



14 August 2020

## Jobs and services to be cut at City of Adelaide

Last night, the City of Adelaide council voted to proceed with \$20 million worth of budget cuts, which will result in approximately 150 council employees losing their jobs.

This is on top of the 159 staff who have already lost their jobs over the past six months.

Fifty ASU members and officials stood outside the Adelaide Town Hall last night to greet the elected members as they arrived for the council meeting.

We were there to remind Councillors that these cruel cuts are more than just numbers on a budget spreadsheet, this decision will have very real consequences for the 150 staff left without a job, the staff who remain and are left to pick up the pieces, and the broader community who will face significant cuts to services.

Of course there is never a good time to face unemployment. But right now - in the middle of a recession brought on by a global pandemic - is a very grim time to be out of work.

With local government ruled out of JobKeeper support, this decision is particularly cruel indeed.

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CITY

### Adelaide City Council approves 2020/21 budget with \$14 million set aside for redundancies

More jobs are set to go after Adelaide City Council approved its multi-million budget and restructure. Some councillors dubbed the move “cruel”, “inappropriate” and “madness”.



Right now, during this unprecedented health and economic crisis, we should be stimulating the economy.

**We should be safeguarding jobs, not slashing them.**

Every other level of government is focused on doing this. Local Government, especially our capital city council, should be no different.

As the **former Minister for Local Government Stephan Knoll** said in March, "Councils should do everything possible to keep people employed and keep services operating. If councils scale down services and operations unnecessarily, it will mean more people are out of work, which is the last thing we need at this time.

Councils provide essential services and are responsible for a lot of development and job creation in South Australia, and that's why they must continue to operate. We need all three spheres of government working together to keep people safe, keep people in jobs and keep society operating as normally as possible."

**LGA President Sam Telfer** agrees: "Councils also have a role to play in stimulating economic activity, and we want to work with the state and federal governments on opportunities to create jobs and drive economic recovery."

Even the former Mayor of City of Adelaide and now **CEO of Business SA Martin Haese** said in a recent media release: "Safeguarding SA jobs is an absolute priority right now."

CITY

## Adelaide City Council expected to spend \$14 million cutting 150 jobs, to save \$20 million in budget

Adelaide City Council is widely tipped to get rid of 150 jobs as part of an attempt to save \$20 million. It already has allocated \$14 million to pay for redundancy packages.

Colin James, The Messenger

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While **Councillors Phillip Martin, Anne Moran and Rob Simms** (pictured above) have all spoken out in the media against the harsh budget cuts, it's the dominant ultra-conservative 'Team Adelaide' faction that are proudly driving these 'efficiencies'.

### What services might go when 150 more jobs are slashed?

City of Adelaide have already closed the much-loved Business Advisory Service which provided support to thousands of South Australian businesses. Night Parking Information Officers - often the first on the scene when there's been an emergency - are already being let go.

Programs like Carbon Neutral Adelaide that are saving businesses and residents money

on electricity, creating jobs in building refurbishments, and supporting new and innovative businesses could be scrapped altogether.

Initiatives for vulnerable people, including people experiencing homelessness in the city, will likely be wound back as the Lord Mayor and her CEO look to reduce the Council to a minimalist, basic service. (All the while, councillors like Team Adelaide's Alex Hyde have been more than happy to spend ratepayers' money attacking services for the homeless on Hutt Street.)

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Like all our local government members, City of Adelaide staff want to support the community through this difficult time. The pandemic is far from over, and the need for support services is only increasing.

News of these job cuts comes after years of City of Adelaide running deficit budgets. The council hasn't been in a strong financial position in a while now, and we believe they are using this pandemic as an excuse to cut staff by a quarter.

City of Adelaide staff have already endured years of rolling staff reviews and restructures. ASU members at the City of Adelaide have seen colleagues leave suddenly, moved on by HR without a chance to say their goodbyes. Now this new round of redundancies hangs over their heads and morale has never been lower.

Jobkeeper, the safety net for so many who have found themselves out of work during this pandemic, is not available to Local Government workers because the Morrison Government believes the public sector should be investing in their staff and services at this time, not cutting them.

The Australian Services Union is ready to work with the City of Adelaide, the State Government and the Federal Government to ensure that we protect as many jobs and services as possible during this pandemic.

Our **Secretary Abbie Spencer** has met with the **Federal Minister for Local Government Mark Coulton** via Zoom a number of times during the pandemic to keep him updated on moves by the City of Adelaide and other Councils to stand workers down, and she will provide the Minister with an update on these job losses next week. We have also called on **Premier Steven Marshall** to provide more financial support for the sector, noting that other states like New South Wales announced big stimulus packages for councils early on in the pandemic, to ensure as many jobs as possible were saved. Instead, the SA Government has been focused on introducing another rate capping bill into Parliament, and swapping Ministers around following the country members allowance debacle.

We will continue to stand in solidarity with our members at the City of Adelaide and do everything we can to support them during these difficult days ahead.