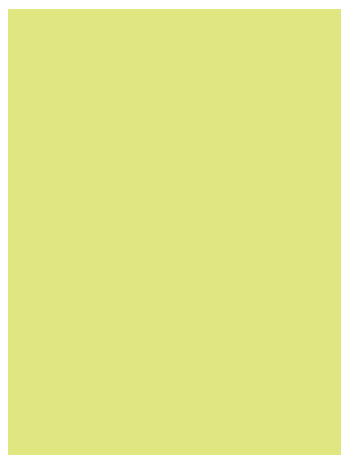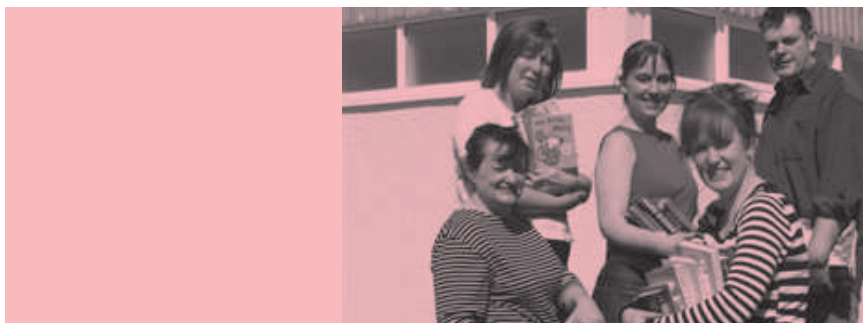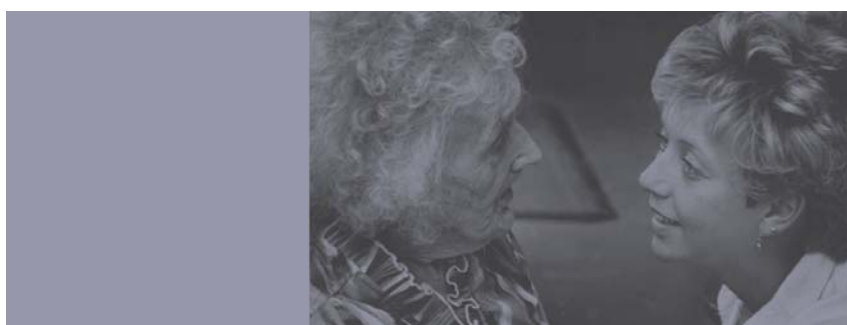# not just a **vote**… having a **say**

UNISON
Scotland

We've been

re**vital**ising
our **local**
services

you **value** it …
so **vote** for it.

Not just a vote... having a say

UNISON Scotland

Solutions to local problems should be developed in communities, not imposed from the centre. Otherwise increasing quangos and hived-off trusts mean we risk creating a patchwork of unaccountable bodies with little or no control by local people.

The Efficient Government Initiative's push towards shared services has many risks. Proposals are often driven by unrealistic claims of savings, encouraged by consultants who collect huge fees at the taxpayers' expense. Artificial separation of 'front line' and 'back office' functions deskills and demoralises those who perform key support functions and undermines joined-up services.

Long-term investment is essential if we are to revitalise local government. Billions of pounds have been wasted on PPP/PFI projects. Progress can be made now, within Scotland, by providing capital grants that mean public authorities have a real choice between funding sources - a 'level playing field'.

A locally set, fair, property tax is the best way to fund local services. It is easy to collect and hard for the wealthy to avoid. A nationally set, local income tax would penalise working couples on average incomes and sever the link between councils and local people.

Women working in local government have been waiting over thirty years for equal pay. Local authorities must use the extra money provided by the Scottish Executive to fulfil their legal and moral duty to implement single status and address past pay discrimination.

Ask your candidates -

- How will you finance local services without shifting the tax burden to working families and undermining local accountability?

- How will you ensure that drives to increase efficiency don't lead to increased centralisation and the creation of a patchwork of bodies accountable to no-one?

- How are you going to implement equal pay for women without cutting jobs and services?

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positively public