



North Ayrshire Council
Comhairle Siorrachd Àir a Tuath

Meeting of the Council

Wednesday 2 November 2022

Response to a Supplementary Question
Submitted After the Meeting

Question

(20) a question by Councillor McDonald to the Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care in the following terms:

“It has been reported that the Scottish Government want to “reclaim” reserves from Health and Social Care Partnerships. Can the Cabinet Member tell us how much funding for health and social care services in North Ayrshire could be grabbed back by the Scottish Government under this move?”

Response

“At the end of February 2022, the Scottish Government wrote to Integration Joint Boards to advise that significant additional funding was being made available to meet Covid costs and the ongoing impact of the pandemic, this resulted in the North Ayrshire IJB carrying forward an earmarked Covid reserve of £13.321m into 2022-23.

This funding is to be utilised by Health and Social Care Partnerships to cover additional Covid-19 related costs associated with delegated services, to support any loss of income as a result of services being closed, and to support commissioned care providers for additional costs incurred. During 2022-23 the funding can only be utilised to fund the same costs and areas which were funded in previous years and not any new areas of expenditure.

Further communication was issued by Scottish Government in September, noting that “There have been a number of significant changes to Public Health policies in relation to Covid over the summer, resulting in the profile of Covid spend reducing significantly compared to when funding was provided to IJBs for Covid purposes. In response to this, the Scottish Government will reclaim surplus Covid reserves to be redistributed across the sector to meet current Covid priorities”.

At the end of September, the projected utilisation of this funding by the HSCP for the 2022-23 financial year is £5.118m. This is significantly less than the previous two financial years, due to a reduction in additional costs as well as the provision of new funding by Scottish Government to support areas of additional expenditure which were covered by the Covid funding in previous years, for example additional funding for investment in Care at Home capacity.

This underutilisation of Covid funding is consistent across all IJBs in Scotland.

On this basis, it is anticipated that the amount reclaimed by Scottish Government from North Ayrshire IJB would be £8.203m.

The Scottish Government plan to retain this funding in the health and social care system as Health Boards locally and nationally also continue to incur additional costs as a result of the pandemic in services which are not delegated to IJBs and have not yet received any additional funding to meet these in 2022-23. The Covid funding which is reclaimed from IJBs will be redistributed to Health Boards across Scotland, including NHS Ayrshire and Arran, to meet these additional costs.”

Supplementary Question

“At the last Council meeting the Labour Group proposed using a proportion of the HSCP’s reserves to scrap non-residential care charges, a decision that would have helped vulnerable residents immeasurably during this cost-of-living crisis.

Does the Cabinet Member now regret the decision to vote that down, given that their own Government may now try and grab the money from us?”

Response to Supplementary Question

“I refer Cllr McDonald to paragraph 2 of the written reply to his original question”