

WENDY DEMANDS COUNCIL THINK AGAIN ON MUSIC TUITION

- FORMER PUPIL SPEAKS OUT AGAINST THE PROPOSED CUTS -

Proposed music tuition “savings” from Renfrewshire’s SNP led Council have been met with mounting protests from pupils, staff and parents. The proposals will mean lessons are cut from once a week to once fortnightly and the loss of 7 full time equivalent posts. A former pupil who received such tuition and is now following a professional music career has spoken out.

22 year old Marie-Clare Pless benefited tremendously from the trumpet tuition she received right through from Primary 5 to sixth year as a pupil at St. James’s Primary in Renfrew and Trinity High School. Now in the process of joining the army as a musician, she has voiced her concern over the proposed cuts:

“The music lessons do not only provide excellent music tuition but develop confidence through playing with other students and in concerts. They also give students focus and determination to improve. Cutting lessons to once a fortnight will reduce the standards of many students playing, especially in the early years when you set the routine for practice.”

The cuts would result in parents being forced to fork out for private lessons. To this end Marie-Clare adds:

“When I was at school there would have been no possibility of my parents paying for private lessons as both my brother and myself played a number of instruments.”

It remains unclear at this stage whether the Council intend to retain or cut the tuition fee parents current pay.

Wendy has condemned the Councils proposals as “madness” and set out a three point plan of action to the SNP administration:

(1) Guarantee there will be no disciplinary action against those staff speaking out. It is morally wrong that disciplinary action is threatened against staff members who make known their qualified views on this matter.

(2) Guarantee there will be no compulsory redundancies. The policy will be "dead in the water" if they do this because they will not find 16 part-time volunteers for voluntary redundancy.

(3) Commit to an immediate formal review of this short-sighted savings proposal.