

mg/lw10830

5 April 2023

Sue Webber MSP
Convener
Education Children and Young People Committee
The Scottish Parliament
EDINBURGH
EH99 1SP

(By email)

Dear Ms. Webber

Education Children and Young People Committee

Thank you for your letter dated 31st March, 2023 acknowledging Rossie's input at the Committee's evidence session. You have asked for additional information / clarifications which are provided below.

1. What the definition of the 'last bed' is, i.e. should there always be an empty bed? Or what are the circumstances that the 'last bed' can be used?

Rossie Young People's Trust is a national charity and provides secure care services to the most vulnerable children across Scotland and the UK. The contract with Scotland Excel (SXL), on behalf of Scottish Local Authorities, does not guarantee any referrals or income, only a place on their Framework Agreement. A place on the Framework evidences we have gone through a rigorous tendering and selection process, in terms of service quality and value for money, to achieve the status of preferred provider or provider of choice. Referrals of young people and occupancy levels are our only source of income.

The Scottish Government entered into discussions with all providers on the Framework to fund and retain 1 bed in each Centre for Scottish local authority referrals. The pilot commenced in January 2023 for 3 months, and meant that the Government paid for the 'last available bed' in each Centre, to ensure bed availability for Scottish children. When the pilot began, it was agreed the Scottish Government would pay for one bed only in each Centre, regardless of how many other vacancies there were. We entered into a formal agreement with the Scottish Government to

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retain one vacant bed, for which we were paid our current approved negotiated SXL bed price.

This “last bed” title is a slight misnomer, but used for the sake of convenience. Once this bed has been filled by a Scottish referral (either via Scottish local authority or Scottish Ministers for children serving a custodial sentence) the Scottish Government reserves the next bed which becomes vacant in each Centre. If the reserved bed has been vacant continuously for one month, and referrals are received from outside of Scotland, the arrangement will be reviewed. During the 3-month pilot Rossie’s reserved bed was used for Scottish referrals.

2. Is there a ‘last bed’ at each secure accommodation centre, or is it one ‘last bed’ across the whole of the secure accommodation estate?

The Scottish Government funding is for one bed in each of the 4 contracted secure centres on the SXL Framework Agreement, for a 3-month pilot. Therefore, there are 4 beds purchased by the Scottish Government across the secure accommodation estate. The objectives of the pilot were:

- to ensure availability of a secure care bed for children living in Scotland when required;
- to ensure secure centres were not disadvantaged financially for engaging in the pilot, i.e., that we received our market bed price for keeping the bed available;
- to assess the viability of making the trial a permanent feature of secure care in Scotland, to meet the longer term changes proposed in the Child Care and Justice Bill and The Promise.

3. Funding for the ‘last bed’ pilot. The Committee understands that the funding for this runs out today and there has not yet been confirmation of whether future funding will be forthcoming. What is your understanding of the funding situation?

Scottish Government officials have indicated that they hope to continue the pilot until March 2024, and that agreement in principle has been reached. They expect this pilot will both continue and expand, subject to final budget ratification.

I hope the above provides the additional information you require and look forward to welcoming you and Mr. Rennie to Rossie on 24th April 2023.

Yours sincerely

Mary Geaney MPA MSc BSocSc CQSW
Chief Executive Officer

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