

Council Leader demands better pay offer to avert strikes

Stirling Council Leader Chris Kane has urged COSLA and the Scottish Government to provide an improved pay offer to staff after local Unions announced plans to strike.

Council workers at Stirling are among staff at nine local authorities across Scotland who have voted in favour of industrial action over a 2% pay increase offered to them by the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA).

Schools, early years workers and waste and recycling officers were consulted in the ballot and Cllr Kane has issued a call for an improved pay offer to come forward to avoid severe disruption to services.

Cllr Kane said: "The results of ballots on industrial action show the level of anger and frustration within the council workforce.

"I have every sympathy with the desire for a fair and decent pay increase and I am disappointed that the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) has been unable to make a pay offer that would avoid the need for industrial action.

"The reality is that the Scottish Government provides over 80% of Stirling Council's funding and without additional funding, the only way we can make an appropriate pay offer is with more cuts to local services.

"It simply is not factual for the Scottish Government to say pay negotiations are nothing to do with them when they hold the purse strings.

"If councils cannot provide a decent level of pay, then we won't be able to recruit or retain the staff needed to run local services and that would be a disaster for Stirling and the local services we value most.

"I urge COSLA to continue to pursue a joint meeting with the Scottish Government and the Trade Unions to seek additional funding to make a decent pay offer and avoid industrial action."