


Unison warn Edinburgh council over privatisation

[Unison](#) have launched a campaign against Edinburgh City Council's privatisation plans. 

Malcolm Chisholm MSP, Sheila Gilmore MP and Councillor Ricky Henderson were among those who turned out to lend support to the unions rally and leafleting event.

Vice Chair of the Edinburgh branch of Unison, Matthew Crighton, claimed that services such as street cleaning, refuse collection, park management, benefits, revenues, council tax payment and management of council properties could be privatised. Crighton said: -“This is the first step in our campaign against the outsourcing of large chunks of the council services. The council has been going through a process it calls alternative business models under which it enters into contracts with private companies to do big pieces of council work.

“We reckon it is going to be bad for the council bad for the councils finances and probably bad for the services that people receive.”

One of the major aims of the campaign is to make the people of Edinburgh aware of what is happening. Crighton said:- “Our main aim today is to tell people because the council has failed to tell the public that they are doing this. They will be taking a decision on this on the 27th of October and most people in Edinburgh are not aware of this.”

A number of local community groups have appeared in recent months in opposition to the council's plans. Nick Gardner is a founder member of one such group, Greater Leith Against the Cuts, who were supporting the Unison event. Gardner said: “The

whole point is that is if you have [private] services on 7 or 12 year contracts ran as businesses then there is real issues on the costing of those.

Also whether your local councillor can intervene anymore if services are privatised. Currently if you are not happy you can contact your councillor who can act on your behalf. If this was no longer the case that would be a real concern."

Unison is holding a public meeting on Monday October 24 2011 at the Appleton Tower from 7pm. They also plan to protest outside the full City of Edinburgh Council meeting on Thursday October 27th.