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Attempts to attack our terms and conditions are a threat we constantly live with but we will continue resist these.

To ensure the grading structure is not being manipulated we are also scrutinising all indicative grades and revised job descriptions.

For those of us who remain after Transformation the message is clear, just having a job is not enough.

We need to protect our pay and conditions of service.

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In this bulletin we give some brief updates on the main issues.

UNISON is using all its strength to protect you but it would be stronger still with more members.

UNISON continues to resist any attempts by senior officials to promote the removal of the Capital Coalition’s no compulsory redundancy pledge.

We continue to talk to councillors and senior officials to ensure the pledge remains through and beyond Transformation.

And we have support from UNISON across Scotland.

Any Scottish council who proposes compulsory redundancies would trigger calls for a national campaign of action.

Photo: Service conditions officer Gerry Stovin with one of the UNISON Scotland campaign posters.

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BUSINESS SUPPORT REVIEW

Speaking up for the specific skills needed across services

A major effort has gone into the support of the thousands of staff in the Customer Division reviews which comprise Business Support Services.

UNISON reps quickly identified that the transformation team and lead officers lacked knowledge and understanding of the diverse nature of the business carried out across the council’s service areas.

‘We have informed lead officers’ knowledge - and saved jobs and services from a disproportionately high cut.’

UNISON has long argued the council needs to take into account that many services need the specific knowledge and skills of business support staff in these services. Working together with members, the branch officers and representatives we have informed the lead officers’ knowledge and understanding of the diverse nature of the business - and saved jobs and services from a disproportionately high cut.

Campaign against ‘silent slaughter’ of council services

UNISON locally and nationally continues to campaign against the 'Silent Slaughter' council services.

Over 40,000 jobs have been lost in Scottish councils with the result that the most vulnerable are a greater risk of not receiving the services that they need.

Job losses on this scale have a negative economic impact on or cities, towns and communities.

UNISON welcomes the end to the Council tax freeze after eight years but, after having been starved of funds for so long, the 3% cap will not provide the stimulus council funding needs.

Edinburgh Council had already budgeted for a 3% rise next year so there is no respite from cuts with the cap in place.

UNISON called on all parties in the recent election to use all the Parliament’s powers to fund public services and combat austerity.

UNISON’s manifesto said: “Councils cannot continue to bear the brunt of austerity. Local democracy should be supported with a proper reform of local taxation and fair funding.”

Branch president John Stevenson said: “In a UNISON opinion poll, 72% of people said public services were in their top three most important election issues.

“Much was said about protecting services during the election campaign. It is now up to the politicians to deliver on that and not just hand down austerity to councils.”

Transformation update

We are passing the midpoint in the Transformation programme with two large reviews yet to start, i.e. Homecare and Corporate Property (including Facilities management).

The branch officers, stewards and branch support staff are working tirelessly to achieve the very best from an unbelievably high cut in budget and staff.

There for You is UNISON’s registered charity offering FREE and confidential services, benefits and support including:-

• Advice and support
• Financial Assistance - if you are in financial hardship due to unforeseen circumstances
• Links to Credit Unions for loans/savings
• Small Grants - School Uniform May-July & Winter Fuel Dec-Feb
• Debt advice - freephone 0800 389 3302
• Wellbeing breaks - during illness/respite for carers
• Support & information

To access contact branch welfare officers Caroline Mclean or Mike Smith on 0131 558 7488.

UNISON City of Edinburgh Branch also has its own Welfare Charity, supported by voluntary contributions from members, to back up the national scheme.

Join us in UNISON 0131 558 7488 or www.unison-edinburgh.org.uk