



# Council Connections

UNISON  
Scotland

Local  
Government  
Network

for people who care about local government

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## Fair Pay

Over the past few years the value of local government wages has been cut by 16%. Pay freezes and pay rises have been imposed at well below the rate of inflation. Increasingly, many colleagues are relying on welfare benefits to keep their families. There needs to be a commitment to restoring the value of wages. We accept that a 16% drop in value cannot be made up overnight – but a start needs to be made.

UNISON has asked for a £1 an hour increase this year and for the Living Wage to be consolidated. The 1% imposed in April is not good enough and has been overwhelmingly rejected by UNISON members in a consultative ballot. We are now reluctantly balloting for industrial action. We urge all councillors to support an improved pay offer this year and commit to proper meaningful negotiations next year.

## The Cuts Don't Work

UNISON has published a booklet – [The Cuts Don't Work: The impact of 'austerity' cuts on Scotland's public services](#) – showing what's really happening to public services. It graphically sets out the data and illustrates the impact through the experiences of public service workers. Our [evidence](#) to the Scottish Parliament on the forthcoming budget shows that councils have taken the brunt of the cuts. As councils start to consider their own budgets for next year, we would urge councillors to set budgets based on the needs of their constituents - not the priorities of the UK or Scottish governments.



## In Brief.....

UNISON broadly [welcomes](#) the final [report](#) of the Commission on Strengthening Local democracy. 50 years of centralisation hasn't worked, so we agree it's time to try revitalising local democracy.

Health inequality is probably Scotland's greatest challenge. This UNISON [paper](#) sets out some practical solutions.

The Living Wage should be extended through procurement. This [briefing](#) shows councils how it's done.

Cuts can have short-term financial benefits but negative impacts may take longer to be revealed. This [JRF study](#) shows how councils can properly risk assess the impact of cuts in Scotland.

Fragmentation can lead to poor care services as the latest inspection [data](#) shows. It's time for [ethical care](#).

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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