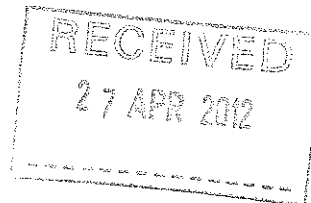




Mr Ellis Thorpe
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18 April 2012



1. PROTECTING PUBLIC SERVICES:

THE EFFICIENT USE OF MONEY IS KEY TO PROTECTING THE "CORE" SERVICES. THIS MEANS GETTING PRIORITIES RIGHT AND NON-CORE SERVICES MUST BE LOOKED AT CAREFULLY. CLEARLY THERE ARE DIFFERENT VIEWS OF WHAT IS MEANT BY "THE CURRENT ECONOMIC CLIMATE" AND THIS IS A NATIONAL ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL ISSUE. RAISING TAXES ON THE WEALTHY TO INVEST IN PUBLIC SERVICES IS A PREFERRED OPTION.

3. PROTECTING STANDARDS IN SOCIAL CARE.

THE VULNERABLE IN OUR SOCIETY MUST ALWAYS BE A HIGH PRIORITY IN OUR SPENDING PLANS.

(MTO)

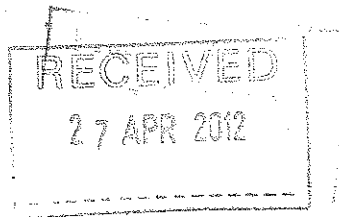
To maintain standards of social care is one of the "core services" local authorities must deliver and funding must be maintained at the necessary level. Again this can be achieved by the efficient use of money and we must always ensure we are using our resources like labour as efficiently as possible. There is no room for waste at any level in the council but the council staff must not be penalised or used as a scapegoat for cuts in services.

7. A councillor is in a difficult situation vis-a-vis national government programmes like welfare reforms. However the vulnerable dependent upon benefits must be protected if at all possible and it may be funding from the Scottish government/grants etc can be used to cushion welfare reforms. Of course in the long term we need affordable housing, we need well paid jobs and we need to create an economy in which most people are prosperous. // Alis Thompson

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18 April 2012

Dear Mr Thorpe

We understand that you are standing for election to Aberdeenshire Council in the local elections on 3rd May.

We are writing to you on behalf of our members in Aberdeenshire UNISON to ask you what your vision is for the public services provided by Aberdeenshire Council and delivered by our members. This will help our members decide who to vote for.

I would be grateful if you could respond to the following questions.

1. How will you go about protecting public services in the current economic climate?
2. Will you oppose any proposals for privatisation of key council services? YES.
3. With budgets going down, how will you protect standards in social care?
4. How can you ensure that the amount of personalisation or self-directed payments are at a level for elderly or disabled people to purchase an adequate amount of care?
5. Do you believe that everyone delivering public services - council staff and those working for contractors - be paid the Living Wage? YES
6. Will you recognise the contribution made to our children's education by classroom assistants by supporting them in opposing cutbacks? YES
7. What will you do to lessen the impact of the UK Government's Welfare Reforms which will see many families losing entitlement to a range of benefits including council tax benefit, housing benefit and working tax credits?
8. Do you think it's fair that council staff should have their pay frozen while inflation is high and the rich are getting richer? No.

9. Will you support the council negotiating a Green Workplace agreement with trade unions to help meet climate change targets? **YES.**

Please note that we would intend publishing your response on the Branch website at <http://www.aberdeenshireunison.com/>

We look forward to hearing from you and would be grateful for your response by Friday 27th April.

Yours sincerely,

Kate Ramsden
Branch Chair
Aberdeenshire UNISON