



Local Govt. Concordat

Briefing on ...

Local government finance

Introduction

The Scottish and local government concordat lays out the terms under which individual local authorities can access funding to freeze the council tax this year. The concordat covers funding details, key policy aims of the Scottish Government and details on ring-fenced funding for local government.

The Agreement

- There will be no structural reform of local government
- Total funding has been agreed
- A move to a Single Outcome Agreement
- They will agree a new performance system with a single report setting out progress towards national outcomes
- They will work together to develop an agreed response to the Crerar review.
- The Scottish Government will reduce substantially ring fencing of funding streams to local government.
- Local authorities will retain all their efficiency savings. The target is now increased from 1.5% to 2%.
- They will put in place arrangements to jointly oversee and monitor the new partnership.

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Single outcome agreement (SOA)

There will be a move to a SOA to monitor the performance of local government. Central and local governments will work together to develop a new performance system based on outcomes. Each council will be required to submit a single report on the year just finished and plans for

the following year. While UNISON welcomes moves to simplify reporting and scrutiny systems measures must take account of the varying levels of funding and different challenges councils face if they are to truly reflect performance.

Specified set of commitments

In return for the new funding arrangements councils must:

- Freeze council tax at 2007-08 levels
- Make an additional 1,000 police officers available in communities
- Introduce Small Business Bonus scheme by 2010-11.funded by non domestic rate income.
- Reduce class sizes to 18 for P1 to P3 “as quickly as possible” and “access to a teacher for every pre school child”.
- “Make substantial progress” towards a 50% increase in pre school entitlement for 3 and 4 year olds.
- Pilot free school meals for all P1 to P3 pupils, full implementation by 2010 if pilot successful.
- Subject to legislation extend entitlement to free school meals to pupils who get maximum child tax credit and maximum working tax credit

Reductions in ring-fencing

The concordat offers substantial reductions in ring fencing of funding to councils. While this is broadly welcomed in principle by UNISON it is unclear if the funding for every project is in the new settlement. Branches will need to monitor individual budgets closely for any changes in local provision.

Ring fenced

Justice

Police
Criminal justice social work
Fire capital grant

Health and Wellbeing

Community regeneration fund
Community voices programme
Working for families
Housing support grant

Hostels grant
Vacant and derelict land fund
Private sector housing grant
Transfer of the management of development funding
Assistance to owners affected by housing stock transfer

Education and lifelong learning

Determined to succeed

Finance and sustainable growth

Regional transport capital grant
Cycling, walking safer routes
First Minister
Gaelic

Further information

Concordat between local government and the Scottish Government
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2007/11/13092240/concordat>

P and I briefing Budget 171
<http://www.unison-scotland.org.uk/briefings/speakingreview2007.html>

P and I briefing Creer review briefing 166
<http://www.unison-scotland.org.uk/briefings/creerreview2.html>

Rolled into settlement (un ring-fenced)

Justice

Antisocial behaviour
Community Safety partnership
Police capital grant
Health and wellbeing
Mental health
Children's services- women's aid fund
Homelessness task force
Furniture grant resource
Glasgow hostels decommissioning
Private landlord registration
Supporting people
Violence against women fund
Delayed discharge
Accommodation for sex offenders

Education and lifelong learning

National priorities action fund
Social work training
Languages grant
Educ. attainment for looked after children
Changing children's services fund
Specialist provision programme- centre of excellence
Children's legal representation grant scheme
School estate/PPP
Early years and childcare workforce development
Fostering services
Adoption
Youth work
Schools fund

Finance and sustainable growth

Demand responsive transport grant
Rural public passenger Bus route development
School travel coordinators
Efficiency and reform fund
Piers and harbours
Public transport fund and integrated transport fund
Rural affairs and the environment
Strategic waste fund
Anti social behaviour noise grant scheme
Air quality monitoring
Flood prevention and coastal protection grant
Contaminated land
Strategic waste fund

Action for Branches

Individual councils decide whether or not to agree to this concordat. Branches should monitor their council decisions and check individual budgets closely. For example social work and early years training budgets, community wardens etc. are no longer ring-fenced and may be cut. There may also be implications for voluntary sector funding.

Many of the commitments are ambiguous such as police numbers and 'access to a teacher' in early years provision. Branches will wish to ensure that the leadership of early years professionals is not undermined. There will also be implications for capital budgets and PPP grants although this may become clearer when the Government announces its Scottish Futures Trust proposals for capital infrastructure.