



Issue 282 9th - 15th March 2020

### Scottish Government Debate: The Local Government Finance (Scotland) Order 2020

Local government funding is becoming ever more difficult to follow. The SPICE [briefing](#) states that "there are a wide range of interpretations that can be produced depending on what is included in the calculation." Following funding should not be this opaque. But we live in hope that this week's debate will highlight the cuts to local government funding. We are less hopeful that adequate funding will be provided.

As COSLA have made clear, while the government can claim a cash increase of £495 million this goes along with £590 million worth of government programmes to be delivered. So this is a cut of £95 million.

You can hear directly from workers about how difficult it is to try and deliver services in our [Damage reports](#). These make it clear that local government budgets are not adequate for the demands they face.



### CORNERSTONE AND UNISON JOINT STATEMENT

Following formal discussions, UNISON and Cornerstone met on Thursday 5 March 2020 and signed off a new voluntary recognition agreement. This follows referral to the Central Arbitration Committee which promoted negotiations between the parties.

The agreement provides for trade union recognition and facilities, negotiation and consultation and collective bargaining on a range of workforce matters and an agreed channel for dealing with any matters in dispute. The agreement adopts the principles of the Scottish Government's Fair Work Convention Framework, embedding the fair work dimensions into collective bargaining and partnership working arrangements. Read More [here](#)

### Ministerial Statement: Independent Inquiry into Mental Health Services in Tayside.



The [report](#) from the inquiry into mental health services in Tayside followed serious issues about services. A UNISON chaired Employee Participation Group (EPG) was set up as part of the inquiry.

UNISON was deeply concerned about the content of this report. Over the last few years we have raised many of the issues which are highlighted in the report. For example, last year (October 2019) we asked for the Mental Health Strategy to be put on hold. In particular we had serious concerns that patients were being transported a long way from their family for treatment.

## As the Coronavirus spreads and continues to dominate the news, UNISON has all your work-based coronavirus questions answered

### **Time for the Scottish government to value the work of early years workers**

**Audit Scotland's report** into the Scottish Government's childcare expansion plans should come as no surprise to politicians.

In 2018, UNISON Scotland conducted a comprehensive **survey** of the numbers being trained to deliver the expansion which showed there are just not enough people in colleges or in-work training courses to deliver the promised extra hours ... we also highlight issues in our **response** to Scottish government's consultation on the Early Learning Childcare Service model for 2020

Lorraine Thomson, chair of UNISON Scotland's Education Issues Group, said: "We warned the Scottish government at the outset that there was a very high risk there would not be enough qualified staff to deliver the planned expansion. The fundamental issue is that this service is delivered by a highly trained workforce and to recruit and retain staff requires improved pay and terms and conditions across the sector. (Full press release **here**)



### **PICK OF THE MEDIA**

06/03/20 [tuc.org](http://tuc.org) [unison.org](http://unison.org)

**Sick pay for all** and **why the government must do more.**

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04/03/20 [scotsman.com](http://scotsman.com)

**Scotland could use community heating to fight climate emergency.**

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04/03/20 [bbc.co.uk](http://bbc.co.uk)

**Five things that happened after women took charge**

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02/03/20 [pressandjournal.co.uk](http://pressandjournal.co.uk)

Plans to axe half of hospital laundries in Scotland could progress within weeks despite warnings it is a **"recipe for disaster"**. **UNISON Scotland's Willie Duffy**

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01/03/20 [eveningtimes.co.uk](http://eveningtimes.co.uk)

"UNISON is disappointed in the lack of progress SPF have made in addressing climate change. Depute convener of UNISON Scotland Stephen Smellie. **Read More ....**

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01/03/20 [heraldscotland.com](http://heraldscotland.com)

COSLA want powers to generate "taxation without restrictions" in a bid to get more funding to tackle "dreadful" roads and a social care "ticking time-tomb".... **read more.**

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28/02/20 [tuc.org](http://tuc.org)

**Workers in the UK put in more than £35 billion worth of unpaid overtime last year.**

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**NHS Scotland's self-help guide on the coronavirus**



## Nursing and Midwifery Conference 2020

**All welcome:** nurses, midwives, health visitors and healthcare assistants. Local branch will cover your cost, it is eligible for revalidation portfolio

Contact local UNISON branch for details.

Friday 27 March, 9.30 to 3.30  
Hallmark Hotel, Washington St, Glasgow



# PUBLIC WORKS: TOOLKI T

**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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