

Discussions on local government pay will take place on Friday

Speaking ahead of a meeting of council leaders on Friday when local government pay will be discussed, Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government Shona Robison, said: “We absolutely recognise the importance of supporting meaningful dialogue to reach a fair pay deal and avoid industrial action.

“That is why I asked my officials to work at pace with local government officers to understand what an improved negotiating envelope may look like.

“All parties, including COSLA, trade union leaders and political group leaders have engaged constructively with that process.

“Against an extremely challenging financial landscape, the Scottish Government has identified additional funding to support COSLA to make a strong offer.

“The enhanced envelope represents the absolute limit of affordability and has required difficult decision making.

“I hope Scotland’s council leaders can agree a way forward when they meet that will help to avert strike action starting next week, with a revised offer being made to local government union members and accepted as soon as possible.”

Unions have given notice of industrial action which would begin on 14 August for eight days. This would mean that Edinburgh Council workers working in refuse collection would be on strike for a week during the festivals. The last time such action took place bins in the city were overflowing by the time a settlement was reached by COSLA and The Scottish Government.

As the festivals began the council leader, Cllr Cammy Day, said that it was imperative the unions, COSLA and The Scottish Government reached a deal to prevent disruption during the city’s busiest month.

Councillor Day said then: “I’m disappointed that negotiations between Scottish Government, COSLA and the unions have so far failed to avert this action across Scotland.

“While acknowledging that talks are ongoing, including yesterday’s meeting with the Cabinet Secretary, urgent progress needs to be made if we are to prevent significant disruption during one of the most important and enjoyable periods in Edinburgh’s calendar.

“I firmly believe that all council colleagues deserve to be paid fairly for the work they do and have every right to take this action and have their voices heard. As the lowest funded council in Scotland, it’s time for the Scottish Government to properly fund our capital city and its services.

“I’m extremely concerned about the impact this will have on bin collections and street cleaning services, as well as the cleanliness of our city. But I want to assure residents that we’ll be doing all we can to minimise any impact on essential services.

“We’ve published advice on our website for residents and businesses on how to safely and responsibly store their waste – and will continue to post updates as the situation develops. I’d ask residents to please share this information with any friends, family or neighbours who may not be online.

“We’ll also be writing out to businesses to encourage them to remind their customers that they can return their litter back to their premises for disposal, and to use reusable packaging where possible. We’re also working with our transport and hospitality partners to ensure visitors are aware of the strike and its impact on the city.

“I urge the Scottish Government and COSLA to stay round the table with the unions and find a way of averting, what will be, a hugely damaging dispute for Edinburgh – and for Scotland as a whole.”

For the [latest advice, guidance and updates on the strike](#), please visit the dedicated pages on the council’s website.



Bin strikes in Edinburgh in 2022 Chambers Street PHOTO Alan Simpson