



UNISON
Scotland

Local
Government
Network

for people who care about local government

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Budget Bill

The Budget Bill offers little relief to hard pressed councils who are bearing the brunt of austerity cuts in Scotland. Public sector workers still take the biggest hit through their pay packets, followed by council services. Local government remains the only major spending portfolio to have a cut in cash terms since the financial crash.

We would urge councillors not to be the passive administrators of cuts. Budget proposals all too often propose restructurings that rarely deliver what 's promised. Just moving the costs around like deckchairs on the Titanic. Then there is simple salami slicing, with no proper assessment of the impact on service delivery. We summarised some of these in a recent [briefing](#) to MSPs. There is also a statutory duty to ensure that proposals have proper equality impact assessments. Instead of claiming cuts have no impact on services, try developing needs based budgets.

Council cuts don't add up for business either

In addition to the regressive Council tax freeze, the Small Business Bonus scheme also takes vital resources from local government. The total cost has reached £882.7m since 2008/9. A further £165m last year. This is an increase of £11m due to increasing numbers of beneficiaries – up 50% since the scheme started.

Business interests rightly point to the importance of infrastructure investment. It's just that they are not so quick to recognise that taxes pay for it. There is no evidence that the Small Business Bonus Scheme has done anything for jobs. Time to phase it out.

Scottish Councils spend £600 a day on pot hole compensation

RAC says Government
"are simply not giving councils
enough money to keep their
road networks up to scratch."

Stop dumping austerity
on local government

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In Brief.....

In our latest [report](#) *Dumped On – Working in Scotland's Waste Management Services* we detail the experience and expectations of a workforce trying do their job in an a constantly changing environment.

In our quarterly review [Public Service Futures](#) we look at the latest developments in public service reform.

Private sector rented housing needs better regulation and rent controls. Our [response](#) to the Scottish Government consultation sets out how it should be done.

All change for the Local Government Pension Scheme in April as outlined in our latest [Bulletin](#). Improved governance is an opportunity to make better use of this important resource - including [housing](#).

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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