



Dear Cllr,

As representatives of UNISON Scottish Borders Public Services, we are reaching out to you regarding the critical issue of proposed cuts to the Local Area Coordination (LAC) service in the Scottish Borders. Specifically, we address this letter to you as Council representatives on the Scottish Borders Health & Social Care Integration Joint Board (IJB).

We acknowledge the challenging financial landscape facing local government and health integrated services, but we urge you to consider the long-term consequences of the proposed 10% budget cut (84k) to the LAC service. This service plays a vital role in our communities, emphasising community capacity building and reducing reliance on formal services.

While we recognise the need for difficult decisions in the current financial landscape, we firmly believe that investing in preventative services like the LAC and Community Link Worker posts will ultimately reduce the demand for more complex and costly services in the future. Cutting these services now would be short-sighted, sacrificing long-term benefits for short-term savings.

The proposed reduction in staffing - cuts to LAC and Community Link Worker positions, is deeply concerning. These positions are invaluable to individuals, families, and localities in the Borders, as evidenced by the significant positive feedback they receive from service users and our communities.

It's crucial to understand that prevention is often difficult to measure in immediate impact, but this should not undermine its importance. Preventative services like the LAC service contribute significantly to building resilience and capacity within our communities, ultimately reducing the strain on our public services.

Therefore, we urge you to:

- Further scrutinize the proposals within the LAC review.
- Refrain from implementing the drastic 10% budget cut to the LAC service.
- Resist any cuts to Health and Social Care that will have a long-term impact on service user health.
- Consider the long-term impacts of cuts to the LAC service on our communities.
- Seriously consider feedback gathered during the public consultation period before making any decisions.
- Continue to lobby the Scottish government for greater public service investment.
- Explore alternative measures to balance budgets, such as reducing agency spend in social care.

In conclusion, we implore you to prioritise the well-being of our communities and the effectiveness of our public services. Now is the time for bold leadership and strategic investment in services that will benefit our residents for years to come.

As a trade union representing public sector workers, we commit to continuing our relentless lobbying and campaigning efforts on behalf of our members who are on the frontlines delivering public services

in the Scottish Borders. Their dedication and hard work are the backbone of our communities, and we will stand firm in advocating for their rights and the integrity of the services they provide.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter.

Sincerely,

Kaymarie Hughes
Branch Secretary
UNISON Scottish Borders Public Services