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Councillor Kay Cutts, Leader
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Monday, 20 December 2010

Dear Cllr Cutts,

ALTERNATIVES TO PROPOSED NOTTINGHAMSHIRE SERVICE AND JOB CUTS

In the light of your Cabinet decisions this week and the plea by Eric Pickles last week for councils to use existing reserves to protect vital services, UNISON is writing this open letter directly to you. We believe there are alternatives to the current proposed service and job cuts, and we believe the people of Nottinghamshire now expect that the existing plans should be urgently reviewed.

Compared to a number of authorities elsewhere, you will know that Nottinghamshire County Council has a far greater level of cash reserves in the bank; some £150 million.

UNISON concerns for jobs and services mean we call on the council to:

Use the Council's vast reserves, as Eric Pickles suggests, to protect services
It cannot be right that you are considering axing some of the most vital services across the county – most of which will simply not be replaced by any other organisations - when Nottinghamshire has millions of pounds in reserves. Charging for care services, will simply mean that less people are able to afford to access them

Stop the sale of profitable council services and all compulsory redundancies
We fear that privatisation and/or compulsory redundancies will see the loss of thousands of jobs across the county - which will hit local economies hard, perhaps causing permanent deprivation and decline

We do not believe that Nottinghamshire people have voted for these cuts, and so UNISON is calling for all council efforts to be directed into saving "at risk" services.

UNISON is willing to work with council officers to consider how council finances can be deployed more cost-effectively. We always have been. And our members, working directly to deliver services, are perhaps best placed to identify cost savings that would protect vital services and keep staff gainfully employed in our local communities.

The simple question for UNISON is, will you now work with us to prevent these cuts?

Yours sincerely,


Martin Sleath, Branch Secretary