



This year, all service areas must be considered as Councils look to address pressures of **£1bn**. At the same time the climate crisis is getting worse. This is a time for investing in delivering new infrastructure, low carbon technology and preparedness, not cuts

Scotland's Climate Targets are in Danger of Becoming Meaningless

Climate Target 'Moving Out of View' After Scathing Report

These are two headlines showing the delivery gap we face in Scotland on climate change. The Scottish Government lacks a clear delivery plan and has not offered a coherent explanation for how its policies will achieve Scotland's bold emissions reduction targets – is the message by the Climate Change Committee in their 2022 report. A quantified plan is needed now. Local Government is the Scottish Government's key delivery partner on climate change but budget cuts sap Local Authorities' ability to respond to a changing world.

Council funding goes towards:

Supporting public transport, walking, cycling and wheeling

Building and maintaining electric vehicle charging infrastructure

Making homes and buildings more energy efficient

Low carbon heating technologies

Protecting green spaces, the natural environment and biodiversity

Flood protection and climate resilience

There is no single revenue and capital budget to tackle climate change. Climate action is delivered through multiple funds and through Local Authorities' core budget. A cut to Councils' budget is therefore a cut to climate action. Instead of cuts we should be increasing the investment in climate action through local government, as the economic and societal case for reducing emissions is clear.

Clearly, Councils will still make appropriate decisions in an attempt to minimise the impacts on climate action, but the fact is a cut to local government will make delivering targets even harder. Delays also hit the most vulnerable as climate change has a disproportionate impact on the poorest in society, setting back Scottish ambition to lead a Just Transition.

The impacts of this year's cuts could mean:



Less investment in transport and heat decarbonisation -
two of the sectors which need the biggest cuts in emissions



Less money to protect communities from the effects of climate change such as flooding, heatwaves or droughts



Targets for 2030 are put further at risk, which will impact the most vulnerable

“ Local Government in Scotland is ready and willing to do more on climate change - it is only 84 months until 2030. We know that we need to go further and faster in the next few years or our targets, set by Parliament, will be undeliverable. This takes more funding, not less. So a cut to Local Government will further slow progress which may mean that our targets are unachievable. ”

Councillor Gail Macgregor,
COSLA's Environment and Economy Spokesperson

“ We are at a crisis point like never before - the impact of this Scottish Budget for climate action is serious, and needs to be urgently reconsidered. ”

Councillor Katie Hagmann,
COSLA's Resources Spokesperson



Your local MSP has a key role to play to support Local Government during the budget process – please feel free to contact them to highlight the essential services your council delivers and the need for the Scottish Government to provide Councils with a fair settlement.

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