

UNISON South West Press Release

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For immediate release: Tuesday 19 October 2010

UNISON urges public to think of the One in Four

UNISON, Britain's largest public service union in the South West has urged every person in the region to think about the devastating impact the Chancellor's Comprehensive Spending Review announcements due tomorrow, Wednesday 20th October, is likely to have on our public services and to join their campaign against the cuts.

Ian Ducat, Regional Secretary, said:-

"A 25% or more cut across public services is unprecedented and it not only places the economy in grave danger but poses a risk to every one.

"Think about each day ... you leave the house, worrying about the heaps of rubbish as one in four refuse collections have gone. You walk on pavements where one in four cracks won't be mended, travel on roads where one in four potholes won't be repaired. As your children walk to school, say goodbye to one in four school crossing patrol staff that help your children cross the road, giving them a smile and a wave. At school, one in four classroom assistants will be going, along with one in four school meal staff and see classroom equipment, like books, computers – cut by a quarter.

"After school, forget about free swimming because it already went; and one in four pools will be gone anyway. Make sure you have time to look after the elderly people in your street; one in four home carers, meals on wheels staff will be gone. One in four residential homes could be gone. Spare a thought for the children in care or on the at risk register where one in four social workers have lost their jobs and the rest struggle to cope."

Ian Ducat went on to say:-

"Every economist knows that this Government had a choice and they are choosing to inflict pain and to inflict it on the most vulnerable in our society. Our Million Voices campaign offers a choice and an alternative economic vision. We urge the public to join our campaign and reject the false claims of the Government about the necessity of these cuts and to reject the notion that the alternative to cuts in services is cuts to welfare.

"The union launched its Million Voices campaign in 2009 and has produced an alternative budget, based on sound economic evidence."

ENDS

Notes to Editor

Today, 19 October contingencies from across the country, including the South West went to London to lobby their MP's ahead of Wednesday's announcements. At the last minute, Tory MPs backed out from meeting their constituents to go and meet their leader instead (see press release issued earlier today, 19 October - Tories run scared to avoid hearing the truth)

UNISON is Britain and Europe's biggest public sector union with more than 1.3 million members. Our members work in the public services and for private contractors providing public services, the utilities and voluntary sector. They include frontline staff and managers working full or part time in local authorities, the NHS, the police service, colleges and schools, the electricity, gas and water industries, transport and the voluntary sector.

Find out more about the Million Voices campaign:-

<http://www.unison.org.uk/million/>

UNISON's alternative budget can be found at:-

<http://www.unison.org.uk/acrobat/18887.pdf>