Rt Hon Humza Yousaf MSP

First Minister

The Scottish Government

By Email

Your Reference: 202300389640

8 January 2024

Dear First Minister

First, can I wish you and yours a healthy, peaceful and prosperous new year. We appreciate that these are difficult times for all, but hope is the bedrock of social care and I know we share a commitment to build a better future for all who make Scotland their home.

Can I also thank you for your response to our jointly signed letter of 10th November regarding social care pay, which we received on 22nd December. We have shared this letter with all signatories to support them to respond to you direct.

This letter is the CCPS response.

We are pleased to hear your ongoing pride in our social care workforce. We agree with your Minister for Social Care's post-budget message that social care and support is transformative in its impact on the lives of individuals and families, as well as communities, across Scotland. Many of those who rely on support are experiencing multiple, day-to-day disadvantages and challenges which are only likely to worsen in the current climate. That is why an investment in social care is an investment in Scotland as a whole and in the wealth and wellbeing of local communities; it is a means to achieve the aspirations of this government across ministerial portfolios.

We note that your letter focuses on a pay award next year for the adult social care workforce only. We trust that this is an error, given a commitment has already been made to extend the pay award to those working in children's social care and support. Clarity on this point, as a matter of urgency, would be appreciated.

Your letter once again notes the 10% rise in pay promised next year. This headline overlooks two crucial points in relation to your own commitments to Fair Work.

First, increasing pay from a baseline which, I am sure you will acknowledge, has been historically poor for a largely female workforce, does not guarantee a fair wage. This is particularly notable for government investment in third and independent sector social care pay when comparing uplifts over time to those doing equal work in the public sector in health and social care. The gap in annual salary has widened considerably in recent years.

Second, your own 2023 Fair Work First guidance sets out a position that those receiving public money should, in general, pay at least the Real Living Wage – meaning that the uplift to £12 from 2024-25 is the very minimum the Scottish Government could do to meet its own policy objectives.

We are also concerned by the implication that staff should be grateful to receive more than the National Living Wage. This does not reflect Scottish Government policy and is not what you ask of providers as employers delivering public service contracts. We would hope that this government would stand by its own aspirations for our social care workforce.

For all of these reasons, we continue to assert that £12ph from April is insufficient to deliver respect to our members' staff and ensure the stability of service to the thousands of people in Scotland supported by CCPS member organisations.

Having considered the letter we are uncertain what, in practice, the government's commitment to Fair Work for social care staff means – both in the current budget cycle and in future aspiration.

Clarity on the above points would be welcomed in advance of the budget process concluding, given the seriousness of the instability facing our sector in which over 50% of those who moved jobs last year left social care altogether.

We would be happy to meet to discuss any of these points further.

I look forward to a response.

Yours



Rachel Cackett

CEO

CCPS

cc.

Mr Michael Matheson MSP, Cabinet Secretary for NHS Recovery, Health and Social Care

Mr Neil Gray MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Wellbeing Economy, Fair Work and Energy

Ms Maree Todd MSP, Minister for Social Care, Mental Wellbeing and Sport

Ms Donna Bell, Director of Social Care and National Care Service Development, Scottish Government

Ms Angie Wood, Director of Social Care Resilience and Improvement, Scottish Government

Mr Ian Turner, Deputy Director of Adult Social Care Workforce and Fair Work