

# Cuts: Join us to help defend jobs and services

**U**NISON officers and stewards are working flat out on a range of issues to defend members as the cuts bite harder and harder.

In this bulletin we give some brief updates on the main issues.

UNISON is using all its strength to protect you but it would be stronger

still with more members.

So branch officers are calling on members to get colleagues who are not in the union to sign up now.

## Support from across Scotland on No Compulsory Redundancies

**U**NISON continues to resist any attempts by senior officials to promote the removal of the Capital Coalition's no compulsory redundancy pledge.

We continue to talk to councillors and senior officials to ensure the pledge remains through and beyond Transformation.

And we have support

from UNISON across Scotland.

Any Scottish council who proposes compulsory redundancies would trigger calls for a national campaign of action.

*Photo: Service conditions officer Gerry Stovin with one of the UNISON Scotland campaign posters.*



## Stopping excessive workloads

**W**e have yet to see the council actually 'Transform' but we do know that Transformation has so far meant cut upon cut in the numbers of staff who provide essential services.

When Transformation ends the employer has to accept that the capacity to provide services will be diminished.

Lead negotiator Tom



**'We will not accept our members being asked to take on excessive workloads to compensate for staff cuts.'** Tom Connolly

Connolly said: "We will not accept our members being asked to take on excessive workloads to compensate for staff cuts.

"The employer has a duty to protect your health and wellbeing.

"UNISON will campaign

on fair pay and dignity at work, where staff are respected and supported and not pressurised to deal with increasing workloads.

"That only leads to workplace stress, poor morale and high turnover of staff."

## Defending terms and conditions

**A**ttempts to attack our terms and conditions are a threat we constantly live with but we will continue resist these.

To ensure the grading structure is not being manipulated we are also scrutinising all indicative grades and revised job descriptions.

For those of us who remain after Transformation the message is clear, just having a job is not enough.

We need to protect our pay and conditions of service.

As the largest and only public service union we will continue to fight and argue the case for maintaining the essential public services that the council provides on behalf of this and future generations and for the economic benefits that it brings to the city and all its citizens.

See Page 2 for Transformation update Business Support review and Anti-cuts campaign

# Speaking up for the specific skills needed across services

**A** major effort has gone into the support of the thousands of staff in the Customer Division reviews which comprise Business Support Services.

UNISON reps quickly identified that the transformation team and lead officers lacked knowledge and understanding of the diverse nature of the business carried out across the council's service areas.

**'We have informed lead officers' knowledge - and saved jobs and services from a disproportionately high cut.'**

UNISON has long argued the council needs to take into account that many services need the specific knowledge and skills of business support staff in these services.

Working together with members, the branch

officers and representatives we have informed the lead officers' knowledge and understanding of the diverse nature of the business - and saved jobs and services from a disproportionately high cut.

# Campaign against 'silent slaughter' of council services

**U**NISON locally and nationally continues to campaign against the 'Silent Slaughter' council services.

Over 40,000 jobs have been lost in Scottish councils with the result that the most vulnerable are a greater risk of not receiving the services that they need.

Job losses on this scale have a negative economic impact on our cities, towns and communities.

UNISON welcomes the end to the Council tax freeze after eight years but, after having been starved of funds for so long, the 3% cap will not provide the stimulus council funding needs.

Edinburgh Council has already budgeted for a 3% rise next year so there is

no respite from cuts with the cap in place.

UNISON called on all parties in the recent election to use all the Parliament's powers to fund public services and combat austerity.

UNISON's manifesto said: "Councils cannot continue to bear the brunt of austerity. Local democracy should be supported with a proper reform of local taxation

and fair funding."

Branch president John Stevenson said: "In a UNISON opinion poll, 72% of people said public services were in their top three most important election issues.

"Much was said about protecting services during the election campaign. It is now up to the politicians to deliver on that and not just hand down austerity to councils."



## Transformation update

**W**e are passing the midpoint in the Transformation programme with two large reviews yet to start, i.e. Homecare and Corporate Property (including Facilities management).

The branch officers, stewards and branch support staff are working tirelessly to achieve the very best from an unbelievably high cut in budget and staff.

there  
for you

**T**here for You is UNISON's registered charity offering FREE and confidential services, benefits and support including:-

- Advice and support
- Financial Assistance - if you are in financial hardship due to unforeseen circumstances
- Links to Credit Unions for loans/savings
- Small Grants - School Uniform May-July & Winter Fuel Dec-Feb
- Debt advice - freephone 0800 389 3302
- Wellbeing breaks - during illness/respite for carers
- Support & information

**To access contact branch welfare officers Caroline Mclean or Mike Smith on 0131 558 7488.**

UNISON City of Edinburgh Branch also has its own Welfare Charity, supported by voluntary contributions from members, to back up the national scheme.