

Coventry Against the Cuts

On Tuesday 22 June, trade union members from public services in Coventry met outside the Council House to protest against the public service funding cuts announced earlier in the day by George Osborne. Unions represented at the protest included:

- UNISON
- UNITE
- NUT
- PCS
- CWU

The protest was organised by the Coventry Trades Council and UNISON is grateful for the CTUC for this.



Protesters gathering before the meeting

Unions are horrified at the proposed cuts to essential and frontline services and the knock-on effects on the local economy, and plan to cooperate to oppose the cuts and to support workable alternatives.

Campaigners vow to fight budget cuts

HOURS after Chancellor George Osborne announced massive budget cuts, trade unionists, community leaders and campaigners joined forces to vow to fight against them.

On the steps of Coventry's Council House around 100 people gathered to voice concerns that yesterday's emergency budget would persecute the poor and lead to declining standards in healthcare and education.

Nicky Downes, a primary school teacher and National Union of Teachers officer from Coventry said: "This will lead to another recession.

"And if you look at education, for example, a 25 per cent cut will affect young people across the board.

"I just can't see how, after these cuts, that working-class children will be able to go to university.

"We did not cause this recession and we should not have to be the ones paying the price for this debt."

Darrall Cozens, secretary of the West Midlands retired members branch of the University and College Union, joined fellow campaigners in slating the cuts. He said: "A 25 per cent cut in education



CONCERNS: Protesters outside the Council House yesterday *Picture: Mark Radford*

over four years could be devastating. "The statistics are frightening. There are one million people under 25 out of education, employment or training. They've effectively disappeared.

"Around 70 per cent of colleges are cutting courses or staff. I was speaking to the principle of City College and he said in the last round of cuts they avoided compulsory redundancies.

"He said he cannot make that guarantee for the future."

The event was called to bring groups together to form a committee to fight the cuts.

Jane Nellist, secretary of the Coventry Trade Union Congress vowed to make it the "biggest campaign Coventry has ever seen".

She added: "This can be the start of something big. A lot of people will be shocked when they watch the news tonight."

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Coventry Telegraph article, 23 June