

# Scotland in UNISON

Scottish council activists' bulletin Use these stories in your branch newsletter or circulate the pdf version to members

## “You can't manage the market” – UNISON launches plan for a REAL National Care Service



Launched by Scottish Secretary, Lillian Macer, at a well attended event on 13 November, the report explains why the Scottish Government's version of a National Care Service does not address the root problems of the social care crisis. It shows how the existing market model of care is responsible for low pay, poor conditions, and the degradation of care work.

Ending competitive tendering and restoring grant funding, direct public delivery – properly resourced and for guaranteed terms – would provide security and better reward for workers in the voluntary sector. Direct public delivery is both affordable and necessary – this report aims to begin a proper national conversation about a strategy for achieving a real National Care Service.

Andy Mudd, author of the UNISON Scotland report called for an end to private provision in social care which allows something in excess of 20% of income to leak from the care system to the owners and financiers of private operators.

Criticising the assertion of the Feeley Commission that a publicly based system is unaffordable, he said: “This conclusion is not underpinned by an assessment of what the costs would actually be.” Andy pointed out that the public sector has access to cheaper capital than the private sector, and apart from an increase in staff costs to ensure they are properly paid and valued, and to aid recruitment and retention, running costs are likely to be lower or the same, with some significant drains on revenue disappearing altogether.



Vivek Kotecha, Centre for International Corporate Tax Accountability and Responsibility, (CICTA) spoke on their recent report 'Extracting Profits Through Care Home Real Estate', highlighting the risks around Feeley's proposal for a more actively managed market, and describing the huge returns that investors in care home properties make.

He quoted the APSE report, saying: “The economics of social care are hopelessly entangled with the economics of real estate.”

“You can't manage the market,” warned Vivek. “It's like trying to tame a jungle.”

Audrey McCabe, social care worker and co-chair of Aberdeenshire UNISON said that she loved her job, but working in the voluntary sector, her pay was lower than council care workers. When she first started in care she earned £4.86 per hour and now 40 years later she earns only £10.90 per hour. She called for the Fair Work in Social Care recommendations to be implemented as quickly as possible. “We don't need a National Care Service bill to put in place sectoral collective bargaining to drive up wages in the third sector, or to give workers a voice. All that could happen now if the political will was there.”

**With the Scottish Government's National Care Service Bill in tatters, UNISON Scotland has launched its new report 'Towards A Real National Care Service for Scotland'.**

The report makes a compelling case for the direct public delivery of social care and sets out the initial steps we can take towards this.

The report was commissioned by UNISON Scotland from APSE, the Association for Public Service Excellence and draws upon APSE's work with local authorities across the UK.

## UNISON in Parliament... getting results

By Stephen Low

**Regional Secretary Lillian Macer recently gave evidence to Holyrood's Health Social Care and Sport Committee about the Scottish Government's National Care Service Bill. UNISON's position is that the Bill isn't fit for purpose.**

A few days after Lillian gave evidence the Committee suspended their consideration of the Bill.

Lillian was part of panel which also involved the GMB and the STUC and made it clear that the key elements needed to tackle the crisis in Social Care aren't part of the Bill



“The bill does not mention sectoral bargaining and does not necessarily recognise fair work – fair work is mentioned once...”. There has been the 2019 report and then the Feeley report, which endorsed the Fair Work Convention's recommendations, but we still do not have sectoral bargaining for the workforce, which is causing huge issues for us in relation to engaging with that workforce, giving them an effective voice, opportunity, fulfilment and respect.

Lillian went on to point out “We do not need to wait on the bill; sectoral bargaining can happen now. There does not need to be a national care service bill for us to deliver fair work for the workforce, and sectoral bargaining is a key pillar of fair work.”

When challenged by one of the MSPs on the committee as to whether UNISON would support the Bill if it could be shown it would provide improvements for the workforce Lillian had to remind the committee that the bill currently does not cover workforce issues. If the Scottish Government has changed its mind and wants to include workforce issues in the bill, we need a new bill.

The trade union panel Lillian was part of was one of a number of evidence sessions. After the committee informed Scottish Government that they cannot write their report on the Bill (a necessity for it to go forward) until the Government can give answers to a whole range of questions.

# UNISON's joint regional International Seminar was honoured to hear from the Cuban Ambassador in October

By Fiona Montgomery

**Barbara Montalvo Alvarez spoke movingly about the extremely damaging effects for Cuba of the US designating the country as a state sponsor of terrorism – a legacy of the Trump presidency, but continuing under President Biden.**

Members can write to the American Ambassador in the UK to protest: [cuba-solidarity.org.uk/offthelist/](http://cuba-solidarity.org.uk/offthelist/)

Ms Montalvo Alvarez focused of course on Cuba, speaking also about the economic and trade embargo, but said her heart was with the Palestinian people undergoing bombardment in Gaza.

Delegates stood with Ceasefire Now signs, supporting UNISON's call for a ceasefire in Gaza and Israel. Branches are encouraged to donate to Medical Aid for Palestinians and the Red Cross.



The seminar was hosted by UNISON Scotland, with delegates coming from North West, Northern and Northern Ireland regions. North West spoke on Cuba and plan an appeal for medical aid with Cuba Solidarity Campaign and other regions.

Northern Ireland spoke on Palestine, with Mohammed reporting on the region's Lajee Centre project in Bethlehem. Northern Region welcomed Nick MacWilliam, from Justice for Colombia, who gave a comprehensive account of developments since elections in 2022. Separately, International Committee Co-Chair Tony Calery spoke at a Justice for Colombia Scotland meeting in the Scottish Parliament in November, with speakers including relatives of civilians murdered by the Colombian army between 2002 and 2008.

Friday night's social saw friends from the Kurdish community and Scottish Solidarity with Kurdistan speaking and singing and delegates enjoyed some dancing and a wonderful Kurdish meal.

Depute Convener Stephen Smellie and International Committee member Charlie McCarthy focused on Malawi, outlining initial thoughts for a potential UNISON project working with trade unions there. Malawi Congress of Trade Unions contributed a video presentation. Watch this space for developments.

## UNISON calls for immediate ceasefire in Gaza

**The union condemns the rising death toll of Palestinian civilians – especially children – caused by Israel's bombardment.**

UNISON supports the call for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza and Israel to allow the delivery of vital humanitarian assistance. The union condemns the rising death toll of Palestinian civilians – especially among children – caused by Israel's bombardment of Gaza. We express our



**O**ctober 21st saw delegates attend our AGM at UNISON West Campbell Street where our new committee was elected, with Watty Gaffney being re-elected, and Kay Marie Hughes taking the role as co-convenor.

The committee noted thanks to Chrissy McKeag who steps down as co-convenor to concentrate on her role as chair of the STUC LGBT+ workers committee.

We welcomed our new secretary Matt Valenti and give our thanks and gratitude to Elaine Duffy for her years of note and minute taking both as a committee member and as a visiting retired member. This year we had 5 new committee members take positions and

we look forward to working closely together over the next 12 months as we approach a busy and important year for LGBT+ workers.

Raza Sadiq from UNISON Scotland Black Members Committee spoke enthusiastically about the committee's work this year and discussed the concerning results from the Black members survey and work undertaken this year to address what members describe as a lack communication, visibility, and representation of Black members in branches and across the union. The LGBT+ committee assured Raza that this committee will continue to work with SBMC to highlight Black members issues and give support where intersections exist.

Lilan Macer Scottish Secretary addressed the AGM and described her learning experience through a variety of roles on her journey to leading UNISON Scotland and emphasised her wish to ensure opportunities for women and learning in our union. She also expressed her continued support of our equality agenda as we move into the Year of the LGBT+ worker in 2024.

Kirsty Robson from the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust gave a moving presentation on the holocaust, and more recent genocides with a focus on those lost because of persecution of the LGBT+ community. The committee agreed that we should mark the day moving forward and were invigorated to build a strong work plan for the year ahead at our forthcoming policy forum.

## UNISON Scotland attend ILGA Conference in Slovenia

**450 delegates from international organisations addressed anti-LGBT+ rhetoric and attacks on our freedom.**

We are at a moment in history which is complex and is changing the way LGBT+ activism happens. As LGBT+ people are repeatedly targeted and instrumentalised as scapegoats by anti-democratic and anti-human rights forces, our communities are made more fragile and the work of the LGBT+ movement has become even heavier in too many places. And yet amidst these turbulent times, activists continue to find new and successful ways to make political and social change in their countries and across Europe.

Within this context, and building on the work of last year's annual conference at which we talked about our role in shaping the world to come, this year we were asked

how collectively as a movement we can rise to both the challenges and the opportunities presented by this moment in history, when LGBT+ lives, rights and equality are becoming more and more of a focus in Europe and Central Asia.

UNISON's workshop on trade union solidarity and with a strong focus on Trans rights, invigorated delegates to keep the focus on longer term goals and not just emergency responses.

Throughout conference workshops we discussed how we stay a strong and allied movement as external challenges seek to undermine our cohesive strength and how do we stay stable and on track when there is pressure to be torn in so many different directions.

To address these questions and more the conference programme was organised under two guiding themes:

Resilience of the movement – Continuing the vital conversation around how we keep our work sustainable, resourced, focused, and strategic in an environment marked by crisis and external pulls and pressures.

Solidarity and cohesion within the movement - In the face of external challenges, we looked at the ways in which we can further foster a sense of unity, collective identity, and shared purpose as a movement to allow us to work effectively together towards shared goals, leaving no one behind.

UNISON's International equality work is fundamental in furthering our visibility and strength as a trade union and the LGBT+ committee are proud to take such an active role in fostering solidarity with organisations across Europe and Central Asia and how we can work together in the fight for LGBT+ equality.

## NHS Grampian car park campaign

**Earlier this year Grampian Health branch discovered that staff parking was going to be drastically cut by 700 spaces.**

A multi-story car park, funded by the Wood Foundation with a caveat that this was for patients and visitor's use only was erected prior to Covid. During Covid that caveat was waived to allow staff to park on the top floors and the car park ownership transferred to NHS Grampian.

The health board failed to consult with staff, refused to carry out Equality and Community Impact Assessments and planned to stop staff parking in the facility at the beginning of August.

Grampian Health branch got a planning committee together and survey led members and other hospital staff evidencing that many public

transport services were drastically cut in and around Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire, resulting in workers having no option but to drive to work.

Jamie Donaldson, branch secretary said "we had over 2,700 responses to our survey, the impact on staff losing parking access was a huge issue for staff and stakeholders. The surrounding area of Aberdeen Royal Infirmary has no accessible parking, buses no longer get staff to work for early or late shifts and staff have to travel in from around the Grampian region, not just from the Aberdeen City limits. No thought had been given to those with childcare or the impact on surrounding housing estates. Our ask is that a change of use for the building is lodged with Aberdeen City Council."

Janet Christie, branch chair said, "We have

built up a very positive, sustained campaign encouraging members, stakeholders and the public to send letters to their local councillors. The support has been fantastic, parking has just been extended for 6 months until April 2024, a win for our members, but our campaign will continue until we have the impact assessments, meaningful engagement with the CEO team and a planning application in place."



concern at the collapse of vital public services – particularly healthcare – and reiterate our call for the release of all the hostages being held by Hamas.

UNISON encourages our members and branches to take action calling for a ceasefire, including joining peaceful protests and contacting their members of parliament. UNISON will be making donations to Medical Aid for Palestinians and the Red Cross

and encourages branches to do the same.

UNISON is deeply concerned by the dramatic increase in antisemitic and Islamophobic incidents. Anti-racism and the right to treated with dignity and respect, irrespective of race or creed, are fundamental values of our union. All members should be able to feel safe in their places of work and the communities in which they live.

Finally, UNISON calls on the British government and the international community



to support a ceasefire leading to renewed talks aimed at achieving a viable Palestinian state alongside a secure Israel, as the only way to secure long-term peace in the Middle East.

# Scottish Water strike to fight pay and grading proposal

**Scottish Water UNISON went on strike for four days from 10 to 13 November, fighting against a new pay and grading proposal that would see the earnings of their lowest paid staff drop by up to £5,000.**

UNISON said that the strike would have serious implications for water and sewage services – emergency repairs would not be done, water quality checks would not take place and, if the public report problems with their water supply, sewage or drainage, they would not be dealt with while staff are on strike.

Branch secretary for UNISON Scottish Water branch, Patricia McArthur said: “Strike action is always a last resort, but Scottish Water managers are imposing a new pay structure with no involvement from staff, which is not acceptable. It is storing up problems for the future.

“It seems that Scottish government’s Fair Work and equality commitments don’t matter in our biggest and most precious public asset. We need urgent intervention from the Scottish government to talk with unions and get meaningful talks started.”

UNISON regional organiser Emma Phillips said: “Scottish Water truly are a rogue employer. Our strong ballot result shows the strength of feeling among our members, who have

overwhelmingly rejected the employer’s slapdash proposals.

“Despite this, Scottish Water are insisting they are still going to implement the changes to employment contracts and pay structures.

“Scottish Water is ripping up the government’s fair work and equality guidance and it’s just not good enough – our members deserve better.



“If the Scottish government don’t intervene, then they have been warned that they are storing up problems over pay structures and future equal pay. Re-grading has to be done properly with the full involvement of staff and unions.”

## Scottish Water in Crisis – MSP Briefing

As Scottish Water workers were poised to go on strike, staff from UNISON and the other Trade Unions involved, went to the Scottish Parliament to speak to MSPs and UNISON Scotland published an MSP Briefing, Scottish Water in Crisis, calling on the Scottish

Government to intervene to resolve the crisis in our greatest public asset.

The briefing points out that the key workers at Scottish Water need their overdue cost of living pay rise now and that Scottish Water management need to realise they are there to hold an asset in trust for the nation – not drive up the share price of their favoured businesses. It also underlines that whilst the strike is about the imposition of a pay and grading structure, there is a background of a long campaign of privatisation by stealth and attempts at union busting on the part of Scottish Water management, where they ignore collective agreements and demonstrate a routine hostility to the recognised trade unions.

Moreover, the briefing warns that the employed workforce is being run down and underutilised while work is transferred at increased cost to private contractors and that this is privatisation by stealth – technically Scottish Water will remain publicly owned but in reality becomes a resource from which profits can be extracted. Despite clear evidence that in house working is both cheaper and carried out to a higher standard than contracted out work Scottish Water management are running down in house capacity.

You can find the briefing at [unison-scotland.org/scottish-water-in-crisis-msp-briefing/](https://unison-scotland.org/scottish-water-in-crisis-msp-briefing/)

# An end to part time worker holiday discrimination in colleges

**It was recently brought to light that part time workers at central belt college had been discriminated against in regards to holiday pay – for over a decade.**

Some years ago, the college took the decision to close campuses fully between Christmas and New Year with most staff using annual leave entitlement to secure the full fortnight off. The



college was incurring the cost of keeping the buildings open for a handful of staff, so they introduced ‘closure days’ as an addition to the annual leave entitlement.

However, it came to light that part time workers were not afforded the benefit of the closure days. The now head of HR, justified this by saying that “part time staff could be asked to work at any time”, despite the building being closed and access to IT systems curtailed over the holiday period. As trade unionists we know it is unlawful to treat part-time workers less favourably than full time workers.

UNISON reps on the ground challenged management and the decision has since been reversed. This year, part time staff will see the benefit of the Christmas closure days for the first time ever. Grace Hepburn says “I could not quite believe it when we realised what was going on. Apart from the obvious discrimination, there is also an equalities issue, 80% of the part time support staff at Forth Valley College are women and it is also likely that there is a high percentage

of workers who are older, disabled, or who have caring responsibilities. The college should hang their head in shame that this situation went on for so long.”

Staff on the ground are understandably upset at the situation. One member said “I had no idea I was being short-changed. You expect to be able to have faith in working practices and you expect people who are CIPD trained to know what they are doing. I have been part time for a number of years and have always been flexible with the college when they required it, and now I feel I have been treated unfairly, underrepresented and that there has been no consideration of equalities. It is disappointing.”

UNISON FE branch are now further investigating college closure days with other colleges in Scotland and aim to stamp out discrimination of this kind across the sector.

# Glasgow City UNISON striking to protect its world-class museums and galleries

**Glasgow City UNISON took five days of strike action at the end of October to fight against £1.5m cuts to Glasgow’s museums and collections.**

Strikers shut the Glasgow Museum Resource Centre and Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum for the full five days, and the Burrell Collection in Pollok Park for two days.

Glasgow City Council’s museums and galleries are the largest civic museum in the UK, 1.2 million items worth £1.4 billion and include original paintings from Rembrandt, Van Gogh, and Degas, as well as Salvador Dali’s Christ of St John of The Cross.

The £1.5 million cuts are part of a package of more than £7 million of savings Glasgow Life, the Arms Length External Organisation (ALEO) responsible for Glasgow’s museums and galleries has been told to make, following Glasgow City Council cutting its service fee earlier this year. The museum cuts proposals could see a number of posts axed including highly skilled curators, conservators, outreach assistants, photographers and technicians.

Mandy McDowall, Regional Organiser pointed out “Without the work of the dedicated curators, conservators and other staff, important works could become infested, broken, stolen or lost. Glasgow Life has presented this plan as if it looks like a very minimal cut, and in the scheme of cuts it is not a lot financially, but the consequences are huge”

Fiona Cairns, Collections Access Assistant and UNISON Steward warned that staff cuts would mean reduced security and underlined that “Museums need to be very trusted institutions, so people feel confident to donate their objects to us and know that those objects are going to be looked after for the very long term,”

Fiona highlighted there were already too few Conservators whose essential tasks include looking after light sensitive objects and calculating how long they can safely be displayed, and carrying out deep cleans and monitoring the environment for pests, “Some parts of the collection are really vulnerable to pest damage. One of the most terrifying types of pest damage that can happen in a museum is moths. Moths

could very quickly sweep through the world class medieval tapestries in the Burrell Collection or eat through our extremely popular taxidermy displays in Kelvingrove.”



Brian Smith, Glasgow Branch Secretary, demanded “UNISON wants more national funding to be provided to Glasgow’s museums to recognise the international significance of the city’s collections. Kelvingrove museum, Riverside museum and the Burrell Collection are all in Scotland’s top ten most visited tourist destinations. Every other museum of this size in Scotland has National Status and receives additional funding to recognise its national importance. It has been estimated Glasgow should receive at least an additional £25 million if Glasgow Museums & Collections were funded to the same level as the national museums in Edinburgh.”

# Aggro at work still a real problem, says UNISON report

**UNISON Scotland published its Annual Violence at Work survey. The report shows an increase of at least 31% on last year – the real figure will be higher but non-compliance with the survey by Scotland’s largest NHS employer mean the picture is incomplete.**

The report shows particular issues faced by staff in local authorities and in particular schools.

Since 2006, UNISON Scotland has carried out an annual survey of assaults to public sector workers by issuing a Freedom of Information (FoI) request to employers covered by Freedom of Information legislation. Following a pause during the pandemic years (2020, 2021) the survey recommenced in 2022.

This is UNISON’s second ‘post pandemic’ report on violence at work.

- This survey registered a total of 54,684 violent incidents taking place against public service staff in the year to 31 March 2023.
- The total number of violent incidents was 31% higher in 2023 than the previous year, with an additional 12,931 violent incidents reported.
- Almost two thirds of the total in 2023 (65%) involve violence against local authority staff.
- Violent incidents against council staff rose by over 50% year on year.



Scotland’s largest NHS employer NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde did not provide a response to this year’s FOI request and NHS Forth Valley took 6 months to provide figures. This is a breach of their legal requirements and UNISON will be taking this up with the information Commissioner. UNISON will be taking this matter further.

Scott Donohoe, Chair of UNISON Scotland’s Health and Safety Committee said: “It shows beyond any doubt that violence at work remains a real problem in our public services and many employers are indifferent or complacent to the problems being faced by their staff.

We need action to tackle the violence and aggression at work – it really isn’t ‘part of the job’. We now need action by employers and stronger legislation, regulation and oversight by government.

The failure by some major employers to respond to our request is more than a breach of the law – it is an indication that employers do not hold or gather information about assaults on their staff. This isn’t acceptable and we will take this further.

# Ballot on new pay offer for council members

**As we went to print, UNISON Scotland had launched a ballot of all local government members on a new offer from COSLA in their pay dispute.**

School strikes were suspended after talks between COSLA and UNISON secured an improved pay offer for local government workers, including a ground-breaking commitment to tackle low pay across local government which should deliver above inflation increases for the lowest paid workers for at least the next three years.

UNISON Scotland's head of local government, Johanna Baxter said: "Action by UNISON members over the past months has delivered an additional £100m into the pay packets of local government workers. This includes an additional £17.2m secured in the last couple of weeks. The agreement to backdate the full offer to the beginning of April for all workers further benefits around 4 in 10 of the workforce."

UNISON was the only union to take strike action in this dispute. The union will put this new pay offer to their members with the recommendation that they vote to accept it. The ballot will run over the next few weeks.

Johanna added: "The improvements put forward today help address low pay and support those in the squeezed middle. The commitment to delivering a minimum rate of pay of £15 per hour for all local government workers by April 2026 will go a long way to tackling low pay across the sector."

"It was UNISON members who stood on picket lines to fight for a better deal. It was UNISON negotiators who brokered this deal. And it will be UNISON members who determine whether it gets accepted."



Chair of the local government committee, Mark Ferguson said: "Where previous offers only offered talks about the possibility of this being achieved, these improvements make it happen. This has been a long-standing UNISON objective to help those on the very lowest pay and we will work hard with COSLA on the practicalities of delivering it."

It is right we put this offer to our members and I want to thank UNISON members for taking action that has helped secure these improvements. Our membership has been growing at unprecedented rates over the past few months which demonstrates that workers know UNISON will deliver for them."

# Branch donation supports Malawi project

By Kate Ramsden

**Aberdeenshire UNISON continued UNISON Scotland's strong links with Malawi when it donated £500 to the Lucent Community Vocational Skills Development Centre in Zomba District.**

The Centre provides training for young women and girls, many of whom are orphans, in skills such as welding. It will also train a number of them to be community leaders and activists.

The aims of the project are to increase the financial ability of women to enable them purchase food for their families, educate their children, with a particular focus on girls, to afford better healthcare, clothing and shelter for their children, reduce poverty and attain improved standards of living.

Because the project is targeted at girls and women it will also have a role "to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women, ensuring elimination of all kinds of violence against women and children through full participation in the social, economic and political spectra at all levels and bringing women into the mainstream of development."

UNISON Scotland communications officer, Danny Phillips, regularly visits Malawi and has been instrumental in making links between UNISON and Malawi. During a recent visit to the country, he visited the project and handed over the donation to Imedi Issa Jafali, project leader, himself a community volunteer.

Danny said: "Issa and the community were delighted with the donation and will put it to good use to support their project for young women in their community."

"Issa is tireless in his work and it is amazing what they have done to improve the lives of people within their community. This money will be put to very good use."

UNISON Scotland has supported many projects in Malawi. During UNISON Scotland Gordon McKay's presidential year, his charity was to build a maternity clinic in Malawi. This is making good progress and is on track to be finished in 2024.

# Year of Black Workers

**Since the launch of the Campaign in Glasgow City Chambers on the 1st of June 2023, the Scottish Black Members Committee (SBMC) have been presenting the YOBW to branches in Scotland.**

Following a survey conducted by the SBMC earlier this year, Black Members from across Scotland were invited to online information sessions. These events were a short introduction to UNISON that included: the role of the Black Members Officer, how to become active, training available to members and speakers from the SBMC. Members who attended shared their personal experiences and discussed ways which UNISON can improve equality and understanding in the workplace.

Members were encouraged to approach their Branches to get in touch with their Black Members Officer and potentially explore creating a branch SOG after only 13 Branches in Scotland indicated having a registered Black Members Officer.

Scottish Black Members want the passion and momentum gained this year to continue



into 2024 and beyond. An increase in Black Members Officers across Scotland will provide a forum to take forward important equalities issues and challenge racism in the workplace.

The SBMC also spoke at the Sheku Bayou Inquiry on 28th August, the STUC Race Conference on 9th September and attended STUC Black Workers Conference in October.

The Scottish Black Members Networking Day in October was an opportunity for members across many sectors to come together, discuss organising opportunities

and share their journey into UNISON activism. Members had in depth discussions on how we can improve equality and challenge discrimination in workplaces across Scotland and welcomed guest speakers from Show Racism the Red Card and Stand Up To Racism, who have committed to work with UNISON in the future.

Several Branches have rolled out equality training including 'Challenging Racism in the Workplace.' The SBMC would encourage activists to undertake training opportunities in 2024.

# Honorary Degree for Raza Sadiq

By Peter Hunter, Regional Manager

**UNISON Scotland is delighted to send our formal congratulations to Raza Sadiq for his recent recognition by the Open University.**

Our heartfelt congratulations reflect all the success Raza continues to achieve in his community, in his workplace, in Scottish sport, in UNISON, in the STUC and across all public services in Scotland.



The range of Raza's commitments is staggering. But what is less well known is the fact that these are not casual hobbies. Raza is a leader and changemaker in each of those

roles: building alliances, identifying issues and bringing change.

UNISON was privileged to welcome the young people from the Active Life Club to the launch of UNISON's year of Black Workers. Confident ambassadors for an award winning project. Within a matter of weeks we had the annual STUC Black Workers conference where the UNISON delegation filled half the room. Raza brings people to activity in all he does.

But the story here is not a numbers game, points on the board or bums on seats. The thread that connects all Raza's engagements is an active commitment to change. And the change in question is an end to racism and all forms of discrimination. Arguably the most demanding challenge any of us face.

As Raza said at his graduation "This award not only connects me to the Open University family but also unites us through shared values and a collective commitment to making the world a better place".

And, as Scottish Council heard in February, turning commitment into action and change involves some uncomfortable conversations. Through Raza's leadership, UNISON is engaged in a range of far reaching changes,

some more comfortable than others. But all that change is vital if we are to end the "inclusion delusion" and make intentional interventions that drive real change for members.



Former First Minister Nicola Sturgeon supports the Year of Black Workers.

**We want to hear your news**

*SiU is your paper, we want to hear your stories*

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