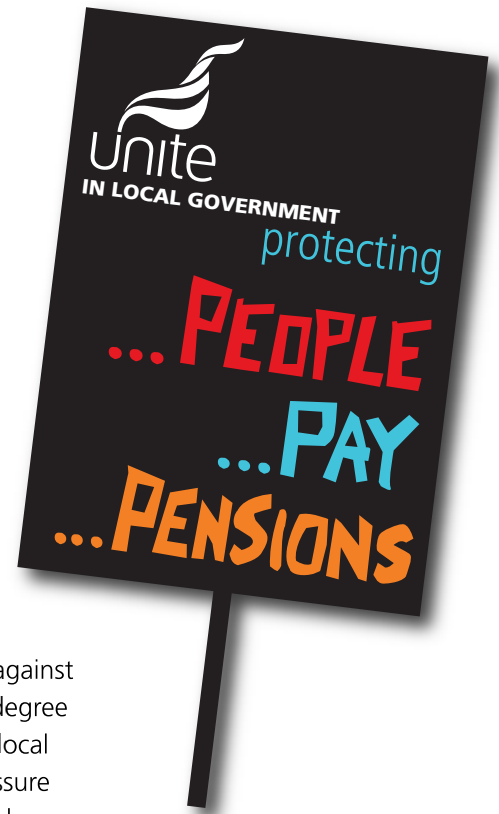


PROTECT PEOPLE'S QUALITY OF LIFE:

DEFEND LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICES AND THE LOCAL COMMUNITIES THEY SERVE

The new ConDem government has lost no time in cutting public expenditure. Local government has immediately been hit hard; £1.165bn has been carved out of the 2010-11 central government grant to councils. This is just the first sharpening of a blade that will cut deeply across the country, reducing public services for all.

The below is general information for you to use to underpin your local arguments against service and job cuts where you work and live – each council will cut to a different degree and will hit different services. But in every workplace Unite want to bring together local government workers and their local communities to put the maximum political pressure on councils and MPs to stand up to the government and their slash and burn agenda.



WHY UNITE BELIEVES LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICES, WORKERS AND THE COMMUNITIES THEY SERVE SHOULD BE DEFENDED

Cutting public spending will damage the economy

- The government deficit of £156bn is not the result of 'reckless' public spending. The country has experienced the worst recession since the end of WWII, causing a massive fall in tax revenues. It is this fall in tax revenues that has caused the deficit and it is economic growth that will end the deficit, not deep spending cuts.
- Public expenditure stimulates the economy – local council spending generates money and investment in a local area. Research by the Association of Public Service Excellence (APSE) has found that for each £1 spent by a local council, 64p is generated in that locality. This means that as well as losing the £1.165bn of spending we are losing the additional £745.6m it would have generated through local government this year alone.

Cuts hurt: local communities will lose vital services

- Local government workers are local government services. The immediate cuts in local government spending – and the further cuts anticipated to come – will result in widespread threats to jobs, with The Times estimating in the region of 100,000 nationally. Job losses directly translate into a reduction in the range and level of council services available to people and therefore the quality of life in a local area.
- APSE have also found that local government workers re-spend 52.5p in the local economy from each £1 they receive in wages. Therefore each job loss is not just a loss of an important local service, it is a loss of spending on local businesses and facilities.
- An arbitrary distinction between 'backroom' staff and 'frontline' staff has been drawn in many quarters. But if there is a cut in 'backroom' staff the important administration, IT and support work they do will simply be pushed onto other 'frontline' workers who will then have less time for other work.
- Local councils have a core of services they have to provide (statutory services). This does not mean other, non-statutory services are not important. Such services have a role in building communities, tackling inequality, alleviating poverty and generally improving where people live. Removing such services can have a damaging social – as well as economic – impact.

