



UNISON
Scotland

Local
Government
Network

for people who care about local government

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Local Government Budget

The Scottish Government's budget allocations are, yet again, placing the burden of austerity onto local community services. A cut of £350m (£500m in real terms) reduces local government's share of the Scottish budget by 1.7% from 32.3% to 30.6% in 2016-17, as we explain in our [MSP briefing](#), and in more detail [here](#).

Differing claims have been made about the job consequences. Our [analysis](#) makes the point that as staffing makes up 60% of the typical council budget – jobs must be at risk. Thanks to those councils that [supported](#) No Compulsory Redundancies Day.

We welcome the Council Tax freeze ending in 2017, but are less [impressed](#) with the limited proposals to reform local taxation. We have [proposed](#) more radical reforms that would strengthen local democracy.

Combating Austerity

While we campaign against the damage austerity is inflicting on our communities, we also need to ensure that we take every practical measure to mitigate against these cuts.

Last year, UNISON Scotland published a [report](#) that signposts some of the actions councils and others could take. We are pleased that the Scottish Government took on board at least one proposal on [loan funds](#).

We have followed up the report with a [toolkit](#), that sets out the ideas in more detail and offers questions and checklists. While aimed at UNISON branches, councillors might also find this resource useful.



In Brief.....

Audit Scotland [report](#) a lack of national leadership and clear planning is preventing the wider change urgently needed if Scotland's health and social care services are to adapt to increasing pressures. On World Social Work Day (15 March) UNISON is [calling](#) for more resources for social work and social care workers.

The latest in our 'Damage' series looks at [Registration](#) services. Cuts are having a serious impact on service users, causing distress at a difficult time and delaying access to, for example, child benefit and organising funerals.

The Scottish Food Coalition's [report](#): 'Plenty: Food, Farming and Health in a New Scotland', outlines a joined up policy towards food. Councils play an important role in food safety, catering and community agriculture.

How councils can use [procurement](#) to tackle tax dodgers. If they want public money, they should pay fair taxes.

For more information please contact UNISON's Bargaining and Campaigns team on 0141 342 2811, or email [Dave Watson](#), Scottish Organiser.

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