



1831

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Hotter than a coffee shop in Athens

BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL PREPARES TO SWING THE AXE. AGAIN.

The Council is preparing to vote through cuts of £28million, resulting in the loss of at least 350 jobs and seriously affecting services for our cities most vulnerable people.

The Libdem led council and their conservative supporters have leapt at the chance to privatise and cut essential social provisions, whilst making very few changes to executive pay or their own expenses. (Not that we think labour would have done much better if they were still in charge).

Proposals likely to be voted through include: cutting funding to community centres (Easton Community Centre is losing 22.5% of its funding and the Malcolm X 46%), reducing or stopping the funding of social projects (like Knowle West Health Association and Southville Community Association) and closing or privatising care homes, day centres and the entire youth service. Councillors are expected to vote on the last two proposals without having seen the full details on how these changes will impact the cities children, elderly and vulnerable people. So much for democracy.

This is the second year of reductions to the council's budget; part of a four year plan to cut over £70million of services. Despite council claims that they will 'protect front-line services and the most vulnerable', thousands will find much needed support reduced or gone. At the same time the lower paid workers in the public sector are learning what 'efficiency savings' mean; dealing with impossibly high workloads with fewer team members and reduced pay. It is clear Bristol City Council don't represent the interests of the majority of people living in our city.



ANTI CUTS RALLY AT COUNCIL HOUSE

As the cities councillors meet to vote through the latest round of cuts, people will be gathering inside and out to voice their anger.

As one anti-cuts campaigner put it "if we're not there, these politicians will believe they can get away with anything".

The budget setting meeting is at the

Council House, College green on Tuesday 28th February. People will be gathering for the start at 1pm and again after work from 5pm for a larger demonstration. Everyone is welcome to come and voice their anger at the Council.

See bristolanticutsalliance.org.uk for more info.

WORKFARE – REBRANDING SLAVERY FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

Workfare involves forcing people to work full time for their benefits or run the risk of losing them entirely. This month it appears the scheme is on the rocks. Publicly the government and employers talk about the experience and opportunities it provides whilst the right wing press pushes forwards the idea that it will force 'lazy' job seekers into work.

In reality, the only experience is often of the most mundane tasks, from stacking shelves at night to sweeping shops in the day. The opportunities for paid employment disappear as company bosses decide they'd rather get more free slave labour than pay a

decent wage. Over a thousand people have completed placements at Tesco only to be told there isn't a job for them. The governments own report into previous schemes in the US revealed there is little evidence they help people get jobs, especially during times of high unemployment

It is not just those in workfare that are hurt. As more work is done for free there are less paid jobs available and many will find their wages forced down. This policy only benefits the bosses and politicians, and it's finally attracting the amount of flak it

deserves. Public pressure against Tesco after it advertised a permanent unpaid position has forced it onto the defensive, and its store in westminster was temporarily closed by demonstrators. Scope, TK Maxx, Marie Curie, Sainsbury's and others have pulled out completely. The Trades Union Congresses has released a statement condemning workfare.

Workfare is still supported by Argos, WH Smith and over 100 other organisations but public pressure is mounting and protests are springing up across the country.

See boycottworkfare.org #boycottworkfare

LOCAL MP SUGGESTS RIOTS IN CLIFTON

Bristol West MP Stephen Williams claimed that the riots on and around Bristol's Cheltenham road last April were somehow caused by squatting law. Mr Williams was being interviewed on BBC1's Points West News on February 16th, about the fourteen squatters who had recently moved into a luxury house in Clifton. He cited Cheltenham Road as being an area "where you more often find squatting" and went on to claim squatting is usually linked "with anti-social behaviour – in this case a riot".

If Mr Williams had bothered to read the first issue of 1831, he would have understood that the riots last April were about the Police invading a community that did not want them there. He seemed to be referring to the fact that it kicked off when the cops turned up gung-ho and blocked off this major thoroughfare on a bank holiday Friday - backed up by their mates from other forces - to arrest ONE person living in a squat. Blaming squatting for the riots is like blaming the Lions for acting on instinct when I throw Lady Gaga and her stupid bloody meat costume into their enclosure in Bristol Zoo! I mean, it's not, but you get where I'm going. At least he's dropped the Tesco protest angle.

As for the 14 squatters, here's the low-down: They're not "Occupy Bristol", but a few ex-occupiers live there. Even at the knock down price of £2.9m the house was taken off the market recently as nobody can afford to live in it. It's not a privately owned home. It's owned by RBS, and WE own RBS so go figure. It was most recently used as halls of residence by Bristol University students, so now the neighbours at least don't have to put up with projectile vomiting Hipsters called Edmund. Squatters are probably quite an upgrade.

When the Beeb interviewed the local residents most couldn't care less as long as they were nice and quiet. The worst they could manage was a woman who didn't like them because "we don't know who they are". Seriously? Not being inbred is not a basis for discrimination!

Laws making squatting a criminal offense look imminent, though the House of Lords are toying with an idea backed by both Labour and Lib-Dem peers to decriminalise it for properties empty for a long period of time. There are an estimated 20,000-50,000 squatters in the UK.

For more info on changes to squatting law
squashcampaign.org
or email bristolquattastic@riseup.net



Simultaneous pickets at Pizza Huts in Bristol

PIZZA HUT WORKERS DEMAND A FAIR SLICE

On the 4th February, the Sheffield Pizza Hut Workers' Union (part of Industrial Workers of the World) held a protest outside their branch in Crookes over the ongoing dispute for workers terms and conditions. Solidarity demonstrations were held in several other locations throughout the UK, Europe and Canada.

The dispute is over holiday pay and mileage rates. Pizza Hut workers do not receive time and a half pay rate for working unsociable hours. This is despite many staff working late into the night and on bank holidays, including Christmas Day. Pizza Hut drivers still receive as little as 10p per mile in petrol money from the international franchise, despite the ever increasing price of petrol.

Even during these savage economic times, Pizza Hut are still making staggering profits; yet continue to deny the workers a wage that reflects these profits. This is sick to say the least and cannot be accepted.

The Protests have been a great success so far. Here in Bristol, solidarity demonstrators from IWW, Solidarity Federation and Anarchist federation have had a great response from the public and the staff working for Pizza Hut. However it's far from over and the Pizza Hut Workers' Union will continue to fight back against the bastards who think they can get away with this injustice against the workers of Pizza Hut. It is also within our responsibility to show our support and solidarity against the management of not only Pizza Hut, but other ruthless companies who think they can treat their workers like shit.

If your boss is giving you trouble or you work at pizza hut, contact IWW at bristolliww@riseup.net

VINCE CABLE VISITS BATH

On Thursday 12th January Vince Cable, the coalition minister responsible for higher education, came to Bath to open a new wing of Bath City College.

Although he pledged to oppose the rise in tuition fees before the elections, he then went back on his words and voted for them. Despite this, he was welcomed with an official reception at the college. Members of Bristol Anarchist Federation joined Bath Against the Cuts to remind him he wasn't welcome. Whilst 20 people protested outside the main entrance, Vince decided to sneak in through a side door – no doubt to cowardly to face the people he is supposed to represent. Not to be outdone by his shy nature, exits were then staked out to allow the remaining protesters to see him off with shouts of 'lying scumbag' and the like. First Nick Clegg, now Vince Cable, when will lying Lib Dem scumbags learn they're not welcome in Bath?

♪ We like big cuts
and we always lie! ♪



Bristol City council leader Barbara Janke at the annual Liberal Democrat karaoke night with Nick Clegg

Bristol Anarchist Federation

Bristol Anarchist Federation is a branch of the Anarchist Federation. It is an organisation of class struggle anarchists which aims to abolish Capitalism and all oppression to create a free and equal society. For more information, to join, come to our meetings or if you would like to write an article, visit our website bristolaf.wordpress.com or contact us bristol@afed.org.uk

Please note: All views and opinions expressed in 1831 are those of the individual authors and not necessarily those of Bristol Anarchist Federation

