

There will be a **COSLA Leaders'** meeting on 26th May 2023 at 11am via MS Teams.

Sally Loudon
Chief Executive

AGENDA

Public Session

1. Introduction
2. Draft Minutes of Leaders' Meeting held 28 April 2023 **LD/23/070**

Private session

3. Partnership Agreement Between Scottish and Local Government **LD/23/071**
4. Scottish Government Policy Prospectus **LD/23/072**
5. Local Governance Review **LD/23/073**
6. SOLACE/Improvement Service Transformation work **LD/23/074**
7. Local Government Finance **LD/23/075**
8. Pay Update **LD/23/076** – *Late due to be distributed 24/05/2023*
9. Climate Intelligence Service **LD/23/077**
10. Non-Domestic Rates Incentivisation Scheme **LD/23/078**
11. Fiscal Framework for Local Government **LD/23/079**
12. Flood Risk Management **LD/23/080**
13. Learning Estate Investment Programme **LD/23/081**
14. Councillor Remuneration: SLARC Review Update **LD/23/082**
15. Local Government Digital Office – Annual Update **LD/23/083**
16. DigitalBoost and Digital Business Support **LD/23/084**
17. National Care Service Negotiations **LD/23/085**
18. Covid Inquiry Update **LD/23/086**
19. Prescribing Minimum Learning Hours – Consultation Response **LD/23/087**

20. Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy **LD/23/088**

21. myjobscotland Contract Extension **LD/23/089**

22. Changes to Strategic Scrutiny and Best Value Arrangements **LD/23/090**

23. Distribution **LD/23/091**

MINUTE OF MEETING OF COSLA LEADERS

Friday 28 April 2023

At Verity House and via MS Teams

Present:

Aberdeen City Council	Angela Scott
Aberdeen City Council	Cllr Ian Yuill
Aberdeen City Council	Cllr Alex Nicoll
Aberdeenshire Council	Jim Savege
Aberdeenshire Council	Cllr Mark Findlater
Angus Council	Margo Williamson
Angus Council	Cllr Beth Whiteside
Argyll and Bute Council	Pippa Milne
Argyll and Bute Council	Cllr Robin Currie
City of Edinburgh Council	Andrew Kerr
City of Edinburgh Council	Cllr Cammy Day
City of Edinburgh Council	Cllr Alys Mumford
Clackmannanshire Council	Nikki Bridle
Clackmannanshire Council	Cllr Ellen Forson
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar	Malcolm Burr
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar	Cllr Paul Steele
Dumfries and Galloway Council	Dawn Roberts
Dumfries and Galloway Council	Josef Coombey
Dumfries and Galloway Council	Cllr Gail Macgregor
Dumfries and Galloway Council	Cllr Katie Hagmann
Dundee City Council	Robert Emmott (Sub)
Dundee City Council	Cllr Willie Sawers (Sub)
East Ayrshire Council	Eddie Fraser
East Ayrshire Council	Cllr Douglas Reid
East Dunbartonshire Council	Gerry Cornes
East Dunbartonshire Council	Cllr Gordan Low
East Lothian Council	Monica Patterson
East Lothian Council	Cllr Norman Hampshire
East Renfrewshire Council	Lorraine McMillan
East Renfrewshire Council	Cllr Tony Buchanan
East Renfrewshire Council	Cllr Owen O'Donnell
Falkirk Council	Kenneth Lawrie
Falkirk Council	Cllr Cecil Meiklejohn
Fife Council	Ken Gourlay (Sub)
Fife Council	Cllr David Ross
Glasgow City Council	Annemarie O'Donnell
Glasgow City Council	Catherine Whitaker
Glasgow City Council	Cllr Richard Bell (Sub)
Highland Council	Kate Lackie
Highland Council	Cllr Raymond Bremmer
Inverclyde Council	Louise Long

Inverclyde Council	Cllr Stephen McCabe
Midlothian Council	Dr Grace Vickers
Midlothian Council	Cllr Kelly Parry
Moray Council	Roderick Burns
Moray Council	Cllr Shona Morrison
Moray Council	Cllr Paul McBain (Sub)
North Ayrshire Council	Russell McCutcheon (Sub)
North Ayrshire Council	Cllr Marie Burns
North Lanarkshire Council	Des Murray
North Lanarkshire Council	Cllr Paul Kelly (Sub)
Orkney Islands Council	Oliver Reid
Orkney Islands Council	Cllr James Stockan
Orkney Islands Council	Cllr Steven Heddle
Perth and Kinross Council	Cllr Peter Barrett
Perth and Kinross Council	Cllr Eric Drysdale (Sub)
Renfrewshire Council	Alan Russell
Renfrewshire Council	Cllr Iain Nicolson
Scottish Borders Council	David Robertson
Scottish Borders Council	Cllr Carol Hamilton (Sub)
Shetland Islands Council	Cllr Emma Macdonald
South Ayrshire Council	Mike Newall (Sub)
South Ayrshire Council	Cllr Bob Pollock (Sub)
South Lanarkshire Council	Cleland Sneddon
South Lanarkshire Council	Cllr Maureen Chalmers
South Lanarkshire Council	Cllr Joe Fagan
Stirling Council	Carol Beattie
Stirling Council	Cllr Margaret Brisley (Sub)
West Dunbartonshire Council	Peter Hessel
West Dunbartonshire Council	Cllr Martin Rooney
West Lothian Council	Graham Hope
West Lothian Council	Cllr Lawrence Fitzpatrick

Apologies:

Dundee City Council	Gregory Colgan*
Dundee City Council	Cllr John Alexander*
Fife Council	Steve Grimmond*
Glasgow City Council	Cllr Susan Aitken*
Moray Council	Cllr Kathleen Robertson*
North Ayrshire Council	Craig Hatton*
North Lanarkshire Council	Cllr Jim Logue*
Perth and Kinross Council	Thomas Glen
Perth and Kinross Council	Cllr Grant Laing*
Scottish Borders Council	Cllr Euan Jardine*
Shetland Islands Council	Maggie Sandison
South Ayrshire Council	Eileen Howat*
South Ayrshire Council	Cllr Martin Dowey*
Stirling Council	Cllr Chris Kane*

**Denotes Substitutes Provided*

Public Session

1. Apologies and Introductions

The President opened the meeting and thanked Leaders for their attendance and commented on the significance of the day that this meeting took place. Leaders were informed that a minute silence would be held at 12pm to remember all who had lost their lives at work, or from work related injury or illness, given that this was International Workers' Memorial Day

Apologies and substitutes had been noted separately for the Minute.

2. Draft Minute of Special Leaders Meeting held 31st March 2023

The President suggested that the draft Minute be amended at item 5, Pay Claims, to be clearer on the decision that Leaders had taken, as follows:

“Leaders agreed that option 4 in the paper be taken forward and that an offer of 5% for 2023/24 and an additional percentage or flat rate amount from January 2024 onwards be made to the SJC Trade Unions.”

Leaders agreed that the minute be amended as suggested and then as an accurate record.

Private Session

3. Partnership Agreement Between Scottish and Local Government

Before discussing the actual agreement, the President provided an update to Leaders on her meeting with the new First Minister on 31st March. The President was delighted to meet Mr Yousaf in his first week in office and pleased that they had had a very positive, warm, and constructive conversation, which also involved the new Deputy First Minister, Ms Robison, and Mr FitzPatrick, the Minister for Local Government Empowerment and Planning. They had spoken about the importance of the Partnership Agreement and of building trust and mutual respect, all things that were reflected in the draft presented.

Leaders were also reminded that last week saw the publication of the First Minister's Policy Prospectus – Equality, Opportunity, Community – in which he had announced the three missions that would guide Scottish Government's decision making over the remaining three years of the parliamentary term. As was the case for the Programme for Government, COSLA officers would prepare a report for Leaders in May, outlining the implications of the commitments in the document for Local Government.

On the report itself, the President was very pleased to ask Leaders to consider a first draft, in what she regarded as a key step in establishing a positive working relationship with Scottish Government, a commitment Leaders had made in the new COSLA Plan.

Since taking on the role as President, she has been all too aware of COSLA Leaders' concerns about the relationship between Scottish and Local Government. This had been the subject of discussion between Group Leaders and the First Minister, Deputy First

Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Local Government and had featured in a number of strategic engagement meetings between the President, Vice President and Ministers.

As the report stated, this draft had very much been developed in partnership and consideration at this meeting was an important step in an iterative process, after which the Cabinet would have the opportunity to reflect on comments and concerns raised and provide their views. It was very much hoped that progress could be made in the next few weeks in the same vein, and there was an offer from the First Minister to meet with Group Leaders during May, to discuss any concerns.

Leaders welcomed this report as a starting point for discussion on developing an agreement between Local and Scottish Government.

Leaders stated that comments made by the First Minister to Parliament in relation to a specific council leader were not appropriate and asked that this be communicated to Scottish Government.

Leaders remarked that there was a positive opportunity to engage with a new First Minister and welcomed that Mr FitzPatrick had reached out to engage with all Council Leaders. It was Leaders' wish to build a partnership agreement that was mutually respectful and would see Scottish Government engage early on all policy areas relating to Local Government, and where priorities were shared between Scottish and Local Government. Leaders provided comment that local knowledge should be utilised more during discussions around policies and funding, and that community planning partners must be involved locally.

Leaders noted that a further paper would be brought to their May meeting.

Leaders:

- i. Noted the work that had been done to date on developing a Partnership Agreement between Scottish and Local Government;
- ii. Provided comments on the draft presented at Appendix 1;
- iii. Agreed that a meeting be set up between Group Leaders and the First Minister during May for further discussions;
- iv. Noted that a further draft would be brought back to Leaders in May; and
- v. Agreed that officers progress the detailed programme of work with civil servants.

4. Local Government Finance Update

This report provided Leaders with a range of updates. As part of wider Ukraine funding, UK Government education tariff funding had been paid to all local authorities from the Scottish Government. These payments were adjusted due to the Scottish Government receiving a lower than expected amount of funding from the UK Government. COSLA and Scottish Government officials had received indications that the UK Government would provide this shortfall at a later date. Officers were waiting for written confirmation.

As part of ongoing Fiscal Framework discussions, COSLA officers had begun a process of collecting data from local authorities to establish a baseline of key cost drivers. This data would be initially analysed and used to inform joint understanding and discussion at

officer and political level in future. SOLACE and Directors of Finance were supporting the work.

The Scottish Government had published a consultation on their plans to set a legal minimum number of learning hours. This included a position which went further than what was previously understood by COSLA. A draft response would be brought to Leaders in May.

A consultation had also been published by COSLA and the Scottish Government on proposed changes to Council Tax on second homes and long-term empty properties, with a closing date of 11 July. This was part of the work of the Joint Working Group on which the Resources Spokesperson, President and Vice President sat.

COSLA officers were continuing to stress to UK Government officials the need for confirmation of Energy Bill Support Scheme (Alternative Funding) and the scope of the fixed costs and cost per application.

The Community Wellbeing Board had agreed a COSLA response to the Scottish Government's proposal to grant an exemption to local authorities from the Additional Dwelling Supplement. The response called for greater recognition of the circumstances whereby local authorities purchase properties to meeting housing needs.

Finally, COSLA Officers were planning to submit a response to the Scottish Parliament's Finance and Public Administration Committee call for views on public service reform. This response would be based on already agreed COSLA positions and would be available on the COSLA website once submitted.

Leaders provided officers with questions to gain further understanding on the report. Officers confirmed that any additional money raised through the proposed council tax reforms on second and long-term empty properties would not be subjected to ring fencing.

Amendment

An amendment was proposed in the following terms, moved by Cllr McCabe, and seconded by Cllr Reid.

Addition to recommendations:

Agree that in light of the desire to reset the relationship between Scottish Government and Local Government and recognising the autonomy of Local Government, COSLA engages with Scottish Government to discuss the withdrawal of the restrictions placed on teacher numbers, pupil support assistants and teaching hours and trust individual Local Authorities to take appropriate decisions on these matters for their local area.

Leaders further agree to write to the Scottish Government, in the spirit of the developing partnership agreement, requesting the Scottish Government bring forward empirical evidence which supports the prescribed hours of 950 for primary and 1045 for secondary schools.

Hence, Leaders:

- i. Agreed that, if necessary, the relevant Spokespeople progress a joint political letter with Scottish Government to UK Government relating to funding for Ukraine resettlement;
- ii. Noted the ongoing work relating to the Fiscal Framework, education interventions, and Energy Bill Support Scheme (Alternative Funding) and Alternative Fuel Payment (Alternative Funding);
- iii. Noted the publication of the joint consultation on Council Tax changes;
- iv. Noted the responses to the consultation on changes to the Land and Building Transaction Tax and call for evidence on Public Sector Reform;
- v. Agreed that, in light of the desire to reset the relationship between Scottish Government and Local Government and recognising the autonomy of Local Government, COSLA engage with Scottish Government to discuss the withdrawal of the restrictions placed on teacher numbers, pupil support assistants and teaching hours and trust individual local authorities to take appropriate decisions on these matters for their local area; and
- vi. Further agreed to write to the Scottish Government, in the spirit of the developing partnership agreement, requesting the Scottish Government bring forward empirical evidence which supported the prescribed hours of 950 for primary and 1045 for secondary schools.

5. Pay Claims Update

This was taken as item 8 on the day.

This report provided Leaders with an update following the rejection by all three SJC trade unions of the offer made to them on 3 April 2023. Each had conducted a consultative ballot and had officially notified COSLA that, of the members who voted, the vast majority had done so to reject the offer. As the ballots were consultative, officers did not have an indication of what percentage of the actual membership of each union had voted. Therefore, officers could not say with any certainty that the unions would achieve the necessary turnout to achieve a mandate for industrial action. Only Unison in their response indicated that they had asked their membership whether they would be willing to take some form of industrial action, up to and including strike action, with 90% of those who responded to that question saying they would be.

Each of the trade unions in their responses had stated that the offer fell far short of inflation and referenced the offer made to Local Government workers in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. As noted in the paper the offer COSLA had made not only achieved parity with the SNCT but compared very favourably and was worth more overall than that made to the NJC. Notably the Scottish Local Government Living Wage would rise to £11.84 whilst the bottom rate of the NJC would only rise to £11.59.

A fact sheet on the offer had been shared with all councils outlining the details for each level of the SJC. Professional advisors remained of the view that this was a credible offer that met the asks discussed with trade unions in the SJC Steering Group and which, as far as possible, protected the integrity of Local Government pay structures. It was within the cost envelope available but did place pressure on council finances on a recurring basis from 2024/25 onwards.

Officers provided Leaders with an update on the last meeting of the SJC Steering Group. Officers also provided an update on the advice given by professional advisors.

Motion

A motion was proposed in the following terms, moved by Cllr Stockan, and seconded by Cllr Reid, that Leaders accept the recommendations in the report, so:

Leaders:

- i. Note the private and confidential nature of this paper;*
- ii. Note the response from the SJC trade unions;*
- iii. Note the affordability and sustainability issues associated with the SJC claim and that the current offer has fully utilised all of the funding available and represents a strong and credible offer;*
- iv. Agree that the current position in relation to the offer is maintained, until there is further clarity on the position from all trade unions.*

Amendment

An amendment was proposed in the following terms, moved by Cllr Ross, and seconded by Cllr Fagan.

Delete recommendation iv in the report, and replace with:

Note that a response rejecting the offer has now been received from Unison meaning that the offer has been rejected by a majority on the trade union side.

Further notes the commitment given by the former DFM on behalf of the Scottish Government to work constructively with COSLA to avoid industrial action and reach a settlement on SJC pay and agrees to engage with Scottish Government to secure additional funding from Scottish Government to allow an enhanced offer to be made to the SJC trade unions.

A vote took place with twenty votes for the motion and ten votes for the amendment.

Hence, Leaders:

- i. Noted the private and confidential nature of this paper;*
- ii. Noted the response from the SJC trade unions;*
- iii. Noted the affordability and sustainability issues associated with the SJC claim and that the current offer had fully utilised all of the funding available and represented a strong and credible offer; and*
- iv. Agreed that the current position in relation to the offer was maintained, until there was further clarity on the position from all trade unions.*

Recess called at 12.45pm

Reconvened at 12.50pm

6. National Care Service

This was taken as item 5 on the day.

This report updated on key developments concerning National Care Service proposals. Since Leaders called for the Bill to be paused in December, which were reiterated in January, the Scottish Government had taken the decision on two occasions to delay the Bill's advancement through the parliamentary process. Having originally been scheduled for March, officers now expected Stage 1 scrutiny of the Bill to take place in autumn, following the Parliament's summer recess. Accompanying the decisions to delay the Bill had been a public and private shift in communication from Scottish Ministers, who had signalled their intention to work with Local Government to find a compromise on the proposals, including in relation to staff transfer and ensuring staff remain employed by local authorities.

Indeed, since the report was circulated, the week this meeting was held, the Health and Social Care Spokesperson had held a constructive meeting with the new Cabinet Secretary for NHS Recovery, Health and Social Care where he again expressed his desire to work closely and pragmatically with COSLA and Local Government to find compromise on the National Care Service. And just on the morning of this meeting, the Health and Social Care Spokesperson had met with the Minister for Social Care, Mental Wellbeing and Sport who echoed this sentiment.

In January, Leaders had agreed that COSLA should seek a negotiation on a way forward on the National Care Service. This intention was matched by the Scottish Government in a letter from the Deputy First Minister to the COSLA President on 14 April, which reiterated the Scottish Government's hope that collaborative discussions be undertaken. In carrying this forward, an initial discussion took place between senior officials on 19 April. At this meeting, there was broad agreement that focus should continue around improvement work and around areas of existing agreement. However, there was also recognition that finding a path forward on the National Care Service Bill would require meaningful further discussion and dialogue.

Leaders provided officers with comments to take into further discussions around the National Care Service Bill.

Leaders:

- i. Agreed that officers engage in regular and intensive discussions with senior Scottish Government officials over the course of May and June, with the aim of agreeing a way forward, and recognising that consensus would be required from both sides, whilst maintaining Leaders' position in relation to the Bill, as set out at paragraph 11 of the report. This included COSLA's key established positions that:
 - a. Local Government retained staff and property and therefore funding;
 - b. Local Government retained legal duties and a key role in commissioning;
 - c. Local Government retained governance functions of IJBs / local care boards; and
 - d. Adequate funding of social care and investment must be prioritised now, in particular in taking forward the Joint Statement of Intent; and
- ii. Noted that the output of these negotiations would continue to be brought back to COSLA Leaders for agreement as this developed.

7. National Care Home Contract Update

This was taken as item 6.

This report provided an update to Leaders on the ongoing challenges in reaching agreement on the 2023/24 National Care Home Contract fee uplift. At their meeting in March, Leaders agreed that the second offer to the sector on behalf of Local Government, which would have provided an average uplift of 6%, was the best and final offer given the significant financial challenges.

Since then, Scottish Care had informed COSLA that their members had formally voted to reject the offer and were instead seeking urgent discussions with Scottish Government in relation to issues of workforce and sustainability of the sector which they felt were inadequately addressed within the contract.

The Health and Social Care Spokesperson had met with the Cabinet Secretary earlier in the week prior to this meeting and raised this issue among others, and asked that any available detail on the timetable for uplifting adult social care pay to £12/hour, which was announced last week by the First Minister, be shared with officers at the earliest opportunity given the shared commitment to improve the pay of the workforce, as well as the material impact it would have on the National Care Home Contract. The Cabinet Secretary had reassured the Spokesperson that his officials were working up options and would keep the Spokesperson informed of any developments.

In the meantime, COSLA officers were working closely with Health and Social Care Partnerships to monitor and mitigate risks to Local Government, the wider sector, as well as the individuals who were placed under the National Care Home Contract.

Leaders were asked to note the update within this report. Further reports would continue to be brought back for agreement as the situation develops.

Leaders provided comments on funding for officers to take into consideration. Officers also updated Leaders that they were looking to get a timetable for the pay uplift. Leaders noted the update provided in this report in relation to the ongoing risk to the National Care Home Contract and the impact that the lack of agreed rate may have on the care home sector and wider health and social care system.

8. Strategic Housing and Humanitarian Issues

This was taken as item 7.

This report set out some of the major housing and humanitarian challenges facing Scotland, and the chronic housing shortages afflicting families and individuals in many areas of the country. Local authorities were experiencing a housing emergency set in the context of a broad range of cost-of-living pressures, and homelessness affecting an ever-rising number of people. This was creating a very high demand for social rented housing, while the available accommodation in the private rented sector was shrinking or becoming unaffordable.

This sharp rise in housing need was even more pressing given the unprecedented demands within the system coming from the humanitarian programmes which supported people fleeing persecution, violence, and war. One of the biggest confounding factors in

taking action in this area was the lack of co-ordination between the UK and Scottish Governments with our member councils.

All of this was covered in some detail in the first part of the paper, as was COSLA's position over the need for adequate resources to meet Governments', and local authorities' own priorities. The report also highlighted other factors that were having an impact on local authorities' roles as social landlords and housing authorities.

Both local authority chief executives and chief housing officers had been in discussions with their senior Scottish civil service counterparts over the last few weeks prior to this meeting and there had been some movement. The proposed official led Housing Task Group (in paragraph 17) – which would be established under the jointly chaired Housing to 2040 Strategic Board – had all but been agreed with the sort of local authority professional membership that it needed.

The report stated that COSLA needed to push on having tripartite discussions leading to inter-governmental approaches with the UK and Scottish Governments. COSLA, and they, must commit to work together to deliver rapid, real, and sustained change. Local authorities could not go on as they were now.

The recommendations were intended to establish a formal recognition of where local authorities were, what needed to be done and how this was managed within COSLA's governance structures.

Minute silence was held for International Workers' Memorial Day at 12pm.

Leaders provided comments on the challenges faced on a local level for COSLA officers to consider in their work on strategic housing and humanitarian issues. Leaders discussed what short term solutions could be achieved, including bringing UK and Scottish Government together and the purchasing of properties.

Leaders:

- i. Noted the severe and chronic shortage of housing across Scotland;
- ii. Agreed that letters be sent to UK and Scottish Governments setting out Leaders explicit concerns and asks regarding the housing crisis, as well as the need for support for Scottish Local Government, as set out in this report;
- iii. Agreed further to seek an early tripartite – Scottish, UK and Local Government - meeting to discuss these matters; and
- iv. Agreed to ask the COSLA Community Wellbeing Board to give some detailed consideration to the issues and potential ways forward and report back to Leaders.

9. Historical Child Abuse Redress Scheme – Financial Report

This report provided Leaders with an update on the latest financial report from Scottish Government on the Historical Child Abuse Redress Scheme. This was the second such report Leaders had received since the Scheme went live in December 2021. Leaders would note there had been an increase in awards since the last update.

The report also provided an update on the Local Authority Reference Group, which had been set up by Scottish Government to allow Local Government representatives to discuss operational matters related to the Scheme.

Leaders:

- i. Noted the report on the Scheme provided by Scottish Government; and
- ii. Noted the update on the Local Authority Reference Group.

10. Early Learning and Childcare Feature Report

This paper sought Leaders' agreement on the publication of an Early Learning and Childcare 'feature' report. The draft report was attached at appendix 1, with the final text subject to partners' feedback and the addition of case studies, which would be developed with partners.

Scottish Government had committed to expand funded childcare for 1 and 2-year olds as well as school age children, and it was not yet clear the models of delivery and funding that would be utilised, and what Local Government's role would be.

It was proposed that this feature was published and publicised widely, as a proactive opportunity to highlight and reinforce Local Government's key strategic role in childcare and the successes of 1140 to date, to help demonstrate the importance of working with Local Government on the development of new commitments from an early stage.

COSLA officers noted the comments that Leaders provided. Officers also provided an update on discussions with Scottish Government officials around the Summer Programme and its funding, noting there had no confirmation that funding would be available to local authorities in 2023.

Leaders:

- i. Agreed the publication of the ELC feature report, noting the draft at appendix 1 was subject to feedback received from partners and the addition of case studies.
and
- ii. Delegated sign-off of the final report to the Children and Young People Spokesperson.

11. Scottish Veterinary Service Update

This paper provided Leaders with an update on the work being done by Scottish Government to establish a Scottish Veterinary Service. Leaders had been presented with a paper on this issue in November 2022 at which point local authority animal health and welfare services were included within scope for the new service.

It had now been decided that these services would remain with local authorities. This was very welcome news and in large part due to the work of the Environmental Health and Trading Standards professions. However, it was the case that resourcing for these services was stretched and Leaders were therefore asked to agree to support the proposals to develop an action plan for animal health and welfare services across Scotland in order to develop a consistent and sustainable service.

Leaders:

- i. Noted the decision that local animal health and welfare services were out with the scope of the Scottish Veterinary Service, and would remain within local authorities;
- ii. Noted that Leaders no longer needed to sign off the local authority engagement outcomes; and
- iii. Agreed to support the proposals to develop an action plan for local authority animal health and welfare services across Scotland.

12. Distribution

This report asked Leaders to consider and agree recommendations from the Settlement and Distribution Group in relation to two distribution areas:

In relation to the outstanding query relating to whether the quantum for the SNCT pay funding in 2023-24 should be £155m or £156m, this had not yet been resolved due to annual leave of civil servants but would be addressed as soon as possible, and Directors of Finance would be informed.

Leaders:

- i. Noted there was an outstanding query relating to whether the quantum for the SNCT pay funding in 2023-24 should be £155m or £156m.
- ii. Agreed that the General Revenue Grant was reprofiled to enable payment of this sum for teachers' pay, from June 2023 to address cashflow concerns.

Date of Next Meeting

The President concluded this meeting of Leaders at 1:10pm and thanked them for their attendance and contributions. It was noted the next ordinary meeting of Leaders was scheduled for Friday 26 May 2023.