

## Petitioner submission of 3 August 2022

### PE1946/B: To call on the Scottish Government to pay all charges for homeless temporary accommodation

I have read the Scottish Government's response to this Petition with great interest and want to comment on their letter. The cornerstone of the petition is that the vulnerable homeless in temporary accommodation cannot pay the very high charges of that accommodation to local authorities, hence the very large debt of £33.3 million that has occurred. Therefore the Scottish Government should step in to cover the costs of temporary accommodation and write off that debt. They have failed to do this and have no intention to do so.

Instead we are given various figures of £23.5 million, £8million and other amounts that the Scottish Government have regurgitated time and again as spin. While in reality the Scottish Government are cutting budgets for Local Government and for building affordable homes, ensuring growing numbers of homeless people being locked into the ghettoisation of temporary accommodation and this will worsen as the cost of living crisis deepens in the months to come.

The setting up of the Temporary Accommodation Task and Finish Group which includes a member of the Legal Services Agency, the organisation that wrote the report advocating the state paying the charges of temporary accommodation may appear positive but is no more than paying lip service to this petition.

The reality is that with the rise in vulnerable homeless households in temporary accommodation from 11,345 in 2019 to 13,192 in 2021 and with the numbers of those in temporary accommodation expected to rise further because of the cost of living crisis we need action and resources now to tackle the homeless and housing emergency. Therefore the near £500 million underspend from last year which is now residing in the Scottish Government's cash reserves could easily be used for paying the charges for housing the homeless in temporary accommodation in Scotland and writing off the £33.3 million debt.

Unless the terms of this petition are met we are condemning our vulnerable homeless households in Scotland into penury and further poverty which will be disastrous for their physical and mental health.