

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BRIEFING

The Scottish Employers (CoSLA) have imposed a non negotiated pay settlement of 0.65% for 2010/11, 0% in 2011/12 and 0% in 2012/13 for all Scottish Joint Council Staff. This represents a pay cut in real terms for all our members and hits the lowest paid hardest.

The Trade Unions have consistently sought to resolve this dispute through discussion and negotiation and laterally were seeking the involvement of ACAS to arbitrate however the employers have refused to cooperate and are simply ignoring the established Scottish Bargaining Machinery. Despite previous statements from the employers about how they value their workforce the reality is that they are treating their employees with contempt.

The Scottish Local Government Conference which met on Tuesday received the result of the branch and member consultation on industrial action, this resulted in a rejection of a programme of industrial action against the employers actions. However what it did clearly highlight is that members clearly were concerned about pay but that their priorities at this time was to protect and defend their jobs and services.

All council workers at this time are facing very real threats to their jobs as local authorities up and down Scotland axe vital services. Whilst the loss of services impacts dramatically on members jobs it also has a huge impact on local communities. UNISON as the largest public sector trade union in Scotland recognises this and is actively encouraging and strengthening links with local community groups and voluntary organisations.

We need to build a campaign that recognises that pay, cuts, job loss and service loss are real issues for our members and are all inextricably linked as local councils slash budgets and services. The campaign will;

- Continue to pursue the dispute over pay with the employers through the SJC and ACAS if possible
- Engage with other public sector trade unions to develop a common pay strategy for 2011-2013
- Encourage support for the STUC There is a Better Way Demonstration on 23 October in Edinburgh
- Continue to lobby Political Leaders that there is an alternative to cutting jobs and services
- Where possible link with branches to co ordinate our approach to these cuts.

Members are also encouraged to contact their local branch regarding arrangements for the STUC demonstration on 23rd October.