

# UNISON WEEK

News and views from the biggest union in  
Scotland's public services



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## A Year in UNISON: 2019 Reviewed

A lot happened in the UK in 2019. But as usual, UNISON members stuck to their principles, kept their feet on the ground and scored some notable victories. Our members continued to **fight for quality public services** and **workers' rights**.



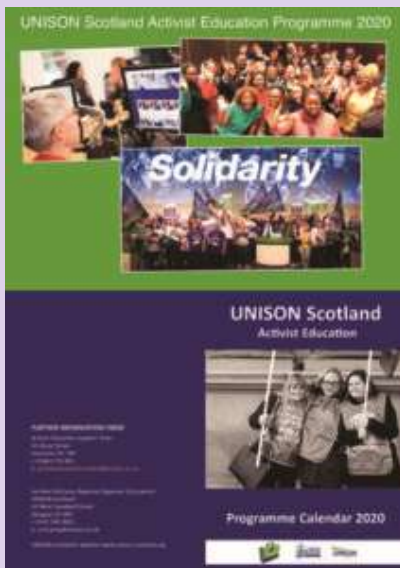


## Policy Briefing 109: Local Government Financial Overview

Audit Scotland published a [financial overview](#) of local government finance at the end of 2019. This report gives both an overview of the picture across Scotland and detail on the challenges individual councils face.

**KEY POINTS:** • Local authority funding has been cut substantially. Councils have been using reserves, increasing charges and more recently increasing council tax in response to the cuts. Councils have identified a “funding gap” of £0.5bn for 2019/20.

## Activist Education Programme 2020



UNISON Scotland is serious about giving our reps the tools they need to do the job.

As part of its extensive learning and training programme, UNISON offers new members a choice of free one day workshops to help you at work and in everyday life. When new members join they will receive a handbook setting out their entitlements. This will include a choice of one of the following free workshops to take place later in the year. More information [here](#).

Our 2020 programme of training courses is [online now](#).



## Communications Awards 2019/20

UNISON communications awards are **now open to all UNISON branches and self-organised groups in Scotland**.

UNISON's communications awards are a great way to share best practice and innovative ideas, as well as recognising enthusiasm, hard work and celebrating success. So no matter what you have been doing please think about submitting an application. More information and an application form is [here](#).



## WINTER FUEL GRANT

Members living on a low income constantly struggle to make ends meet – and this can be particularly acute in the winter when the cost of heating homes rises as the outside temperature falls.

But it's not all bad news – help IS available. The union's welfare charity **There for You** has once more set up a limited fund to help members on low incomes towards the cost of their winter fuel bill through a one-off payment of £40. **Details are here.**



## Our Response to the Scottish Government's Consultation on Prohibiting Smoking Outside Hospital Buildings

UNISON generally welcomes the principle of introducing new measures to end the practice of smoking on hospital grounds. We agree that the current smoke free policies have had some impact but have not been sufficient to end the practice of smoking around hospital buildings. There is still a highly visible smoking presence particularly round doorways. While UNISON is positive about the aims of the proposals members do have some concerns regarding the detail and practicalities of enforcing any ban. Read more **here.**

## UNISON's General Secretary Dave Prentis Blog

# PUBLIC WORKS: TOOLKIT

**Public Works** is the UNISON Scotland campaign for jobs, services, fair taxation and a Living Wage... and against austerity. **This toolkit** provides branches with campaign resources to save our public services from the cuts driven by an austerity that is a political choice not an economic necessity.

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