

MOTION BY COUNCILLORS J DUFF AND C SHIERS

University Of The Highlands And Islands Perth

Following the Scottish Government's flat cash budget settlement for the college sector, UHI Perth will be required to make cuts of £3million and a 10% reduction in its academic credits in 2023/24. This will result in up to 50 job losses and fewer students being taught at UHI Perth at a time when skills training is even more important than ever.

These cuts come on the back of the Scottish Government's removal of £46million from the College/University sector's budget to help fund the recent Local Government teacher pay awards with no assistance being provided to help UHI Perth settle its own 2022/23 and 2023/24 staff pay award. The latest pay offer has been rejected by staff and industrial action remains ongoing which is particularly unsettling for everyone involved.

Thankfully, the proposed cuts to the nursery have been deferred for 2023/24 allowing the college to look at a different funding model for nursery provision, which is a vital facility for the staff, students and others.

Perth and Kinross Council has a successful working partnership with UHI Perth. For example, with the Highland Perthshire Learning Partnership based at Pitlochry High School which is helping to meet the educational needs of pupils and adult learners in the area.

The financial consequences of the Scottish Government's failure to fund UHI Perth is a significant cut to teaching staff at all levels, the potential loss of a number of courses from the curriculum and a reduction in the overall number of students who can find a place at UHI Perth.

This Council therefore calls upon the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive to meet with the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills to call for additional funding for UHI Perth to prevent these job losses and course cuts.