

Dear Kate,

Apologies for sending this in today. I have attached my answers below.

I would like to add that I am an active trade union member (UCU). I am a Union Learning Rep and a member of our branch Equalites Committee and I have been a Unison member when that was the recognised union in a previous job. I fully support the work of trade unions representing members' concerns and protecting public services.

1. How will you go about protecting public services in the current economic climate?
By saving money through efficiency measures such as making sure council buildings are energy efficient and generating income from renewable energy.
2. Will you oppose any proposals for privatisation of key council services?
Yes. In Edinburgh Green councillors have vigorously campaigned against the privatisation of environmental services in the city.
3. With budgets going down, how will you protect standards in social care?
By generating extra income through renewable energy schemes and by working with council staff to priorities social care and education budgets.
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?
We are committed to protecting services to the most vulnerable in society regardless of the delivery mechanism. We would work with council officers in this area of expertise to work out how to achieve this.
5. Do you believe that everyone delivering public services - council staff and those working for contractors - be paid the Living Wage?
Yes. One part of our national manifesto reads as follows "Bring in a living wage of £7.20 an hour for all council staff and workers on council contracts."
6. Will you recognise the contribution made to our children's education by classroom assistants by supporting them in opposing cutbacks?
Yes. This is a key Aberdeenshire Greens manifesto pledge. Scottish Green Party councillors in Aberdeenshire opposed the reduction in classroom assistants.
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?
We will see how we can ensure that people are receiving all the benefits they are entitled to, we will ensure that the housing benefit and council tax benefit offices are fully staffed so that claims are dealt with as quickly as possible.

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?

Absolutely. Green MSPs pioneered the Climate Challenge Fund which has distributed millions of pounds to community groups for local environmental projects which reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Our national manifesto recognises the central role of local government in setting targets for and delivering reductions in emissions of 42% by 2020 and 80% by 2050.