

GOVERNMENT SLASHES YET ANOTHER £37m FROM COUNCIL SERVICES

Speak up against cuts

by Tom Connolly

Service Conditions Coordinator

A 9% cut in the Westminster Government block grant - despite a small real terms rise this year - has seen the Scottish Government again make a deliberate choice to cut its funding disproportionately to Scottish councils.

Even although local authorities will now be allowed to keep the monies raised from the unfreezing of the council tax for Bands



FGH the Scottish Government caveated this by limiting the increase to 3%. Any amount over this would mean Scottish Government would cut the funding more.

In real terms Edinburgh

Write your councillors, MSPs and MPs highlighting the impact on you and the services you provide.'

Tom Connolly

City Council, will see its grant cut by £37million. The allocation has fallen by 5.2% in cash terms in 2017/18, compared to a decrease of 3.9% for Scotland as a whole.

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Pay: Pushing employers for a response

This year's pay claim of a flat rate of £1,000 for all staff was submitted last August and as yet there has been no response from COSLA except cancelled meetings.

There will be a discussion on pay at UNISON's Scottish Local Government conference on 3 February where there will no doubt be a call for a ballot on Industrial action.

We will have an update from that meeting for the AGM.

See Page 2 for updates on Health and Social Care and Schools and Lifelong Learning

Transformation: Fighting for the best results for members

by Gerry Stovin

Service Conditions Officer

The first phase of reviews, which covered around 50% of the workforce, was completed last year and two major reviews in

Health & Social care and Schools & Lifelong learning are at the matching and assignment stage.

The final phase of the Facilities Management review will start at the

beginning of March.

The report going to the full council meeting on the 9 February (see lobby) highlights £40 million of cuts due to take effect this

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AGM - Let's do it first time!

Thurs 9 Feb 6.00pm

Augustine Church, George IV Bridge

We need 200 members to make this important meeting go ahead. Come along and elect your officers and hear updates and debates on Pay, Transformation, Cuts No Compulsory Redundancies, Workload and Stress, Pensions and much more

YOUR UNION NEEDS YOU Lobby of Council Budget Meeting on 9 Feb 08.30

Please come along and make your voice heard against the £40m cuts being forced by Westminster and Holyrood on our jobs and services.

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

Health & Social Care: Funding found for front line posts

by David Harrold

Service Conditions Convener

After much negotiation extra funding was secured for front line posts across the department.

This is particular good news for those who are employed as Social Care Workers, Social Care Assistants, Community Care Assistants and

Community Therapy Assistants where the heaviest cuts were planned.

UNISON also prevented the removal of key professional Social Work staff from the service, arguing that to do so would undermine the ability of the Department to achieve its statutory outcomes safely

for staff and clients.

As a result of union intervention many of the council's austerity measures and worst excesses have been kept at bay or stopped but there is still much to do.

UNISON will continue our dialogue with the employer, fighting for you and the essential services you provide.

Schools & Lifelong Learning review

This has been a particularly difficult review as it contains several distinctive staff groupings such as Community Learning & Development, Community Libraries, School Libraries, Health & Diversity Staff and the Partnership & Information Team; all of who provide a diversity of services.

To cover all these workforces the UNISON team conducted a series of meetings and from them we raised members queries and concerns with management.

Representation was also made to several

councillors and we spoke at length with the council's senior management team.

Strong opinions have been expressed about this review but we can be secure in the knowledge that council policy and procedure has been adhered to.

Dialogue has been at times contentious but UNISON has secured these commitments that will be beneficial to staff and the service.

- Significant changes to the original pooling ensuring that there is no unnecessary detriment to individual, staff grouping or service

- The CLD qualification, as requested by staff, placed in the job description as well as the job spec with a guarantee that it continues to be recognised and respected by the employer

- The removal of the Community Libraries Grade 5 posts from the structure overturned with an acknowledgment that this post is essential to the running of the library service

- Additional posts added to the Lifelong Learning Strategy team Matching and assignment will commence shortly.

Transformation update

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year, which include the reviews just mentioned, some "smaller" reviews yet to start and savings from last year's review still to take effect.

UNISON will meet with directors and heads of service over the coming weeks to identify what this £40 million cut will mean for staff and services in 2017.

UNISON has been applying continuous pressure on the council over the past year to keep staff off the redeployment pool and in to suitable posts.

This work continued when the number of surplus staff without a funded post peaked during October and has now been reduced to 19.

Further work is being carried out on 'Bumped VR' to assist these staff and we are keeping a close watch on the reviews that are about to conclude following successful lobbying by UNISON.

UNISON has and will continue to work tirelessly to achieve the best result possible for our member and the services they provide throughout the Transformation process.

£37million cut: Staff worried about workloads

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The council recently published its Revenue Budget Framework 2017/21 and the update has indicated that a further cuts of over £11million must be found over the next financial year.

This represents a 25% increase on top of the already planned £40 million of cuts.

We have already seen a huge attack on the services that our council is providing.

We are all being told that we need to be more lean and agile - the system is becoming too lean and too fragile, staff are constantly worried about their jobs and becoming overstretched by unacceptable workloads.

The most disadvantaged and vulnerable in our communities are left even more disadvantaged and more vulnerable with the constant cuts.

All members need to stand together. We would encourage you to

write to your local councillors, MSPs and MPs highlighting the impact that the ongoing cuts are having on you and the services that you provide.

Your elected trade union representatives will continue to fight against the damaging cuts to jobs and services by lobbying all politicians and senior management on your behalf, ensure that members opinions are heard and your rights to decent working conditions are protected.