East Lothian	14.6	14.7	0.9%	1,031	1,026	-0.5%
East Renfrewshire	13.1	13.0	-0.4%	1,341	1,356	1.1%
Falkirk	13.1	13.2	0.5%	1,663	1,647	-0.9%
Fife	13.8	13.6	-1.8%	3,636	3,656	0.5%
Glasgow City	12.6	12.5	-1.1%	5,621	5,725	1.9%
Highland	13.1	13.2	0.6%	2,352	2,322	-1.3%
Inverclyde	12.3	12.6	1.8%	795	768	-3.4%
Midlothian	13.5	13.1	-3.2%	1,024	1,067	4.1%
Moray	12.8	12.7	-0.9%	952	960	0.9%
Na h-Eileanan Siar	10.4	10.4	0.2%	317	315	-0.8%
North Ayrshire	12.2	12.4	1.7%	1,462	1,422	-2.8%
North Lanarkshire	13.0	13.2	1.4%	3,778	3,705	-1.9%
Orkney Islands	10.9	11.1	1.6%	257	253	-1.6%
Perth and Kinross	13.1	13.2	0.5%	1,386	1,374	-0.8%
Renfrewshire	13.3	13.6	2.3%	1,793	1,764	-1.6%
Scottish Borders	13.7	13.7	-0.4%	1,054	1,045	-0.9%
Shetland Islands	10.1	10.0	-0.7%	329	328	-0.3%
South Ayrshire	12.7	12.6	-0.8%	1,128	1,129	0.1%
South Lanarkshire	13.0	13.2	0.8%	3,480	3,487	0.2%
Stirling	13.3	13.2	-0.7%	963	969	0.6%
West Dunbartonshire	13.0	13.2	1.9%	959	926	-3.5%
West Lothian	13.6	13.5	-0.8%	2,029	2,058	1.4%
All local authorities	13.2	13.2	0.4%	53,461	53,337	-0.2%
Grant aided	9.7	9.6	-1.4%	120	123	2.0%
Scotland	13.2	13.2	0.4%	53,581	53,459	-0.2%

Annexe B

From COSLA Children and Young People, and Resources Spokespersons

7th February 2023

Convenor of the Education, Children and Young People Committee
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh EH99 1SP

Via Email - ecyp.committee@parliament.scot

Dear Ms Webber,

At the Education, Children and Young People's Committee meeting on the 18th January, we understand that the Scottish Budget 2023/24 was considered. The discussion touched on teacher numbers and we wanted to take this opportunity to write to you with clear evidence that Local Government is committed to and has continued to invest in school staff, but also highlight the challenges faced in the financial year ahead.

Investment in school staff in 2022/23

We believe, at the core, there is a difference in the expectation between the Scottish Government and Local Government on the additionality that the £145.5m provides in terms of teaching and, importantly, support staff. One of the key challenges with this additional funding has been its iterative allocation, with different pots of funding being provided over a three-year period with a number of different stated policy intents.

We understand that the teacher census can be viewed as a useful snapshot of progress and it does demonstrate a substantial increase since 2019, with an additional 2,040 teacher in the system. However, it does not present the full picture, nor was it agreed that it would be used to monitor Local Government's use of the £145.5m. Instead we agreed, through the Scottish Government and COSLA's joint governance process for funding, that we would jointly design a simple collection exercise.

It is important to highlight the significant challenges facing some councils in recruiting teachers qualified in the required curriculum areas. Councils are also reporting difficulties in attracting candidates for particular subjects, and certain geographic areas including rurality.

In the period August to December 2022, there were a total of 1155 teaching jobs advertised on MyJobScotland across 27 Councils (the shared recruitment platform for Local Government and other public bodies). Of these, 630 were for permanent posts, 282 were fixed term and 243 were temporary. This resulted in 1120 candidates being appointed (613 permanent appointments, 270 fixed term and 237 temporary). Overall there were 13,174 applications made.

As of 16th January 2023, there are 232 vacancies across 27 Councils in Scotland for teachers. This is made up of 142 permanent posts, 49 fixed term and 41 temporary,

demonstrating that Councils continue to recruit actively and are seeking to fill posts on a permanent basis.

Information on Local Government expenditure on teachers from Local Financial Returns (LFR) and Projected Outturn Budget Estimate (POBE) clearly shows the significant amount of council budgets spent on teachers and highlights increasing spend year on year, for example a £181m increase between 19/20 and 20/21 – it should be noted that part of the increase will be as a result of pay awards:

All figures in £000s

	19/20 LFR	20/21 LFR	21/22 PO	22/23 BE
Pre-Primary Teaching Staff	49,813	51,564	48,418	49,041
Primary School Teaching Staff	1,363,482	1,452,276	1,496,406	1,497,590
Secondary School Teaching Staff	1,323,871	1,414,436	1,471,776	1,513,460
Total Teaching Staff spend	2,737,166	2,918,276	3,016,600	3,060,091
Increase year on year		+181,110	+98,324	+43,491

We wish to highlight that there is insufficient recognition that the £145.5m was also for a pupil support staff resource. From LFR and POBE, School Non-teaching staff expenditure has also shown an increase year on year, for example an increase of almost £79m between 19/20 and 21/21:

All figures in £000s

	19/20 LFR	20/21 LFR	21/22 PO	22/23 BE
Total School Non-Teaching Staff	1,227,360	1,305,982	1,352,313	1,380,168
		+78,622	+46,331	+27,855

When looking at these figures, it should be noted that there were significant additional COVID funding awarded on both 19/20 and 20/21 which will have been allocated across all LFR/POBE lines across all councils. However, it is clear that this has been an area of investment by Local Government, due to the value councils place on both teaching and non-teaching staff in improving outcomes for children and young people, enabled by both tranches of funding across 2020 onwards.

Scottish Budget 2023/4 and implications for education services

Education accounts for around 50% of council budgets (c£6bn). The figures above demonstrate that teachers account for a huge proportion of education budgets – around

£3bn. Non-teaching staff account for a further £1.4bn.

Education budgets have been protected by Local Government in recent years and there has been an increase in education expenditure over the last 10 years. This means that the cuts that have been required as a result of real terms reduction in councils' core funding over the last decade have fallen disproportionately on other unprotected service areas, such as central services, culture and leisure, roads and planning. These areas have all seen cuts of at least 25% over the same period.

The recent Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) report on [Council and School Funding](#) also highlighted that councils' spending on early years childcare and schools has increased in real terms during the 2010s (with an estimated increase of around 19% between 2009/10 and 2021/22), whilst spending on other council services fell substantially over the same period: central administrative services (-55%), planning and development (-52%), housing (-38%), roads and transport (-29%), and culture (-29%).

COSLA's budget lobbying campaign, [Budget SOS](#), highlighted pressures of at least £1bn for Local Government in 2023/24 due to inflation, rising energy costs, pay and increased demand, unless more funding is provided. Although education has remained protected in recent years, '[Education SOS](#)' warned that if education services had to take their 'fair share' of these financial pressures, around £500m of savings would need to be found – equating to 8,500 fewer teachers, or 16,000 less pupil support staff.

The Deputy First Minister has stated that Local Government funding has increased by over £570m, however this is not all 'new' funding. The figure quoted is the change between finance circulars and includes funding that came to Local Government during financial year 2022/23, including for specific policy commitments such as Whole Family Wellbeing. It is also important to highlight that the only new teaching money made available in 2022/23 was £32.8m for the 2021/22 teachers pay deal.

COSLA's [Budget Reality](#) highlights that Local Government will see just a £71m cash increase in 2023/24, once policy commitments are taken into account – this means only

£71m to deal with inflation and pay across the entire Local Government, nowhere near the £1bn required.

Local Government is under significant financial pressures as a result of inflation across pay, utilities, food and materials. This is hitting Local Government just as hard as it is hitting household budgets. Councils are having to make significant cuts to services in order to balance their budgets.

No one in Local Government is comfortable or wants to be in the position of considering reducing services, particularly those relating to supporting children and young people.

However, the Scottish Budget as it stands requires councils to take exceedingly tough decisions.

We remain and are committed to ongoing discussion with the Scottish Government around their expectations for education services and how these can be met with the reduced funding envelope available to Local Government. Council Leaders have been clear that this must include including a discussion on funding flexibilities and the overall quantum of funding in the Local Government Settlement. Without this, there will be cuts that will impact everyone in our communities.

We hope this letter is helpful to the committee as it continues to consider the Scottish Budget 2023/24 and its implications on Education, Children and Young People.

Yours sincerely,

Cllr Tony Buchanan

Cllr Katie Hagmann

Children and Young People Spokesperson

Resources Spokesperson



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Education Children and Young People Committee

Cllr Tony Buchanan, Children and Young
People Spokesperson and Cllr Katie
Hagmann, Resources Spokesperson

T3.60

The Scottish Parliament

Edinburgh

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9 February 2023

Dear Cllrs Buchanan and Hagmann,

I am writing on behalf of the Education, Children and Young People Committee regarding an evidence session held with the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills on the 2023/24 budget on 18 January. The Official Report of the meeting can be found [here](#); relevant column numbers are set out below.

I note your correspondence to the Committee dated 7 February regarding investment in school staff. I am writing on behalf of the Committee to ask you to provide some further information in relation to teacher and support staff numbers and contact time.

At the meeting, the Cabinet Secretary referred to the Government commitment to have 3,500 additional teachers and 500 additional support staff by the end of this parliamentary session. The Scottish Government has provided £145.5 million per year to local authorities for 2022/23 and 2023/24 to recruit additional teachers and support staff.

The Committee asks COSLA to set out what agreement was reached with the Scottish Government in relation to FTE staff when the provision of the additional funding was initially agreed.

The Cabinet Secretary expressed concern about the lack of progress on teacher numbers and referred to discussions with COSLA in relation to what can be expected to be delivered with the £145.5 million funding. The Committee would welcome some information from COSLA on the outcome of these discussions.

On 7 February, the Cabinet Secretary made a statement about the additional annual funding of £145.5 million being provided for increased teacher numbers and support staff. In the year ahead (2023/24), if this is not delivered by a local authority, the Scottish Government will withhold or recoup funding allocated for these purposes.

The Committee asks COSLA to set out whether local targets for increased FTE staff have been set, with a view to meeting the overall target set by the Scottish Government at the start of the Parliamentary session. It would be helpful if COSLA could provide information on any longer-term strategy or route maps for achieving FTE staff targets and whether there is any flexibility built into these plans. The Committee would also ask COSLA to set out any structural issues or barriers to meeting the overall target.

In the meeting, the Cabinet Secretary referred to separate ASN funding of £15 million, [announced in 2019](#), for councils to expand on the number of pupil support assistants working in Scotland's classrooms. The Committee asks COSLA to provide details of progress made in relation to the number of pupil support assistants in our schools for 2022/23 and what targets have been set for 2023/24.

It would also be helpful if COSLA could set out how the annual £145.5 million funding (for 2022/23 and 2023/24) and the £15 million (announced in 2019) are intended to work together, given that they can both be used for expanding the number of support staff.

In evidence, the Cabinet Secretary referred to discussions with local authorities and the unions regarding a reduction in class contact time. The Cabinet Secretary referred to a difference in views regarding how to deliver such a reduction. I would ask COSLA to provide the Committee with some detailed information about how these discussions are progressing and how any barriers to reaching an agreed way forward can be addressed. The Committee would also welcome information on what progress has been made to date in reducing class contact time.

The Committee will be taking further evidence from the Cabinet Secretary on the budget for 2023/24 at its meeting on 22 February. The Committee would therefore request a response to this letter by 16 February.

Yours sincerely,

Sue Webber MSP

Convener

From COSLA Children and Young People, and Resources Spokespersons

16th February 2023

Convenor of the Education, Children and Young People Committee
The Scottish Parliament

Edinburgh, EH99 1SP

Via Email - ecyp.committee@parliament.scot

Dear Ms Webber,

Thank you for your letter of 9th February 2023. We always welcome the opportunity to set out the position of Local Government to inform the work of the Education, Children and Young People Committee.

Whilst we will respond to the issues raised in your letter in detail, we wanted to be clear from the outset that Local Government greatly regrets being placed in the position of having to make reduction in any of the services it delivers, particularly those that support children, young people and their families.

Outcomes focused

We recognise that there has been a focus on the number of staff working in schools in both your letter and from the Scottish Government in recent weeks. And in our last letter we were keen to provide further context to the committee's recent discussion of these issues. We believe that focusing solely on inputs and outputs as opposed to outcomes for children and young people – as set out by the National Performance Framework - can create a number of challenges and perverse incentives.

Local Government remains absolutely committed to improving attainment, closing the poverty related attainment gap and achieving the best outcomes possible for all young people in Scotland. The recent Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Levels data demonstrates the progress that is being made, particularly when considering the context of the disruption of the pandemic on children, young people and schools.

Indeed, our commitment was demonstrated in our recent joint work with the Scottish Government to set '[stretch aims for the Scottish Attainment Challenge](#)', where we worked collectively to set out ambitions on progress locally and a national articulation of our aspirations for all of Scotland's children and young people, no matter their background.

However, improving attainment requires councils drawing on a wide range of local services, in line with the Getting It Right for Every Child model, in order to support the diverse range of needs of children and young people in our communities. We place

immense value on our teachers and their crucial role in realising our ambitions, but there are a broad range of services we need in order to provide the best support to children and young people and enable improved attainment and achievement.

Given the current financial landscape, we remain seriously concerned that a focus purely on the number of school staff results in very limited choices and therefore a significant impact on other vital services including but not limited to social work support, early intervention programmes for children and families, early years, school transport, breakfast and after school clubs, all of which have been crucial components of our collective plans to tackle the poverty-related attainment gap. These choices would also negatively impact Local Government's ability to achieve other key priorities including reducing child poverty, delivering high quality and sustainable public services and a just transition to net zero.

Funding for teachers and additional support staff

In the statement to the Scottish Parliament on 7th February, the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills set out that the Scottish Government will withhold or recoup funding from two streams within the Local Government Settlement. We thought it would be helpful for the Committee if we set out the origins and purposes of these funding streams, noting that some have been included in the Settlement for years and the quantum has not been updated in line with inflation.

Date	Quantum	Purpose	Recurring?
Funding that makes up the £88m			
2008/09 Settlement	£37m	Funding for Teachers Induction Scheme	Yes
2011/12 Settlement	£15m	To maintain 'as far as possible' teacher numbers and the P1-3 Teacher Ratio	Yes
2012/13 Settlement	£24m	Added to the Settlement for teachers pay	Yes
2013/16 Settlement	£2m	Added to the Settlement for teachers pay	Yes
February 2015 (letter from DFM to COSLA President)	£10m	Provided in addition to £41m in the Settlement to support employment of teachers – to help ensure the delivery of the commitment to maintain teacher numbers (<i>note: the PTR at the time was 13.7</i>)	Yes
Funding that makes up the £145.5m			
July 2020	£50m	<i>To ensure that local authorities are supported to provide sufficient teachers and support staff to cover any additionality that may be due to the COVID pandemic in the 20/21 school year (£45m ring-fenced for additional teachers, £5m to invest flexibly in either teachers or education support staff)</i>	No
August 2020	£30m	<i>Additional to the £50m already announced – to provide sufficient teachers to cover any additionality needed in 20/21 school year</i>	No

March 2021	£60m	<i>For recruitment of additional staff in 21/22 school year in order to further support education recovery in 21/22 - funding may be used flexibly to employ a variety of staff to</i>	No
		<i>meet the needs of children and young people in the local area</i>	
July 2021	£65.5m	To increase teacher numbers by 1000 and classroom assistants by 500 £50m for 21/22 (Aug 21-Mar 22), full year cost £65.5m baselined to meet ongoing full year cost of maintaining these additional staff in the system	Yes
October 2021	£80m	To meet the ongoing full year costs of maintaining the additional staff in the system from the initial £80m in 20/21 school year and the £60m in 21/22 school year	Yes

COSLA is clear that the £145.5m and £88m funding provided by Scottish Government only accounts for a small proportion of the funding required to pay the 54,000 teachers in Scotland. The vast majority of teachers are funded from core Local Government budgets, which have seen a real terms reduction over the last 10 years.

The recent independent report from the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) on [Council and School Funding](#) highlights the pressure on council core budgets. The report makes clear that councils' spending on early years childcare and schools has increased in real terms during the 2010s (with an estimated increase of around 19% between 2009/10 and 2021/22), whilst spending on other council services fell substantially over the same period as cuts have fallen disproportionately on unprotected areas.

There are many limitations in focusing solely on specified funding streams without considering the interactions with core Local Government funding, the long-standing reduction in funding available to councils and significant pressures they face over the next year.

School staff

As set out in our last letter, while the teacher census can be useful, it can only provide a snapshot of staff in schools and does not reflect the complexities of a school's workforce. To reiterate what we set out in our last letter, between August to December 2022, data from myjobscotland showed there were:

- 630 permanent posts advertised, 282 fixed term posts and 243 temporary posts advertised.
- 1120 candidates being appointed (613 permanent appointments, 270 fixed term and 237 temporary).
- 13,174 applications made.

At 13th February, myjobscotland data from 30 councils showed that there were 397 teaching jobs advertised, with 236 of these being permanent jobs. We had also previously provided financial information which showed continued investment in school staff in our last letter. Considering this information in the round, it is difficult to conclude

that Local Government is *not* investing in school staff, despite significant finance pressures – set out in further detail below.

It is also important to note that the Scottish Government and COSLA did not agree to use the census as the benchmark to monitor the use of the £145.5m. The joint Scottish Government/Local Government Settlement and Distribution Group recommended a light touch approach to reporting. It was agreed that there would be reporting in November, March and June on the number and type of additional teachers and pupil support assistants recruited using this funding, the setting in which they are employed and employment status details (e.g. permanent, temporary, full-time, part-time). COSLA does not have a record of the Scottish Government initiating this work.

Your letter asks about the structural challenges and barriers facing Local Government when recruiting a skilled workforce for schools. It should also be noted that authorities face recruitment difficulties for teachers for particular subjects such as maths, sciences, and home economics. Councils areas that cover rural and remote areas also face challenges in recruiting teachers.

Class contact time

COSLA has aligned with Scottish Government in seeking to obtain an agreement with the teaching unions about the implementation in the reduction in class contact time.

Currently we (COSLA and Scottish Government officials) have been unable to agree an implementation schedule, as the teaching unions have declined to agree it unless the additional non-class contact time is designated solely to be used for marking and preparation. COSLA officers and Scottish Government officials have suggested that the additional non-class contact time should be used more flexibly for activities related to raising attainment under the Curriculum for Excellence. It has not been possible to seek further discussion with the unions about this in recent weeks as a result of the ongoing dispute about the 2022/23 pay claim.

In terms of scheduling implementation of the reduction in class contact time, many councils indicated that it may be possible to achieve this earlier in primary schools than across all settings. It is understood that this would be undesirable from a union perspective as it would mean that teachers would have different terms in relation to class contact time and this would mean undermining the common terms and conditions enjoyed by teachers through the SNCT agreement. This obviously required further work across all parties.

Scottish Budget 2023/4

As we highlighted in our last letter, COSLA remains clear that funding available to Local Government is insufficient to meet the pressures facing councils. As we set out in our previous letter, last year COSLA's [Budget SOS](#) highlighted pressures of at least £1bn for Local Government in 2023/24. Our '[Education SOS](#)' warned if education services received their 'fair share' of pressures it could equate to 8,500 fewer teachers, or 16,000 fewer pupil support staff.

COSLA's [Budget Reality](#) highlights that Local Government will see just a £71m cash increase in 2023/24, once policy commitments are taken into account – this means only £71m to deal with inflation and pay across the entire Local Government, nowhere near the £1bn required.

No one in Local Government is comfortable or wants to be in the position of considering reducing services, particularly those relating to supporting children and young people.

However, the Scottish Budget as it stands requires councils to take exceedingly tough decisions.

An already challenging budget setting process has been made more difficult with by the interventions by the Scottish Government. This approach is incongruous with other

recent commitments, including the desire of Scottish Ministers to form a new partnership with Local Government.

In November 2022, in response to the Scottish Government's commitment to consider the scope for flexibilities to support the funding gap councils face as a result of the 2022/23 pay deal, the Deputy First Minister wrote to Councils to confirm that "it is for individual councils, as democratically elected bodies, to consider the needs of their communities with a focus on the most vulnerable, their legal obligations and the totality of resource funding available to them, and to then take the decisions necessary, openly and transparently, to operate as effectively as possible within this context".

A further letter from the Deputy First Minister to the COSLA President on 15 December 2022, setting out the details of the Local Government settlement for 2023/24, had no mention of any conditions around teacher numbers and learning hours.

Scottish Government budget interventions

We were therefore disappointed that the Scottish Government set out plans for financial sanctions and legislation on 7th February. COSLA Leaders believe this approach:

- is short-sighted and counterproductive with regard to improving attainment and addressing inequality across Scotland's 32 Council areas.
- Does not recognise the extremely positive actions undertaken by Councils since 2015/2016 to exceed the pupil-teacher ratio targets requested by the Scottish Government.
- Does not respect the principle of subsidiarity and the devolution of powers and responsibilities to democratically elected spheres of Government.

Local Government requires more funding rather than more restrictions in order to maintain the local services that matter to our citizens and achieve the goals that we share with the Scottish Government.

COSLA continues to seek a constructive dialogue with the Scottish Government and have specifically asked that a pause to legislation and sanctions be considered, in order to engage with Local Government on how we can protect all the vital council services

that support children and young people, including ensuring that the investment in school staff can continue.

We hope this letter is helpful ahead of the meeting of the Education, Children and Young People Committee meeting on 22nd February.

Yours sincerely,

Cllr Tony Buchanan

Children and Young People Spokesperson

Cllr Katie Hagmann

Resources Spokesperson



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Education Children and Young People Committee

Shirley-Anne Somerville MSP T3.60

Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills The Scottish Parliament

Claire Haughey MSP Edinburgh

Minister for Children and Young People EH99 1SP

Scottish Government

By email only—

ecyp.committee@parliament.scot

9 February 2023

Dear Cabinet Secretary and Minister,

Budget 2023/24

I am writing on behalf of the Education, Children and Young People Committee regarding your evidence session on the 2023/24 budget on 18 January. The Official Report of the meeting can be found [here](#); relevant column numbers are set out below.

Early learning and childcare (ELC)

The Minister for Children and Young People gave a commitment to provide the Committee with updates on engagement with Scottish Social Services Council on the provision of data on the movement of staff across the early learning and childcare sector (cols 4-5). The Committee asks the Minister to provide a timescale for the completion of this work.

The Minister and Eleanor Passmore (Scottish Government) referred to a health check on the overall financial sustainability of the sector and the wider review of the rate-setting process, which is being carried out jointly with COSLA (cols 5-6). The Committee asks the Minister to provide updates on this work as it progresses and, again, requests that the Scottish Government provides a timescale for this work.

The Minister referred to data-sharing arrangements which will allow local authorities to access data needed to identify families eligible for funded places for two-year olds. The Minister offered

to update the Committee on the impact of these new arrangements on uptake of places in due course (col 7).

During the meeting, the Minister was asked about the provision of funded ELC places across local authority boundaries (for example, where parents/carers live within one local authority but are seeking a place in another area due to the location of their workplace). Eleanor Passmore said that the Scottish Government expects local authorities to work together to resolve cross-border issues but gave a commitment to come back to the Committee on what further work might be necessary to ensure that this is happening (cols 9-10).

Staff in schools

At the meeting, the Cabinet Secretary referred to the Government commitment to have 3,500 additional teachers and 500 additional support staff by the end of this parliamentary session. The Scottish Government has provided £145.5 million per year to local authorities for 2022/23 and 2023/24 to recruit additional teachers and support staff.

In the meeting, the Cabinet Secretary expressed concern about the lack of progress on teacher numbers and referred to discussions with COSLA in relation to what can be expected to be delivered with the £145.5 million funding. The Cabinet Secretary offered to come back to the Committee following these discussions (col 14). The Committee asks the Cabinet Secretary whether local targets have been set for increases in FTE staff and requests details of any route map agreed with local authorities.

In the meeting, the Cabinet Secretary referred to separate ASN funding of £15 million, announced in 2019, for councils to expand on the number of pupil support assistants working in Scotland's classrooms. The Committee asks the Cabinet Secretary to provide details of progress made in relation to the number of pupil support assistants in our schools for 2022/23 and what targets have been set for 2023/24. The Committee asks the Scottish Government to set out how it is monitoring the use of the £15 million by local authorities (col 12).

It would also be helpful if the Cabinet Secretary could set out how the annual £145.5 million funding (for 2022/23 and 2023/24) and the £15 million (announced in 2019) are intended to work together, given that they can both be used for expanding the number of support staff.

On 7 February, the Cabinet Secretary made a statement about the additional annual funding of £145.5 million being provided for increased teacher numbers and support staff. In the year ahead (2023/24), if this is not delivered by a local authority, the Scottish Government will withhold or recoup funding allocated for these purposes.

I would ask the Cabinet Secretary to write to the Committee setting out how many additional staff are expected to be appointed in 2023/24 and providing details on how the Scottish Government can have confidence that the funds will be used for their intended purpose of increasing FTE staff.

In the statement, the Cabinet Secretary also said that regulations will be introduced under the Education (Scotland) Act 2016 to specify the minimum number of learning hours per year.

It would be helpful if the Cabinet Secretary could share the letter to COSLA and individual local authorities of 7 February which sets out the details on teacher and support staff numbers, and next steps on learning hours.

Behaviour in schools

At the meeting, the Cabinet Secretary offered to provide further details of the most recent meeting of the Scottish Advisory Group on Relationships and Behaviour in Schools and what plans the group has in relation to tackling challenging behaviour in schools (cols 16-17).

Free school meals

The Cabinet Secretary offered to provide further information on the £30 million allocated to the expansion of free school meals in 2022/23 and details of what has been achieved with that funding (cols 19-20).

International Education Strategy

In the meeting, the Cabinet Secretary was asked about the structural reliance of Scotland's higher education funding model on international fees. The Committee notes that a new strategy for international education is currently being developed and asks the Cabinet Secretary to set out a timescale for its publication.

Colleges

At the meeting, the Cabinet Secretary was asked about the increase in the resource budget of £26 million for colleges in 2023/24. The Committee asks the Cabinet Secretary to provide details of how the £26 million will be used. The resource spending review set out a five-year flat cash settlement for colleges. Given that an additional £26 million has been allocated for 2023/24, the Committee asks the Cabinet Secretary to set out what this means for baseline funding for colleges in future years.

The Committee would also highlight the disparity in reimbursement rates between colleges and universities and the role of colleges in working with people from SIMD20 backgrounds and assisting people in accessing higher education. I would ask the Cabinet Secretary to set out what the Scottish Government is doing to ensure that colleges continue to play a role in meeting their targets despite the substantial economic challenges they face.

Further evidence

The Cabinet Secretary has agreed to provide further evidence on the budget for 2023/24 to the Committee on 22 February. The Committee therefore requests a response to this letter by Thursday 16 February or earlier if possible.

Yours sincerely,

Sue Webber MSP

Convener

Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills
Shirley-Anne Somerville MSP

T: 0300 244 4000
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Sue Webber MSP
Convener
Education, Children and Young
People Committee
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

17 February 2022

Dear Convener

I attended Committee on 18 January to provide evidence on the Education and Skills portfolio draft Budget allocation. During that session I undertook to follow up in writing on a number of points. Annex A below responds to the points raised by Committee members, and to your letter of 9 February 2023. I hope this response is helpful and I am happy to provide further updates over the coming months should you and the Committee members find that helpful.

Yours sincerely

Shirley-Anne Somerville

Annex A - follow-up to draft budget evidence session 18 January 2023 + response to committee convenor letter of 9 February 2023

Update on early learning and childcare, pvi and public sector provider rates and the sssc mapping exercise

The Scottish Government published [Overview of local authority funding and support for early learning and childcare providers: 2022-23](#) on 22 December 2022. The report sets out information provided by local authorities regarding the sustainable rates that they pay to childcare providers in the private, third and childminding sectors for the delivery of funded Early Learning and Childcare (ELC).

In addition to the sustainable rates in each local authority, the report sets out:

- local authorities' approach to setting sustainable rates in line with the supporting guidance
- the payments to funded providers for delivery of the free meal commitment
- details of the additional support package local authorities are offering to their funded providers.

With regards to the Scottish Social Services Council's mapping exercise, I can confirm that our SSSC colleagues are undertaking a piece of work to provide data on the movement of staff across different parts of the Day Care of Children workforce.

We are on course to have that data by the end of March 2023.

We also anticipate further information arising from our Financial Sustainability Health Check that will provide further insight to this work.

Update on sector sustainability and the review of rate setting processes with local authorities

The Scottish Government and COSLA are currently undertaking a review of the process for setting sustainable rates in 2022-23 to identify where this can be improved further to ensure that rates reflect the costs of delivering funded ELC and payment of the real Living Wage to staff, as set out in the Sustainable Rates guidance.

The Review will be an evidence-based approach that captures views from both local authorities and from funded ELC providers. The Review will inform what further action may need to be taken ahead of August 2023, and the wider approach to rate setting over the rest of this Parliament. More information on the outcome of the Review will be set out in Spring 2023.

The Scottish Government is also currently undertaking an update of the [Financial Sustainability Health Check](#) exercise, which was previously published in August 2021. To support this, a survey for registered **day care of children services and**

childminding services to complete was launched on 20 January 2023 and was open until 15 February 2023. The survey asks providers for a range of information including on costs of delivery, income, capacity, charging and staffing.

The previous Financial Sustainability Health Check has been a vital source of evidence and has helped the Scottish Government to tailor support for childcare providers. However, since Summer 2021 there have been substantial economic impacts as a result of the pandemic and the costs crisis

This update will help provide detailed information as to how these events are impacting on the childcare sector, as well as allowing for analysis of any changes in underlying trends in the sector. This includes understanding where there may be disproportionate impacts across different types of providers.

The information provided in response to these surveys will be reflected in an updated report to be published in Spring 2023.

Update on how £15 million ASN funding allocated and on progress of increasing number of classroom assistants

Since 2019-20, we have invested an additional £15 million per year to help local authorities respond to the individual support needs of children and young people. The distribution is based on the number of pupils in each local authority. We monitor the impact of this funding through numbers of pupil support assistants. In 2021, 1,036 extra pupil support assistants were recruited. This builds on the increase of 1,354 from the previous year and again exceeds our Programme for Government commitment to deliver 1,000 new support assistants. This brings the total number of pupil support staff in Scotland to 16,299.

Update on additional annual funding - £145.5 million to support the recruitment of additional teachers and support staff.

Following my discussion with COSLA where I expressed my concerns that there has been a decrease in teacher numbers as published in the Summary Statistics for Schools in December 2022, I set out in a statement to Parliament on 7 January, the actions I have taken to:

- maintain teacher numbers, and the number of pupil support assistants, at their current levels in the year ahead as we continue to work towards our aim to increase teacher numbers by 3,500 and support staff by 500 by the end of this Parliament.
- Ensure places remain available for probationer teachers who need them through the Teacher Induction Scheme.

Historically local authorities have received £88m per annum to protect the pupil-teacher ratio, teacher numbers and to provide places on the Teacher Induction Scheme for all probationers who need one. Additional annual funding of £145.5m per annum is also being provided to maintain increased teacher numbers and support staff.

In the year ahead (2023/24), if this is not delivered by a local authority, the Scottish Government will withhold or recoup funding allocated for these purposes.

A copy of my letter of 7 February to CoSLA spokespeople is attached.

Update on last meeting of SAGRABIS

The Scottish Advisory Group on Relationships and Behaviour in Schools (SAGRABIS) met on 7 December 2022. The group discussed the Behaviour in Scottish Schools Research (BISSR) which is underway, with a final report due at the end of 2023. The group also received an update on the recent consultation on restraint and seclusion in schools. I will be chairing the next SAGRABIS meeting which has been arranged for Thursday 30 March.

Update on use of the £30 million capital for free school meals in 2022-23 for estate/infrastructure improvements

The allocation of £30 million of capital funding was provided in October 2022. Education authorities are in the process of utilising this funding to support their understanding of infrastructure needs and have begun to invest in infrastructure improvements in catering and dining facilities. This funding is due to be used by the end of this financial year and some authorities may require to carry over funding in order to support wider projects. This funding will be accounted for as part of the local government finance statistics in due course and the delivery capacity which has been established will be taken into account in our delivery plans for future expansion to primary 6 and 7 pupils.

Additional information on how the additional £26 million for FE will be allocated

The additional resource funding for FE is intended to help our colleges transition to future provision ensuring that the offer to learners is rooted in a robust understanding of local, regional and national priorities and is fiscally sustainable. The SFC is working with Scottish Government officials and colleges to identify the best use of the available resources, taking into account Government priorities and the sector's needs with a view to providing indicative institution allocations in Spring 2023.

Additional information on the differences between funding rates for places in FE and HE

All our education institutions make a crucial and unique contribution to Scotland. There are variations and unique considerations for schools, colleges and universities that means funding per student is not directly comparable as it is not comparing like-for-like provision. Work has started between the SFC and Scottish Government officials to determine the most appropriate model for funding colleges and the outcomes that we seek from our public investment in them.

Update on international education strategy

My officials are engaging closely with key stakeholders as we develop an International Education Strategy that promotes Scotland's education offer globally and attracts a diversity of students to our institutions. The strategy is currently in the drafting stages and we expect to publish it in late Spring 2023.

Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills

Hirley-Anne Somerville MSP

Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Covid
Recovery

John Swinney MSP

0300 244 4000

scottish.ministers@gov.scot

Cllr Katie Hagmann Cllr Tony Buchanan

Copy to: Cllr Shona Morrison and

Sally Loudon

7 February 2023

Dear Katie and Tony

Protecting teacher numbers, pupil support staff and learning hours

As you will be aware, the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills updated Parliament this afternoon on the actions that the Scottish Government will take to protect teacher and pupil support staff numbers, and the number of learning hours for pupils. This letter confirms that position and, further to the Deputy First Minister's correspondence of 15 December 2022, confirms the revised terms of the local government finance settlement for 2023-24.

We have been clear during recent dialogue that this government's vision for education in Scotland remains to deliver excellence and equity for all. A key element of that is to ensure there is no reduction in the fundamentals of education delivery, including the number of teachers and support staff, and the amount of time children spend learning in schools.

We are agreed that delivering positive outcomes, including raising attainment and closing the attainment gap, is a shared endeavour and one in which we are making positive progress. In particular, we would like to place on record our thanks to colleagues in local government and across the education workforce for their dedication to the delivery of a first-class education for our children and young people.

We have also heard clearly your position on the financial pressures facing local authorities, and understand that they are wrestling with difficult decisions.

However, ministers are equally faced with difficult choices to support vital services, and it is essential that all funding that is allocated supports the outcomes it is provided for. Within this context, we have made our expectations clear that:

- Teacher numbers and the number of pupil support assistants are at least maintained at their current levels in the year ahead, as we continue to work towards our aim to increase teacher numbers by 3,500 and support staff by 500 by the end of this Parliament.
- Places remain available for probationer teachers who need them through the Teacher Induction Scheme.
- There is no reduction in the number of pupil learning hours delivered by teachers in the school week.

Further details are as follows.

Teacher numbers/pupil support assistants/Teacher Induction Scheme

Firstly, turning to teacher numbers, pupil support assistants and the Teacher Induction Scheme. Local authorities already receive £88 million per year to (i) maintain teacher numbers and (ii) provide places on the Teacher Induction Scheme for all probationers who need one (£37 million of the £88m is allocated for this specific purpose).

In addition, we provide a further £145.5 million each year explicitly to fund teacher numbers and pupil support staff.

This funding will be maintained in full, but from April 2023 both components (giving a total allocation in 2023-24 of £233.5 million) will now be conditional upon the successful delivery of the following expectations.

1. Maintain teacher numbers at 2022 census levels, as published in the Summary School Statistics in December 2022 (details provided at Annex A).
2. Maintain pupil support staff numbers at 2022 census levels, which we will publish on 21 March 2023 based on the data collected from local authorities in September 2022.
3. Ensure that places remain available for probationer teachers who need them through the Teacher Induction Scheme

As a result, it is our intention to distribute £151 million as part of the 2023-24 Local Government Order which will remain with local authorities, contingent on them delivering the first two of these expectations. A further £45.5 million will also be distributed following confirmation that those conditions have been met in full. The remaining £37 million will continue to be distributed depending on the number of teachers that receive a place on the Teacher Induction Scheme in August 2023 as has been the case in previous years.

Officials will work with COSLA officers to agree an appropriate monitoring process for those conditions, which is likely to include but not be limited to the data collection for the 2023 school census. In the event of these requirements not being met, then the Scottish Government reserves the right to recover or withhold relevant monies allocated to individual authorities for these purposes. In assessing whether these conditions have been met, we will consider any mitigating circumstances individual councils may wish to put forward, and Ministerial judgement will be applied.

A full breakdown of the teacher numbers we expect to be maintained, both nationally and locally, is attached at Annex A, with the relevant financial allocations set out in Annex B.

Officials will be writing to individual local authorities in the coming days to set out what this means for them specifically.

During our recent discussions you have raised concerns over the decision to remove £32.8 million from the Local Government Settlement for 2023-24. Having reflected upon those concerns we can confirm that £32.8 million will again be transferred from the Education and Skills portfolio to support councils with the continuing cost of previous teacher pay settlements.

Learning hours

Similarly, we are aware that pressure on budgets means that some local authorities are reportedly considering reductions in the number of learning hours for pupils. As with the above, we know they will not have considered that lightly. However, it gives us very serious concern given the significant negative impact it would have on children and young people, and on their families. It would, in our view, be incompatible with our shared mission to provide equity and excellence for all Scotland's pupils.

Therefore, we propose to commence section 21 of the Education (Scotland) Act 2016, which confers powers on the Scottish Ministers to specify by regulations the minimum number of learning hours which must be made available to pupils in a school year. We intend to consult shortly on proposals to make regulations under that power which would ensure that there is no reduction in the number of learning hours made available to pupils.

Decisions over the delivery of the school week are primarily for local authorities and I am aware that many authorities have already used a degree of flexibility in order to adapt provision, for example, to implement an asymmetric week. We would not intend to restrict that flexibility, but to ensure that the current levels of provision, which are so important to pupils and parents, are protected.

It will be important to gather accurate information on current provision in order to inform our consultation and ensure that new regulations would have their intended effect. Officials have prepared short surveys that local authorities are asked to complete via SmartSurvey to provide information on the number of learning hours per week currently taught in schools. The surveys can be accessed here:

Primary schools - <https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/4M7LJ6/>

Secondary schools - <https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/53W3L7/>

Special schools - <https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/60KAF4/> .

We would be grateful if these are completed by Wednesday, 22 February.

All other terms of the Local Government finance settlement offer for 2023-24, as set out in the Deputy First Minister's letter of 15 December 2022, remain unchanged. This includes our firm commitment to delivering a New Deal for Local Government.

There have been positive discussions between Ministers and the COSLA Leadership in recent weeks and we are keen to build on these and seize the opportunity to agree an outcomes-based partnership and new fiscal framework.

We are content to discuss any of the above further if that would be helpful.

Yours sincerely

Shirley-Anne Somerville

John Swinney

Annexe C

Letter from COSLA Children and Young People and Resources Spokespersons to Convener of Local Government, Housing and Planning Committee

16 February 2023

Convener of the Local Government, Housing and Planning Committee
The Scottish Parliament

Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

Via Email - localgov.committee@parliament.scot

Dear Ms Burgess,

Following the announcement by the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills on 7 February in relation to teacher and pupil support assistant numbers, places for probationer teachers and learning hours, we wanted to write to you to highlight the challenges faced in the financial year ahead for wider council services as a result of these interventions.

COSLA has provided both written and oral evidence to the committee in its Pre-Budget Scrutiny in recent years, setting out the severe funding pressures faced by councils for at least the last decade as a result of a real terms reduction in councils' core budgets and increasingly directed funding from the Scottish Government. As a result of protections in areas like education and social care, cuts have fallen disproportionately on other, unprotected services areas. Our submissions to the committee have warned that pressure on core budgets is becoming increasingly visible and leads to councils making difficult choices.

A further lack of flexibility for councils will result in very limited options for savings and will have a significant impact on other vital services. Further detail on the impact on these interventions on council services is set out in this letter. These interventions represent an unsustainable pressure on Local Government's core budgets.

We also wish to highlight that these interventions clearly contradict the reference in the Resource Spending Review to managing the pay bill by reducing public sector headcount by 2026/27 and it is therefore unclear what the impact is on the longer-term funding proposals from Scottish Government.

Scottish Budget 2023/24 and implications for education services

Education accounts for around 50% of council budgets (c£6bn). Teachers account for a huge proportion of education budgets – around £3bn in 2022/23. Non-teaching staff account for a further £1.4bn.

Information on Local Government expenditure on teachers from Local Financial Returns (LFR) and Projected Outturn Budget Estimate (POBE) clearly shows the significant amount of council budgets spent on teachers and highlights increasing spend year on year, for example a £181m increase between 19/20 and 20/21 – it should be noted that part of the increase will be as a result of pay awards:

All figures in £000s

	19/20 LFR	20/21 LFR	21/22 PO	22/23 BE
Pre-Primary Teaching Staff	49,813	51,564	48,418	49,041
Primary School Teaching Staff	1,363,482	1,452,276	1,496,406	1,497,590
Secondary School Teaching Staff	1,323,871	1,414,436	1,471,776	1,513,460
Total Teaching Staff spend	2,737,166	2,918,276	3,016,600	3,060,091
Increase year on year		+181,110	+98,324	+43,491

School Non-teaching staff expenditure has also shown an increase year on year, for example an increase of almost £79m between 19/20 and 21/21:

All figures in £000s

	19/20 LFR	20/21 LFR	21/22 PO	22/23 BE
Total School Non-Teaching Staff	1,227,360	1,305,982	1,352,313	1,380,168
		+78,622	+46,331	+27,855

When looking at these figures, it should be noted that there were significant additional COVID funding awarded in both 19/20 and 20/21 which will have been allocated across all LFR/POBE lines across all councils. However, it is clear that this has been an area of investment by Local Government, due to the value councils place on both teaching and non-teaching staff in improving outcomes for children and young people, enabled by both tranches of funding across 2020 onwards.

Education budgets have been protected by Local Government in recent years and there has been an increase in education expenditure over the last 10 years. This means that the cuts that have been required as a result of real terms reduction in councils' core funding over the last decade have fallen disproportionately on other unprotected service areas, such as central services,

culture and leisure, roads and planning. These areas have all seen cuts of at least 25% over the same period.

The recent Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) report on [Council and School Funding](#) also highlighted that councils' spending on early years childcare and schools has increased in real terms during the 2010s (with an estimated increase of around 19% between 2009/10 and 2021/22), whilst spending on other council services fell substantially over the same period: central administrative services (-55%), planning and development (-52%), housing (-38%), roads and transport (-29%), and culture (-29%).

COSLA's budget lobbying campaign, [Budget SOS](#), highlighted pressures of at least £1bn for Local Government in 2023/24 due to inflation, rising energy costs, pay and increased demand, unless more funding is provided. Although education has remained protected in recent years, [Education SOS](#) warned that if education services had to take their 'fair share' of these financial pressures, around £500m of savings would need to be found – equating to 8,500 fewer teachers, or 16,000 less pupil support staff.

[Culture and Sport SOS](#), [Local Area Services SOS](#), [Social Care SOS](#) and [Climate SOS](#) set out the impact on each of these service areas if they had to take their 'fair share' of the £1bn pressures in 2023/24, and what these savings equate to. For example;

- the £154m savings required across services such as waste, planning and roads equates to 33% of the roads and transport budget, or 70% of the building, planning and development budget;
- the £40m of savings required across culture and sports services equates to 1,400 fewer library assistants, or 90% of total spend on museums and galleries;
- the £300m savings required in social care equate to 5,000 fewer social workers, or 100% of the services that help councils keep The Promise;
- Climate SOS highlighted that cuts to councils' core budgets will make delivering climate targets even harder. The recent [report](#) from the Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee is also clear that climate targets will not be met without a more empowered Local Government and that councils need both increased funding and more flexible funding streams.

As a result of the recent education interventions, councils will now have to find significantly more savings from these areas. These services are critical to a 'whole systems' approach to physical and mental health and wellbeing and tackling inequality – cutting funding in these areas will mean more costly interventions elsewhere.

The Deputy First Minister has stated that Local Government funding has increased by over £570m, however this is not all 'new' funding. The figure

quoted is the change between finance circulars and includes funding that came to Local Government during financial year 2022/23, including for specific policy commitments such as Whole Family Wellbeing. It is also important to highlight that the only new teaching money made available in 2022/23 was £32.8m for the 2021/22 teachers pay deal.

COSLA's [Budget Reality](#) highlights that Local Government will see just a £71m cash increase in 2023/24, once policy commitments are taken into account – this means only

£71m to deal with inflation and pay across the entire Local Government, nowhere near the £1bn required.

Local Government is under significant financial pressures as a result of inflation across pay, utilities, food and materials. This is hitting Local Government just as hard as it is hitting household budgets. Councils are having to make significant cuts to services in order to balance their budgets.

No one in Local Government is comfortable or wants to be in the position of considering reducing services, particularly those relating to supporting children and young people.

However, the Scottish Budget as it stands requires councils to take exceedingly tough decisions.

We remain and are committed to ongoing discussion with the Scottish Government around their expectations for education services and how these can be met with the reduced funding envelope available to Local Government. We are concerned that this

intervention in education will have a further disproportionate impact on wider services in communities, with impacts on health, wellbeing and widening inequality. Council Leaders have been clear that this must include including a discussion on funding flexibilities and the overall quantum of funding in the Local Government Settlement.

Without this, there will be cuts that will impact everyone in our communities.

We hope this letter is helpful to the Committee as it continues to consider the Scottish Budget 2023/24.

Yours sincerely

Cllr Tony Buchanan

Cllr Katie Hagmann

Children and Young People Spokesperson

Resources Spokesperson