

Outlines



UNISON NEWCASTLE CITY BRANCH NEWSLETTER

July 2014



ALL OUT ON 10 JULY!

Members say NO to employers offer!

You will know by now that 59% of UNISON members have voted to reject the NJC employers' pay offer for 2014-15 in the strike ballot. Each member balloted has been sent a letter with the results below:

Ballot result:

Number of votes cast: 85,020

Number answering "yes" to the question: 49,836

Number answering "no" to the question: 35,062

Number of spoiled voting papers: 122

Industrial Action Agreed

The Industrial Action Committee has agreed to the UNISON NJC Committee request for strike action on 10 July.

Every member of UNISON now needs to work very hard to deliver a massive turnout and support the action. Only a huge display of strength will get the employers back to the bargaining table – with or without ACAS.

UNISON does not take the decision to ballot for strike action lightly and we are aware that many members are facing difficult times with prices riding high.

That is why we need every member to participate in the action to get an improvement to the insulting offer.

We will be providing hardship funds for those who suffer hardship as a consequence of the action, please contact the Branch directly.

A Union is only as Strong as its Members

Locally, Newcastle City Branch has delivered:

- An equal pay settlement for low paid woman workers that secured the best negotiated settlement across the Northern Region,
- A single status agreement that provided 4 years of protection, a significant increase on the initial council proposal, and an increase in annual leave entitlement,
- The retention of an enhanced redundancy scheme,
- Review and positive change in the Council's imposed selection process,
- Personal representation for members involved in disciplinary, grievance, sickness and performance processes, and
- Many other examples of day to day support to members and challenge to the employer.
- A learning fund that supports member's course fees

Nationally, the union has delivered:

- Retention of nationally agreed Terms & Conditions on sick pay and annual leave (Green Book),
- Lead negotiations on LGPS retaining a defined benefits scheme, and NJC Pay,
- Legal representation scheme through Thompsons solicitors,
- Government legal challenge to the introduction of ET fees,
- Education bursary for course fees and books.

Union membership is about being part of a collective that is stronger together, where members abide by democratically reached decisions, where an injury to one is an injury to all.

It is no surprise that terms and conditions are better in unionised workplaces, where employers have to negotiate with the employee's union representatives.

Seven reasons why our pay claim is fair and just

A minimum increase of £1 an hour on scale point 5 to achieve the Living Wage and the same flat rate increase on all other scale points

1. Local government workers have suffered an 18% cut in wages since 2010

A pay freeze and eight years of below inflation pay rises since 1997 mean thousands of local government workers, from across the pay scale, are struggling to make ends meet.

2. Local government: the worst pay and conditions in the public sector

Over half a million, mostly women, mostly part-timers, earn less than the Living Wage. Only in local government and local authority schools are large numbers of public sector employees paid so poorly. No one in local government earns as much for the job they do as other public sector workers doing equivalent jobs elsewhere.

3. We all expect and deserve high quality public services

407,000 local government jobs have gone since 2010. That is the same as 372 jobs disappearing every day. An over-worked, stressed out workforce, stripped to the bare bones cannot provide high quality public services. And slashing pay and conditions means our members are less likely to act as advocates for their employers. Local government workers are voters and service users too!

4. Politicians from all parties are calling for an end to low pay

Party leaders, ministers and MPs from all parties are calling for a higher National Minimum Wage or the Living Wage. If leading politicians are focussing on the role decent pay can play in raising living standards, surely what is good for other workers should be good enough for those working in local government.

5. Affordability

Many local government workers rely on benefits to pay bills. The taxpayer is subsidising local government to pay poverty wages. Paying all local government workers a Living Wage will boost Treasury coffers by around £0.9 billion every year from increased tax and national insurance take - shifting many off in-work benefits. Our claim is affordable.

6. Boosting your local economy

Outside London, most local government workers live and work in the same area. Every £1 spent in the local economy generates a further 64 pence for the community. Paying local government workers a rise of at least £1 an hour will boost local businesses.

7. The benefits of paying a Living Wage

Paying the Living Wage will enhance the council's reputation, boost morale and improve productivity. Living Wage Employers report better retention of staff, improved service, and a reduction in absenteeism and in recruitment costs.

Chief Officer's Pay 2014

Although Chief Officers are covered by other bargaining arrangements, and the union has not received any recent communications from the employers; the union decided to include them in the NJC ballot as they work for councils and will be affected by the outcome of the dispute as negotiations always take account of the position of the NJC.

Strike Preparations

Picketing - will take place at the following locations, and other locations as determined by the Branch Strike Committee: **Please come down and show your support.**

Civic Centre
YHN House
Allendale Road
Condercum Depot
Rothbury Terrace
Newington Road
Sandhills Depot
Shieldfield Centre
City Library
Westgate College
Leazes Lane Depot

**Any member who wishes to help with picketing should contact the Branch Office
0191 2116980**

Exemptions – The union will negotiate “life and limb” cover with the employer(s) and any member seeking an exemption for service delivery reasons must speak to their manager.

Personal exemptions are dealt with via the Branch Strike Committee and can be requested for the following reasons:

Maternity – If a member is confirmed to be within 12 weeks of starting their maternity leave.

Redundancy – If a member is within 12 weeks of a confirmed leaving date.

Staff receiving exemptions can make a contribution to the hardship fund, to support their colleagues taking strike action.

Hardship Payments – If a member will experience particular difficulty through participating in strike action, the Strike Committee can approve a hardship payment, subject to basic qualifying criteria.

Home Workers – Support the strike by not logging in to systems at home – **come and join the picket lines.**

Rally – UNISON Northern Region will be organising a rally in Newcastle between 12 noon – 2pm. The rally will be at the “Blue Carpet”, outside the Laing Art Gallery.

Social – There will be a social in the Labour Club, Leazes Park Road, 1.00 – 4.00pm, Buffet from 2.00 pm.

Biggest Strike since the General Strike

Members of UNISON have backed a one-day walkout set to be even bigger than the 1926 General Strike.



Unison general secretary Dave Prentis said: "These workers care for our elderly, clean our streets, feed and educate our school children and keep our libraries running, but they receive no recognition in their pay packets.

"They are mainly low-paid women workers, stressed and demoralised, and they deserve better from their employers and from this government.

"This is the group that has borne the brunt of the government's austerity agenda."

In addition to Unison's 400,000, the day of action will see 70,000 Unite members and 150,000 GMB members in schools and local government walk out.

They will be joined by as many as 300,000 teachers in the NUT and possibly 260,000 PCS members.

UNISON's Head of Local Government, Heather Wakefield, said:

"Our members have made it clear that this pay offer is the straw that breaks the camel's back after years of pay freezes and below-inflation rises.

"This offer is effectively another pay freeze for the majority of our local government and school members, and they have used this consultation to send a strong message that it is insulting and unacceptable.

"Local government workers have kept services running in our communities in the face of the Government's harsh austerity agenda, and they deserve more than just a bare minimum pay increase."



I ♥ Sure Start

UNISON is currently running a campaign in respect of Sure Start Children's Centres based in Newcastle which are under threat.

Sure Start offers joined up services for parents and carers of children under 5 years (and expectant parents) including : advice and support, drop in sessions for children and parents, family support, health services, training and employment support and early education and childcare.

Across the city, Sure Start Children's Centres could be cut by as much as 65%, due to Central Government's budget constraints on the Local Authority. These proposals could lead to the closures of a significant number of Centres and are a huge concern to service users.

We are holding a **UNISON Sure Start Picnic in the Park outside the Civic Centre on Wednesday 2nd July from 12.00 until 2.00 pm** as an opportunity for parents and children to come together and show their support for the service.

The Leader of the Newcastle City Council has confirmed his attendance from 1.00 pm and councilors have also been invited to attend to meet and speak with service users directly.

The Branch has a petition on going, please add your name

<https://you.38degrees.org.uk/petitions/save-newcastle-sure-start>

1. YOUR PERSONAL DETAILS

Please tick or fill in the boxes below

Mrs	Ms	Miss	Mr	Other
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First name	Other initial
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Surname/Family name	Date of birth / /
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Home address

National Insurance number (from your payslip)
<input type="text"/>

Please tick this box if you require materials in a different format (eg large print or Braille) – be sure to supply contact details below.

Please give a telephone number/voice/text/email address for UNISON to contact you – indicate if work or home

Contact tel/voice/text/email

2. YOUR EMPLOYMENT DETAILS

Employer's name

Your job title/occupation

Directorate – Department - Section

Workplace name and address
Postcode

Payroll number (from your payslip)

PLEASE RETURN YOUR COMPLETED FORM TO:
UNISON, Room 145, Civic Centre
Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 8QH

3. WHAT YOU PAY – RATES FROM 1ST OCTOBER 2003

Please tick the appropriate box for your earnings before deductions.

	EMPLOYMENT (£)	PER WEEK	PER MONTH
Band A:	<input type="checkbox"/> Up to £2,000	£0.30	£1.30
Band B:	<input type="checkbox"/> £2,001–£5,000	£0.81	£3.50
Band C:	<input type="checkbox"/> £5,001–£8,000	£1.22	£5.30
Band D:	<input type="checkbox"/> £8,001–£11,000	£1.52	£6.60
Band E:	<input type="checkbox"/> £11,001–£14,000	£1.81	£7.85
Band F:	<input type="checkbox"/> £14,001–£17,000	£2.24	£9.70
Band G:	<input type="checkbox"/> £17,001–£20,000	£2.65	£11.50
Band H:	<input type="checkbox"/> £20,001–£25,000	£3.23	£14.00
Band I:	<input type="checkbox"/> £25,001–£30,000	£3.98	£17.25
Band J:	<input type="checkbox"/> £30,001–£35,000	£4.68	£20.30
Band K:	<input type="checkbox"/> £35,001+	£5.19	£22.50

Please tick this box if you are a student member in full-time education (including student nurses). Your subscription is £10 per year.

Please tick the appropriate box to indicate how often you are paid:

4. POLITICAL FUND

UNISON's **Affiliated Political Fund (APF)** is used to campaign for and promote UNISON policy and the need for quality public services within the Labour Party, locally and nationally, in Parliament and Europe. UNISON APF affiliates to the Labour Party.

UNISON's **General Political Fund (GPF)** is used to pay for campaigning at branch, regional and national levels of the union and for research and lobbying in Parliament and Europe. It is independent of support for any political party.

It is important that you indicate a choice of fund by ticking one of the boxes below, otherwise you will be allocated to a fund by the union. Your subscription shown above includes a political fund payment so you do not pay any more by being in one of the funds.

If you have been a member of a trade union before, please state which one:

The information provided by you shall be recorded by UNISON for statistical purposes and used for sending you UNISON publications, ballot forms and otherwise communicating with you. If you do **NOT** want any mailings from UNISON, besides those required by statute, please tick this box

To keep you fully informed of the services we arrange for members we want you to receive details of benefits offered by or in conjunction with UNISON's affinity partners. The affinity partners are organisations with close links to UNISON that share our ambition to provide you with the best possible range of benefits. Under the Data Protection legislation we can only disclose your details to our affinity partners with your explicit consent. Therefore if you **WANT** to receive details of the full range of benefits you **MUST** tick this box

5. YOUR AUTHORISATION

- I wish to join UNISON and accept its rules and constitution.
- I authorise deduction of **UNISON** subscriptions from my salary/wages at the rate determined by UNISON in accordance with its rules to be paid over to them on my behalf and
- I authorise my employer to provide information to UNISON to keep my records up to date
- I authorise deduction of the following Political Fund payment as part of my subscription: Tick one box only

Affiliated Political Fund **General Political Fund**

Now please sign and date below.

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