

Alex Norris MP, Nottingham North
Lillian Greenwood MP, Nottingham South
Nadia Whittome MP, Nottingham East

16 January 2024

Dear

FINANCIAL CRISIS AT NOTTINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

I am writing on behalf of Nottingham City UNISON, about the financial situation at the City Council and the consequences for the workforce and council services. As one of the three city MP's we hope that you will give your full support to UNISON as we fight to defend all threatened jobs and services.

In our view, the main blame rests with the Tory government, who are starving local authorities of money which in Nottingham equates to £97m each year since 2013. The council's poor decision making and commercialisation strategy (which has been an alternative to fighting for proper funding) has exacerbated the situation, but the money lost from those mistakes amounts to far less than government underfunding. Alongside government underfunding, is also the council's failure to properly campaign for sufficient funding for council services.

We do not regard meetings with government ministers or letters to them, as constituting campaigning. The council has passed on Tory cuts which has already resulted in well over 1000 jobs going, and numerous cuts to services that you will be aware of. Now, a further 550 jobs, and over £50m worth of cuts are threatened.

Our UNISON Branch does not accept the prevailing view of the councillors that nothing can be done. It is still not too late for the council to set a legal budget that does not involve cuts.

If the council proceeds with its current proposals for the 2024/2025 budget, this may include closing the three remaining Adult Residential Homes, around two thirds cut in the Community Protection Service and the closure of the Jackdawe Homecare Service, that supports citizens who require homecare and have complex and challenging behaviours.

We ask you as a Nottingham MP to publicly call on the council to campaign for direct government support to cover the projected deficit. There is recent precedent for direct government support to councils, for example in 2018 the government gave Northamptonshire County Council, an additional £70m; more recently in 2022 the government gave Surrey County Council, £100m in return for a restructuring of its Special Educational Needs Service.

We also ask you to: -

- Publicly raise this demand with government yourself
- Publicly support the local trade union campaign for direct support that will be launched at a public meeting this Thursday in Nottingham.
- Call on Labour nationally to commit to proper funding for under resourced local authorities like Nottingham City.
- Publicly call on and support any councillors at Nottingham City, who vote against cuts at the budget setting meeting.

We also invite you to attend the jointly organised Trade Union and Trades Council meeting this Thursday at 7.00pm at the New Mechanics, North Sherwood Street, Nottingham.

Your sincerely

Jean Thorpe

Jean Thorpe
Branch Chair