

# Welcome

## About COSLA

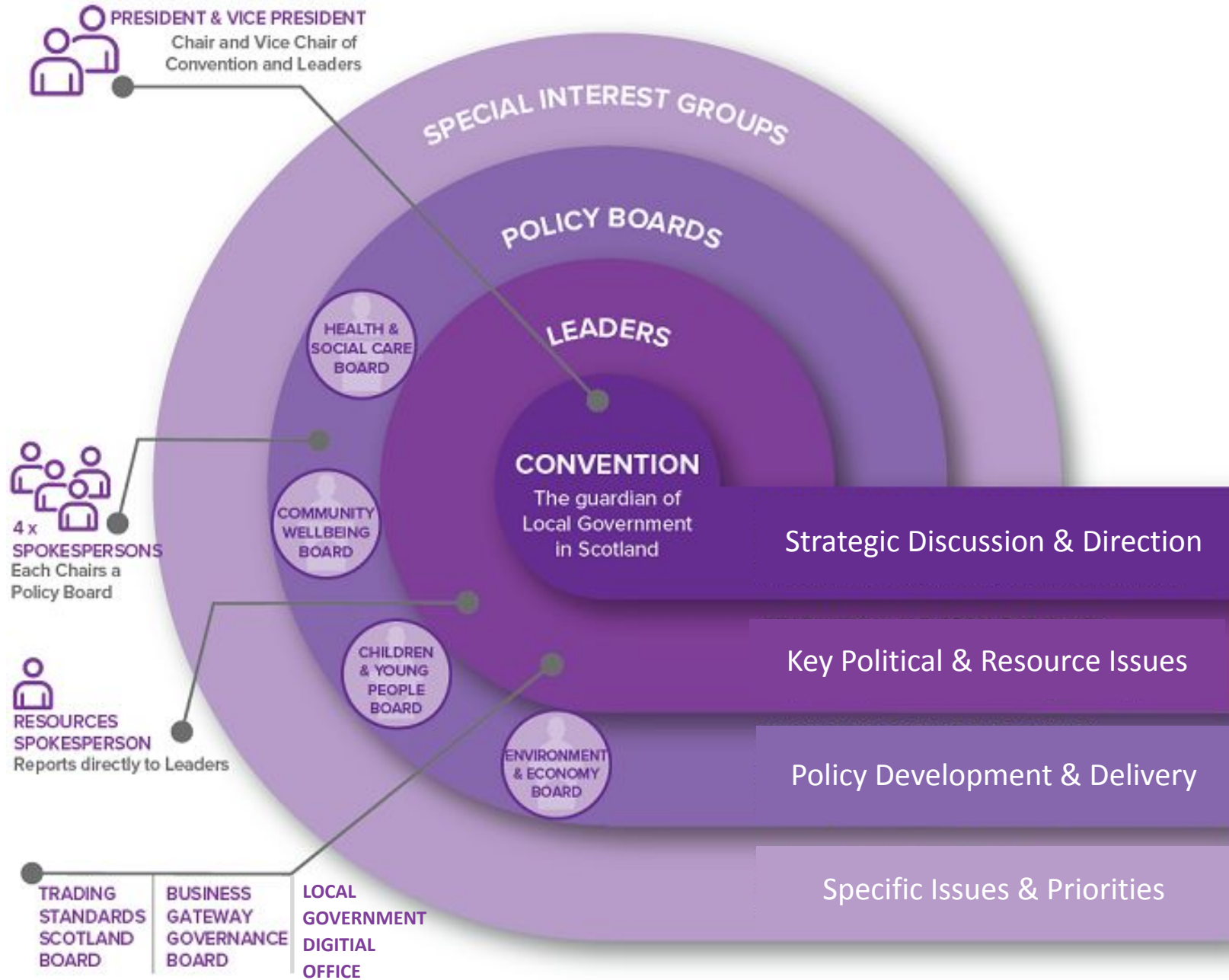
- The voice of Local Government in Scotland
- Councillor-led and provide political leadership on national issues
- Engage with Scottish, UK and international governments to secure councils' resources and powers
- Work with councils to improve local services and strengthen local democracy
- Specialist shared services - Business Gateway, myjobscotland, Digital Office and Trading Standards Scotland

## Challenges and Opportunities

Policy Landscape and priorities

- Relationships with Governments – Verity House Agreement
- Financial Constraints
  
- Local Government's place in governance of Scotland
- Membership and One Local Government Voice

# COSLA's Governance Arrangements



## COSLA Convention

- Key roles:
  - COSLA's overall strategic direction and priorities
  - Promote and showcase Scottish Local Government
  - Consider and debate nationally significant issues
  - Oversee COSLA's Constitution and budget
- Meets twice each year

# COSLA's Plan

We launched our COSLA Plan in November 2022.

The COSLA Plan sets out our vision and priorities for Local Government and communities across Scotland.

The COSLA Plan is framed around six key themes:

- Strengthen Local Democracy
- Secure Sustainable Funding
- Improve the Wellbeing of Individuals, Families and Communities
- **Enhance Education and Support for our Children and Young People**
- Deliver a Just Transition to a Net Zero Economy
- Support the Most Vulnerable in our Communities



## COSLA Leaders Meeting

- COSLA's key decision making body
- Focus on key political and resource issues
  - The priorities set by Convention
  - Leaders Workplan
  - Issues referred by Policy Boards
- Voting, Substitutes, and Motions
- Meets 8 times each year

# Children and Young People Board



- National policy voice for Local Government on Education and Children's Services
- Chaired by Cllr Tony Buchanan, COSLA Children and Young People Spokesperson
- The board's work plan is structured around 3 priorities
  - **Learning opportunities** - Supporting children and young people to achieve the best possible educational outcomes, including working to close the poverty-related attainment gap, and improving the overall standards of attainment which have been impacted by the effects of the Covid pandemic
  - **Care and wellbeing** - Keeping the Promise Scotland made to care experienced infants, children, young people, adults, and their families, and supporting all children and young people's mental and physical health.
  - **Rights and protection** - Making sure that children's rights are protected, supporting incorporation of UNCRC into Scots law, and keeping children and young people safe and protected from harm.



# COSLA: Children and Young People's Team

The Children and Young People team supports the Children and Young People Board, and the Children and Young People Spokesperson.

## Main Policy Areas

- Education, including governance, Curriculum for Excellence, assessment and examinations, attainment and achievement, education resources, education reform and additional support for learning
- Early Learning and Childcare
- Children and young people's health, wellbeing and Mental Health
- Keeping the Promise and improving outcomes for Looked After Children in all settings including at home, in foster care, kinship care, residential and secure care, and Corporate Parenting
- Protecting and Supporting Families, including child protection
- Children's hearings and youth justice
- Child poverty and tackling inequality
- Aspects of employability for young people
- The incorporation of the United National Convention on the Rights of the Child
- GIRFEC (Getting it Right for Every Child) policy development and implementation

# Professional Associations

- The team works closely with other organisations of professionals across Local Government, for advice, support and to understand concerns.
- This includes:
  - Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE)
  - ADES (Association of Directors of Education),
  - SWS (Social Work Scotland)
- As well as SLAED (Scottish Local Authority Economic Development network), SPDS (Society of Personnel and Development Scotland).



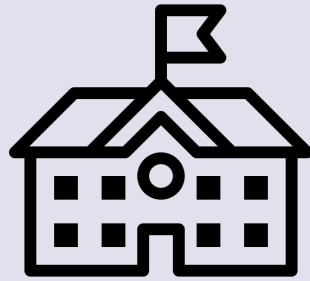
COSLA

## Key areas of work



### Early learning and Childcare

- 1140 hours expansion
- Engaging with providers
- Quality and workforce
- Further expansion?



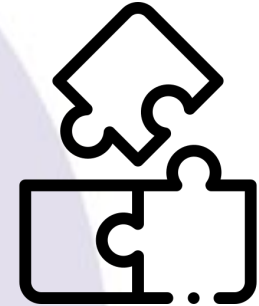
### School education

- Improvement
- Education Reform
- Curriculum and Assessment



### Inclusion, health and wellbeing

- Additional Support Needs
- Behavior and Relationships
- Race, gender, LGBTi
- Counselling in Schools



### Education provision

- Free school meals
- Digital Devices
- School estate
- Teacher numbers funding

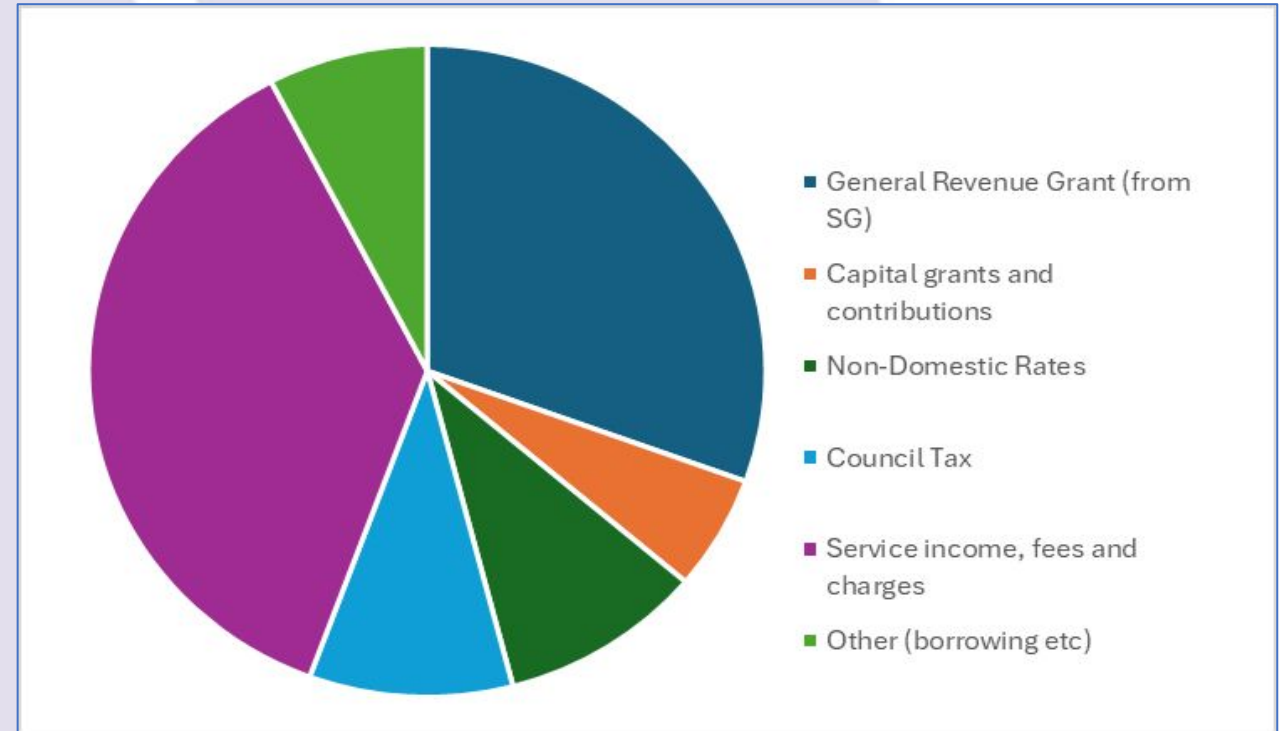
## Challenges

- Funding and Capacity
- Ensuring holistic approaches across children's services
- Partnership working with Scottish Government but also broader partners across education (trade unions, parents/carers, young people)

# COSLA: Local Government Finance Team

## Local Government Funding

- In 2022/23, Local Government Settlement was **£12.7bn**. Councils' gross expenditure was **£27.2bn** (revenue and capital)
- Income from a variety of sources (*see chart*)
- Local Government expenditure:
  - Enables service delivery across every community in Scotland
  - Supports local economies and supply chains
  - Pays around 260k FTE staff
- **Education – around 50% of total council spend** (£6.5bn net revenue expenditure in 22/23 - out of £12.9bn total net rev expenditure)



# COSLA: Local Government Finance Team

- **Local Government Finance Challenges**

- Cuts to core funding
- 70% funding is ringfenced/directed
- £585m funding gap in 2024/25, cumulative budget gap of £780m by 2026/27
- Single year budgets
- **Tough decisions – service and staffing reductions and cuts**

- **COSLA LGF team role:** Support policy teams, Settlement and Distribution Group, fiscal framework, local taxation, budget lobbying...

## **COSLA: Employers Team**

- Each council is a separate employer
- COSLA Leads the Employers Side in negotiations about national pay and terms and conditions
- The team supports the resources spokesperson and councillors conducting the negotiations
- There are 4 bargaining groups – SNCT, SJC, Craft and Chief Officials
- We recognise 6 teaching unions and 4 unions in the rest of the workforce
- The team also does other national workforce related work

## Keeping in Touch

- WEBSITE: [www.cosla.gov.uk](http://www.cosla.gov.uk)
- DROP US A LINE: [cyp@cosla.gov.uk](mailto:cyp@cosla.gov.uk)
- SOCIAL MEDIA: Follow us on Twitter [@COSLA](https://twitter.com/COSLA)