

Union says National Care Service Bill is not fit for purpose

UNISON, Scotland's largest local government union, has called on the First Minister not to put care at the bottom of her list as she issued her Programme for Government including measures to help with the cost of living crisis.

The union is demanding that The Scottish Government protects the most vulnerable by withdrawing the National Care Service (Scotland) Bill as they deem it not 'fit-for-purpose' and it would retain profit in care.

The Bill would mean that care is provided as a for-profit service, leading to the outsourcing of tens of thousands of council workers' jobs – and would mean the most personal services relied on by the most vulnerable adults and children in Scotland will be the subject of contracting and procurement exercises.

As it stands, the Bill would also give the Scottish Government power to transfer functions and property out of councils and the NHS. In addition, the Bill lacks crucial elements of detail in so many areas that the government is denying Parliament the opportunity to carry out meaningful scrutiny of legislation.

Tracey Dalling, UNISON's Scottish Secretary, said: "While the First Minister is outlining her plans to protect others during this cost-of-living crisis, we are urging her not to forget the most vulnerable in our society. That's why we are asking the Scottish Government to withdraw the National Care Service (Scotland) Bill.

"What is being proposed is not a valid or effective response to the care crisis. Nor is it a route to high quality social care. Instead we have a power grab by central government, private companies and tax dodgers. It is a massively centralising move and if the Bill goes ahead as planned it would deal a fatal blow to local government."