



COUNTY UNISON News

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NEWS AND INFORMATION FOR NOTTINGHAMSHIRE FROM 'NOTTS UNISON'

District election results show voter disgust as Tory cuts hit Notts says

The Tories now only have outright control of Rushcliffe Borough Council following the local elections, with several high profile Tory county councillors losing district seats. UNISON sees this as evidence that Notts voters are rejecting the plans of the Tory-led county council to axe services.

Conservative controlled Nottinghamshire County Council has already cut £89million of services for 2011/2012. And now looks set to agree a further £40million of cuts from April 2012. Some 2,500 jobs are planned over 3 years, with up to 1,000 compulsory redundancies announced for 2011 (we were awaiting clarification as we went to press).

Look at the services cuts they already plan to make:

- Privatising Learning Disability home services
- Reduce Special Education Needs support in schools
- Close 25 adult day centres, and cut 50% of posts
- Sell off all elderly persons homes to private sector and raising residents fees by £800 per month
- Cut the Sure Start budget

There are many ways YOU can help our campaign to stop cuts across Nottinghamshire:

- Organise a local community campaign to save your care home, adult day centre, library, country park, school services etc.
- Book regular meetings with your local County Councillor. What are they planning to do to protect your local services? Find them on the web at www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/councillors or call the council contact centre on 08449 80 80 80.
- Join UNISON today. Get involved in our campaigns, or become a trained UNISON rep in your workplace. Call us on 0115 9810405 to join our campaign team.

- End the Welfare Rights service
- Cut park ranger posts to make parks less safe
- Reduce library opening times
- Political decision to privatise profitable services
- Axe voluntary services by pulling vital funding

Council officials have told UNISON that they have “no idea” where the next £40million cuts will fall. The union fears all services remain at risk — even those ‘saved’ this year.

They have no mandate for slashing vital services

The council election results in May 2011 show voters are turning away from the Tories. But they still plan to axe YOUR county council services regardless.

The Tories have yet to deny UNISON claims that they are axing essential services to build up a ‘slush fund’ to reduce council tax before the May 2013 County elections (see over). Job cuts will take millions out of Notts communities as dole queues grow. These cuts will ruin lives. Join us to help stop them.

- Use council services such as libraries and parks on a regular basis (or help neighbours or your families to do so). This will save jobs and keep services open in your local community.
- **Are you a service user (or do you care for a service-user)?** Do you think cuts to Adult Day Care Centres and the privatising of Elderly People Homes and Learning Disability Homes will reduce your care? Worried the Council is pushing ahead without taking your needs onboard? UNISON may be able to help you publicise your concerns. Call us on 0115 9810405.

 *a million voices for public services*
the public service union

join UNISON today at www.unison.org.uk/join

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Why won't Notts Tories come clean on council tax plans?

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Thursday 12 May 2011

Dear Cllr Cutts,

IMPACT OF NOTTINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL SERVICE CUTS ON FUTURE COUNCIL TAX RATES

You will recall that earlier this year UNISON questioned with you how the scale of service cuts and privatisations planned by your administration would impact on council tax charges the County would levy in the next few years.

Specifically, we have a fear that the Conservative group plans to implement cuts to such an extent that will allow them to manufacture a 'slush fund' situation so that council tax charges are reduced ahead of the 2013 County Council elections.

I posed the question again at a public meeting where Cllr Cottee was a guest speaker this week. His response was along the lines of "the election is some time away, and nothing has been decided yet". Given that your Administration determined well in advance to freeze council taxes during the last two years, this rather undermines the stance that "you haven't yet decided" a policy direction on where you plan to be with council tax charges over the next two years.

We intend to keep asking the question of Cabinet members at public meetings until we get a simple "yes" or "no" response to our question. In the hope that we can resolve our concerns more speedily in this age of greater efficiency I therefore pose the question direct to you in this letter: Does the Conservative administration plan to reduce council tax charges ahead of or at the time of the 2013 County Council elections, or not?

I feel sure council employees, faced with being sacked, would expect the basic courtesy of a direct answer and unambiguous reply. I look forward to your answer, preferably before the Council AGM taking place on Thursday 19 May 2011.

Yours sincerely,

Martin Sleath, Branch Secretary

MANAGEMENT AGREE TO MEET WITH UNISON TO RESOLVE STRIKE DISPUTE

NCC has agreed to meet with UNISON to discuss how to resolve our existing dispute about job cuts and privatisation. As soon as a meeting has been held we will of course update our members. Look at our branch website for latest : www.nottsunison.org.uk

We are particularly keen to hear from your employer on their latest intentions regarding job cuts this year, how many staff will leave under 'voluntary' redundancy or early retirement, whether the council intends to submit 'in-house' bids when privatising services, and some detail on plans to close council offices across the County. There is still no detail on the process or timescales on any of this. We want meaningful consultation on all these issues and now hope for a constructive dialogue with them.

Ever since Tory-led Notts County Council announced their massive service cut plans, UNISON questioned the impact cuts would have on future council tax charges. We fear the Tories are planning to build up a 'slush fund' ahead of the May 2013 County Council elections by cutting your jobs.

We have asked them to put the record straight on their council tax plans for the next two years. Surely they must know their tax intentions by now? By refusing to come clean, some people *might* interpret this as having something to hide.

See our latest letter to Cllr Cutts, asking to give us a simple "yes" or "no" either way.

The Government plans to cut YOUR pension — join UNISON to stop them



Do you pay into the LGPS (Local Government Pension Scheme)? George Osborne wants to increase your monthly pension contributions by **up to 50%**, so that he can raise £1 billion. He also plans to change the way pension benefits are calculated, increase your retirement age, replace the final salary scheme with a career average one, and make it easier for private firms to take over council services and cut your pension.

UNISON is leading a joint union campaign to stop him. So join us today or become a UNISON pension contact in your team or workplace by calling us on 0115 981 0405.