

UNISON City of Edinburgh branch welcomes the Scottish Government's previous announcement of "a package of financial flexibilities and extra funding for councils to address the financial pressures caused by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic over the next two years". And welcomes the proposed extra funding mentioned by the Scottish finance minister last week, but unfortunately what has been offered will do very little to solve the problems.

This council continues face budget challenges and once again is proposing further cuts to jobs and services. We have seen massive cuts to jobs and services over the past years and witnessed the negative and damaging impact that it has had on the staff that remain and the communities that we serve.

If COVID-19 has shown us anything it is that local government and other public sector workers across the services have risen to challenge in the most courageous and dedicated ways. Looking after and caring for our most vulnerable adults, young people, and children, emptying our bins and keeping our streets clean, across all the jobs, providing services from the cradle to the grave.

All these workers need to be recognised and rewarded for the contribution that they have made throughout the pandemic and beyond – clapping does not pay the bills. And any threats to cut their pay or benefits would be a disgrace.

Local government and all the services that it provides are an essential component of well-functioning and caring society.

We call on the council and its leadership to call on the Scottish Government and Westminster Governments to increase their funding for local government. We have seen that the money is there, it just needs the political desire and will and the end to the ideological attack on public services.

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