



UNISON
Scotland

Local
Government
Network

for people who care about local government

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Funding for local government is not 'fair'

As councils grapple with their budgets, the settlement is anything but 'fair' to local government. As the Accounts Commission's latest [report](#) puts it, "Councils are balancing a real terms funding cut of 9.6% over the last eight years with increasing demand, particularly from a growing older population."

Cuts have mainly fallen on the ageing workforce. 9 out of 10 austerity job losses have been in local government – 31,000 in total.

It's core services that are [suffering](#). Councils could be spending 80% of their budgets on education and social care by 2026. We urgently need a new approach.

Council Funding Q&A

Question

If councils have had such a 'fair' budget settlement, why have nine out of ten austerity job losses been in local govt?

Answer

They haven't. Since 2013 council budget allocations cut by 6.9%. While ScotGov budget cut by 1.6%.

**Dumping austerity
on local services**

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Local government and the economy

A new [report](#) from the Jimmy Reid Foundation, commissioned by UNISON Scotland, highlights the contribution local government makes to the local economy. Cuts not only damage services, but they also undermine economic growth. The report also argues that boosting the wages of lower paid public sector workers can ameliorate austerity cuts and generate expansion in the Scottish economy more effectively and efficiently than cutting taxes for the rich or building major infrastructure projects.

In Brief.....

Scottish local government trade unions [pay claim](#) seeks a £1,500 flat rate increase to all, or 6.5%, whichever is greater. This is based on an above inflation increase plus an element of restoration.

UNISON's [response](#) to the Scottish Government's education reforms says that plans to create a Headteachers' Charter is flawed and will make it harder to deliver quality education. Focus on children not structures. Audit Scotland has [highlighted](#) significant risks in delivering early years expansion, as UNISON warned. New research also [highlights](#) the importance of the early years workforce in reducing the attainment gap.

UNISON's latest 'damage' [report](#) gives voice to the concerns of sheltered housing workers. They say cuts are contributing to a generation of lonely older people and make no financial sense given the impact on health.

Plans to [strengthen](#) workforce planning for social care are welcome. However, they need the support of sectoral bargaining structures if the staffing crisis is to be tackled. There are too many providers who are unable or unwilling to make the necessary investment in their staff.

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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