



Mr Keith Brown MSP
Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Jobs and Fair Work
The Scottish Government
St Andrews House
Regent Road
Edinburgh EH1 3DG

1 March, 2018

Dear Cabinet Secretary

I'm writing to you as a matter of urgency and as GMB Scotland's Senior Organiser for Public Services. We have over the past two days been inundated with alarming stories from our members across local government, very particularly those working in home care.

These workers have been out in all conditions this week but we are at breaking point, they are tired, cold and, frankly, feeling abandoned.

I agree with what the First Minister said in parliament earlier today, haulage companies should be ashamed of themselves for sending their workers out in red and amber warning conditions. Unfortunately, the same could be said about many local government workers who have been left without the right transport, protective equipment or management back up to do their jobs safely in these conditions. Clearly our members in local services such as home care and roads have important work to do at this time and, whilst some employers have been slow to act, there can be no doubt about the commitment that our members are showing.

Over the next 24 hours and into the weekend we have two priorities, ensuring our elderly are cared for and that the welfare of the staff that do that work is looked after. How are we going to do that? Relying on good will from low paid women workers in home care, for example, won't be enough.

The Scottish Government have, appropriately enough, focused on transport issues up to now but we need you to intervene now to help our members get to and from this home care clients safely whilst ensuring that our elderly citizens are cared for.

Home care staff are having to rely on public transport or their own vehicles when the official advice from you is to stay at home. I can give you examples from across the country but the theme is the same, we need to ensure that all staff are safe in delivering our vital public services.

GMB

SCOTLAND

There will need to be a fuller discussion about how these workers are properly rewarded for their efforts over the past few days, but in the meantime, I do hope to hear from you about how we will respond more immediately.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Drew Duffy', written in a cursive style.

Drew Duffy
Senior Organiser for Public Services

cc: Alison Evison, COSLA President