

MP confirms £20m pledge to Mayfield gone

Plans to invest £20 million in a Midlothian community will not go ahead under the new Labour Government, Midlothian's MP has confirmed.

Former Prime Minister Rishi Sunak promised the funding for Mayfield, under a UK-wide Long Term Town Planning initiative unveiled before last year's General Election.

However Labour MP Kirsty McNeill, who was elected as Labour won a landslide victory in the election, said no money was allocated to the initiative which she described as an unfunded election pledge by the Conservatives.

In a letter to Midlothian council leader Kelly Parry, Ms McNeill said: "The award that was announced for Mayfield and other communities at the start of the election campaign was, like many Conservative announcements and pledges, entirely unfunded."

And she suggested the Scottish Government could share some of the additional investment given to it by Westminster with Midlothian to support public services.

The £20million pledge was part of a UK wide promise by the Conservative Government to invest in local communities with the money expected to be given to the council over ten years for the community with a town board established to oversee it.

Ms McNeill said she had written to civil servants involved to

establish the reasons Mayfield was chosen in the hope it would help with future investment bids and given local community group In It Together guidance.

She said she was committed to ensuring Midlothian received its share of funding passed on from the Labour Government.

Speaking to the Local Democracy Reporting Service she said: "After years of inaction and broken promises, real change for Midlothian – not empty words – is needed.

"I promised to fight for the investment which Midlothian needs, and I'm very proud to say that the Labour Government has delivered the largest funding settlement for Scotland in the history of devolution – resulting in nearly £5 billion extra funding which the SNP Government can choose to invest in our communities.

"Later this month, Midlothian Council should see its confirmed funding allocation from the Scottish Government for 2025/6. If the additional funding the Scottish Government received from Labour's budget is spent wisely and Midlothian receives its fair share, there should be real opportunities for the investment our communities need."

Councillor Parry, SNP, said of the update: "The pledges made during the General Election have been proven to be nothing more than empty electioneering and people in Scotland now know they cannot trust a word any Westminster party says.

"Whether it's axing heating support for pensioners during one of the coldest winters in recent memory, lying to WASPI women, or keeping the two child cap that keeps thousands of kids in poverty – Labour's decision making in Number 10 has demonstrated that they don't have Scotland's, or Midlothian's, interests at heart."

By Marie Sharp Local Democracy Reporter