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The Scottish Conservatives have slammed the SNP for slashing funding to local authorities in the budget.

SNP finance secretary Derek Mackay tried to claim yesterday that he had increased council funding, but figures in the budget document, Local Government Finance (Scotland) Settlement 2018-19, revealed a dramatic fall in their day to day spending in cash and real terms.

There will be a £157 million real terms cut to local authorities in 2018-19, which comes at a time when many local authorities are already struggling with their finances.

The decision to cut their funding came despite the amount of money available to the Scottish Government increasing, with the block grant set to increase in real terms by 1% over the next three years.

Scottish Conservative local government spokesman Alexander Stewart MSP said:

“The SNP’s cuts to local government are totally inexcusable.

“The Scottish Government’s budget has been rising, and yet they’ve chosen to slash the money given to local councils.

“With councils across the country already struggling financially, it’s no wonder so many of them are furious with Derek Mackay.

“These cuts will mean that front line services that millions of Scots depend on will suffer, at the same time that the SNP are hiking taxes of hardworking Scots.

“It just goes to show that under the SNP we pay more, but get less in return.”