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Convener  
Health & Sport Committee  
Scottish Parliament



By email

25 February 2021

Dear Lewis

### **SOCIAL CARE SUSTAINABILITY**

Thank you for inviting me to the round table session on social care yesterday. I enjoyed the discussion and I would like once again to record my thanks to the committee for its detailed consideration of this matter, and its very welcome report.

During Tuesday's session, committee member Brian Whittle MSP asked a question about social care sustainability and post-pandemic recovery. In my response, I mentioned the difficulties that third sector social care providers have experienced in accessing the significant resources allocated by the Scottish Government to cover the additional costs of COVID19 in the social care sector.

You asked me to provide further details, and these are set out below.

### **Resources to support social care**

A total of £262 million in additional resource has been allocated by Scottish Government to support social care, as follows:

- £50 million in May – announcement [here](#)
- £50 million in August – announcement [here](#)
- £50 million within the £1.1 billion announcement in September – see link here ([£1.1b for health and social care sector - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#))
- £112 million in the Adult Social Care Winter Preparedness Plan – announcement [here](#)

These allocations were all made from Scottish Government to Health Boards, and funding was then passed on to Integration Authorities.

The funding in May, August and September was to support a range of pressures due to the pandemic as set out by Integration Authorities in their Local Mobilisation Plans. This

includes providing financial support for social care providers for additional costs and impact on service delivery, as well as wider social care pressures, for example reducing delayed discharges, PPE, loss of income and other staff costs.

The funding committed in the Adult Social Care Winter Preparedness Plan is broken down within the Plan, with the relevant extract as follows:

- £50 million to support the additional costs of restricting staff movement across care settings
- £50 million for the Social Care Staff Support Fund and winter sustainability funding through to the end of March 2021
- £7 million for Health Boards to invest in Nurse Director teams to support increased infection protection and control measures in care settings
- Up to £5 million for additional oversight and administration costs associated with responding to the pandemic and outbreak management.

Some of these allocations are very specific to a particular purpose, for example the Social Care Support Fund and the investment in Nurse Director teams. Nevertheless we understand that a minimum of £150m has been allocated to cover the broad range of additional costs incurred as a direct result of the pandemic, including costs incurred by third sector providers.

### **Challenges experienced by providers in accessing resources**

To support the onward allocation and processing of these resources, a series of guidance documents was issued by Scottish Government and COSLA setting out the arrangements whereby providers could submit claims for reimbursement for costs incurred. We have had some involvement in the drafting of these documents on behalf of our members.

From the beginning, CCPS has received multiple reports from third sector providers relating to difficulties encountered in accessing funds. These include reports of delays in issuing the necessary paperwork required to submit claims; delays in processing claims; delays in payment of claims; rejection of claims in apparent variance from the guidance; and onerous requirements for documentary evidence to be submitted in support of claims (including, for example, details of comparative spend over several previous years; localised breakdowns of PPE use; and individual staff payslips).

A particular concern, in the context of Mr Whittle's question about post-pandemic recovery, is the apparent reluctance on the part of several authorities (again, contrary to guidance) to meet the unavoidable costs of non-delivery, where third sector services have either been closed temporarily because of public health restrictions, or have been running at less than full capacity, but nevertheless incur 'sunk' costs (including staffing).

If these costs are not met, the sustainability of these services is placed at serious risk and they may not still be in operation by the time restrictions are lifted and people with support needs are once again able to access them.

CCPS has had two members of staff working almost full-time, since April last year, trying to resolve these problems and unblock individual instances of difficulty. We are grateful to officials within both Scottish Government and COSLA who have worked alongside us; however it is with regret that we note that as soon as one problem is resolved, another arises, and so it goes on. We have regularly raised these issues at a strategic level and provided a significant amount of evidence to illustrate the problems that providers are experiencing, but the situation seems to be improving only minimally.

### **CCPS data on monies claimed and paid**

In January 2021 we collected data from our members about the claims they have made, and payments received. Thirty-two national providers submitted data. We estimate that these providers are collectively responsible for between 17% and 22% of **all** adult social care provision in Scotland; their principal areas of operation are care at home, housing support and supported living services. These organisations have worked extraordinarily hard both to maintain service levels and support their workforce through the pandemic and they have incurred unavoidable additional costs during this time.

The 'headline' data we collected is as follows:

Total monies claimed by these 32 providers as at Dec 2020 = **£8,021,557**

Total monies received (or approved for payment) as at Dec 2020 = **£3,270,564**

Thus, a group of providers that are responsible for 17%-22% of all adult social care has claimed only 3% of the total £262m made available for social care by the Scottish Government; and has received only 1.2% of that total.

Assuming, as noted above, that some of these monies were for specific purposes not available to this group, and the total therefore stands at £150m, then these figures change, with 5.4% of the total claimed, and 2.2% received.

The committee will perhaps wish to note that whichever formulation is applied, the proportion of total monies both claimed and received by this group, relative to their contribution to social care overall, is very modest indeed. The average claim per organisation (excluding those organisations in the sample that haven't claimed anything) is £297,095 which, again, represents a very modest amount.

And yet CCPS is still handling a significant number of reports of delay, difficulty or refusal of claims. In the year April 2020 to date, we have dealt with more than 400 separate reports, all of which we have been trying to resolve both at an individual service level and strategically, for example through seeking changes to guidance.



## Next steps

We continue to work with our colleagues in Scottish Government and COSLA to address these matters and we remain (as ever) optimistic that we will eventually see change in this most unfortunate situation. One of our key difficulties is in reaching agreement with our partners about a clear and effective process through which we can address and resolve these difficulties. The challenges of accountability that we discussed in Tuesday's session present a significant barrier in this respect, as do the mechanics of the procurement approach to social care provision.

As well as pursuing individual issues on behalf of our members, we have made enquiries as to what the totality of the £262m has been spent on, given that so very little of it has found its way to this significant group of providers. We are aware that the Auditor General has made a commitment to "[follow the pandemic pound](#)" and with your permission, we would like to copy this letter to him.

Many thanks again for the kind invitation to attend yesterday. Do please contact me again if the committee would like any further detail from points I raised at that discussion, or from this letter today.

With kind regards

Yours sincerely

**ANNIE GUNNER LOGAN**

Chief Executive Officer



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