

Council crisis deepens as 1000 jobs could go

The council is due to set its budget on 21 February amidst a deepening funding crisis.

Proposals for this year aim to cut £41 million plus a further £19 million from Health & Social care. The revised budget from Holyrood lowers the overall cut by £7 million

300 jobs are likely to go in 2019 and unless more funding is found the four year plan to cut £140 million could see several hundred jobs lost, slashing vital services across the council.

Details on the exact amount to be cut will not be known till 15 February and where the axe falls over the next four years is even more of an unknown.

Service conditions officer Gerry Stovin said: "If we are going to fight off these cuts from Holyrood passed down to Local

ENOUGH IS ENOUGH

STOP THE CUTS TO EDINBURGH'S SERVICES UNISON Edinburgh

Council Budget Day Lobby
Thurs 21 February 08.30
City Chambers High Street
Edinburgh

Scottish Parliament Lobby
Thurs 21 February 12.00 - 2pm
Press the government for proper
funding for councils



Need to be open and honest about effect of cuts' GERRY STOVIN

authorities, we need to be open and honest on the effect they will have."

UNISON has already

made a deputation to council last week and on budget setting day, 21 February, we will be lobbying outside the City Chambers at 08.30 and then down to the Scottish Parliament from 12 till 2 to press the government for more money. Please come and join us.

Look out for our petition calling for more funding.

Pay 2018-2020

UNISON members have voted overwhelmingly to accept the 9.5% three year pay offer of 3.5% backdated to April 2018, followed by two years of 3% and a commitment to consolidate the living wage.

For most members this will amount to a 6.8% rise by this April.

91% of those voting, in the biggest ballot return for years, accepted the offer which also has a reopener clause if another council bargaining group's total pay offer becomes greater than the sum agreed for our workforce.

While the 3.5% will be backdated to April last year, the payment may be held up till the end of April as the GMB union will not close their consultation till the end of this month.

There was a meeting with COSLA due as we went to print and we will let you know of any developments.

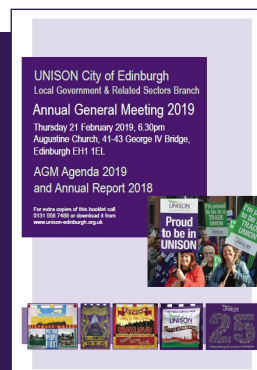
Annual General Meeting

Thurs 21 Feb 6.30pm

Augustine Church, George IV Bridge

We need 150 members to make this important meeting go ahead. Come along, elect your officers and hear updates on Pay, Cuts, No Compulsory Redundancies, Workload and Stress, Pensions and much more

Tea, coffee and biscuits from 6pm along with sandwiches for the first 100 people - **Full details at unison-edinburgh.org.uk**



Join us in UNISON 0131 558 7488 or www.unison-edinburgh.org.uk

Government must stop stripping council of funding

After cuts of £240 million from our budget in the last six years we are faced with another £140m over the next four years, unless the Scottish Government stops stripping the council of funding.

The government has

made the decision to prioritise Health and Education and while it has received a cut in funding of 1.8% in the last five years it has inflicted a huge 7.1% cut on the councils.

Nine out of 10 of the 30,000 public service

jobs lost in Scotland have been lost in local authorities with 7,000 going last year alone.

The Tourist Tax will help when it comes but it is a sticking plaster and we need an end to year upon year cuts in funding.

UNISON warns of attack on terms and conditions

The council's cuts strategy includes a few ominous themes including 'revision of the reward and recognition arrangement', 'managing redeployment of staff' and review of 'pay, reward and terms and conditions'.

Even more challenging is the proposal to consolidate the Living Wage, currently paid as a supplement, into the pay structure.

UNISON has long campaigned for this to happen but we are concerned that it will come with a £20 million price tag on top of the supplement currently paid.

COSLA and trade unions had been expecting a £100 million

LIVING WAGE CONSOLIDATION

Despite requests, we are no nearer understanding why Edinburgh is costing £20 million alone'

cost for consolidation, but that is for the whole of Scotland.

"Despite requests, we are no nearer understanding why Edinburgh is costing £20 million alone", said Gerry Stovin, service conditions officer.

Our concern is that there will be no additional money to pay for this, so it is likely to be funded by removing £20 million from our pay in different ways.

With grades 1 to 3 likely to go, there will be

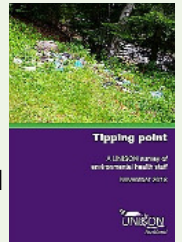
a domino effect as the existing grades above this move up to maintain a differential in pay.

So if 'all our terms and conditions are on the table', this could include increments, pay bands, working time payments such as supplements for nights or weekend working, flexi time, sick pay, overtime rates etc.

Another potential modernising pay fiasco of £20 million of winners and losers, and the lowest paid could still be just above the Living Wage.

Environmental health reaches 'tipping point'

UNISON Scotland report has warned that cuts to environmental health departments have reached 'tipping point', putting public safety at risk.



The report - Tipping Point - is the latest in UNISON's damage series of reports looking at the impact of austerity on Scotland's public services.

Freedom of Information requests to councils and a Scotland-wide survey of members working in environmental health paint a disturbing picture of a service that has been cut to the bone.

The report revealed:

- 95% said there had been cuts or severe cuts in the past five years
- More than three quarters described morale in their team as low or very low
- 9 in 10 (90%) say their workload is higher than five years ago.
- Two thirds say they are working late and skipping breaks and lunch to try and get more work done.
- Less than one in five (18%) believe their teams have adequate resources to deliver an adequate service to the public.

The report says: "These cuts hurt us all and it's vital that we focus on keeping the public safe and investing in the dedicated teams who go above and beyond to protect us from harm."

See the report at unison.scotland.org.uk

City's still not for sale, again

UNISON has been leading the fight against privatisation in Edinburgh for many years and it looks like we are heading for another round.

Arms length



organisations and the voluntary sector may be used more and more for areas as diverse as

Culture and Health & Social Care to save money.

UNISON will continue the fight against the loss of public services from direct control of Edinburgh Council.