

Glasgow equal pay victory explained

After 12 years of litigation, 14 months of talks and the largest equal pay strike in history... - p2



Best council pay offer in a decade

UNISON delivers as members accept 9.5% over three years - p3



Communications Awards celebrate work in branches

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PUBLIC WORKS:

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Scotland in UNISON

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

Exposing the 'silent slaughter' of services

Branches challenge budget cuts across Scotland's councils

UNISON branches across Scotland have been out campaigning against another round of vicious cuts to local councils.

In Edinburgh, facing cuts of £30 million on top of £240 million in the last five years, UNISON's Tom Connolly told a budget day rally:

"The Scottish government must stop handing down austerity to councils. While it has faced a revenue cut of 1.8% over the last five years, it has hit councils for a whopping 7.1% in cuts. Enough is enough."

Also affected are 35 community and voluntary organisations set to lose out on funding with more cuts likely to follow.

Branch communications officer John Stevenson added: "It is bordering on bizarre that the Scottish Government says it is protecting services while it slashes local services year on year, leaving councils to carry the blame."

"UNISON is saying enough is enough and this silent slaughter of local services has to stop. We call on councillors to defend local services, challenge the Scottish Government for more funds and not just administer cuts."



Glasgow and Edinburgh were among council budget day lobbies across the country

Glasgow members turned out in force to protest at £22 million in cuts. Branch secretary Brian Smith said: "We've had 10 years of austerity now, services are getting poorer, communities are suffering."

"We're looking for the councillors to fight back, we've argued that they have the mechanisms under their control to set a one year no cuts budget."

Aberdeenshire UNISON lobbied the council budget meeting on 14 February with a special Valentines' card urging the council to "to love their staff and defend services."

Warning of 150 job losses, Kate Ramsden, branch co-chair said, "This will have far reaching effects on existing staff that are already struggling to carry out their duties in

the time that they are paid." Branch secretary Inez Teece slammed "a perfect storm of more work, more demands and a rise in personal and work-related stress. Something will have to give."

Dundee unions held a joint rally and lobbied the council against £10 million in cuts and attacks on terms and conditions. UNISON's Jim McFarlane,

warning of the effect on front line services, said: "We are strongly opposed to any further job losses among council staff."

"Any further loss of jobs will affect frontline services."

"It will also have a detrimental affect on staff who are already facing stress and absence due to low staff numbers."

The West Dunbartonshire Against Austerity campaign, which UNISON is part of, held a packed meeting on 19 February to campaign against cuts in the run up to the council's budget day on 27 March. The branch is also running a 'No to Overwork' campaign.

Missed opportunity on poverty

Responding the initial Scottish Government budget in December, UNISON Scottish secretary Mike Kirby slammed the cuts to local councils, saying the budget failed: "to make the investment in public services that our country needs."

While there was much to welcome in the welfare package, he said the government "missed the opportunity to use their powers to lift thousands of children out of poverty."

Social care workers deserve fair work and fair pay

Scotland's Fair Work Convention has warned that social care staff frequently work beyond contracted hours and do unpaid overtime.

This was the findings of an 18-month study led by UNISON Scotland Convener Lilian Macer and the chief executive of Alzheimer Scotland Henry Simmons.

It has called for a watchdog to monitor working conditions and draft a "fair work" contract.

More than 200,000 people work in social care in Scotland -



7.7% of the workforce - with about 82% of them women.

However, the study found that these workers were often on zero hours contracts and expected to work excessive hours.

The report added employers

Low paid part time women deserve fair work and fair pay now' LILIAN MACER

complained that it was hard to offer better employment conditions because of problems with funding or commissioning.

Lilian said: "I am very proud to co-chair the Fair Work Convention Inquiry into Social Care in Scotland. This report sends a clear message to Scottish Government that this

workforce of predominantly low paid part time women deserve fair work and fair pay now!"

The Scottish Government has said that it agrees that enhancing fair work is crucial to a future social care workforce.

The Fair Work Convention, which advises the Scottish Government, is a stakeholder body providing leadership in industrial relations and promoting Decent Work and Dignified Lives for working people. Lilian is one of the trade union representatives on the Convention.

UN Anti-Racism Day Glasgow rally

ALL SCOTLAND DEMONSTRATION

UNITED AGAINST RACISM & FASCISM

SATURDAY 16 MARCH
George Square, Glasgow, 11am-1pm @biLiLy/SUTRscotM16

PART OF INTERNATIONAL PROTESTS FOR UN ANTI RACISM DAY
SUPPORTED BY
unite stuc eis pcs RMT UNISON

Twinning to give poorest safe toilets

UNISON Scotland is urging all branches to donate £60 to the Toilet Twinning Campaign, to help fund a project in a poor community that will enable families to build a basic toilet, have access to clean water and learn about hygiene.

At UNISON's Scottish Council meeting in December Andy Crosbie, young members and disability officer at the Scottish Qualifications Authority Branch, explained:



Andy Crosbie

"One in three people around the world do not have somewhere safe to go to a toilet, which further increases poverty and reduces life expectancy for affected individuals.

"Every minute a child under 5 dies from a disease caused by poor hygiene and women and girls are hit hardest as by needing to go to the toilet in the open leaves them vulnerable to sexual assaults."

Andy told us that, the SQA branch of UNISON had recently twinned one of the staff toilets with Congo.

You can find out more information on the campaign by visiting www.toilettwinning.org/

Inspiration from school climate strikers

by Fiona Montgomery
Info & development officer

Climate campaigners here and around the world have been stepping up pressure on governments since the UN IPCC report on the urgent action needed to limit warming to 1.5C.

Many have felt inspired by school climate strikers and politicians and all of us are being pushed to address a 'climate emergency' by Extinction Rebellion.

Stop Climate Chaos Scotland will be stressing the urgency and the need for stronger targets when the Climate Bill Stage One Debate is held in the Scottish Parliament this spring.

Do come to the demonstration at the Scottish Parliament when the date is announced.

UNISON's International Committee supports the SCCS call for MSPs to hear more international voices as they make decisions. We know the workers we campaign with in countries worldwide are struggling to cope with climate impacts.

Our Green Network will be holding another Green UNISON Day later this year, with a twin focus on international impacts and workplace action in Scotland.

And members are urged to support the Scottish Food Coalition E-Action on the consultation on a Good Food Nation Bill. Check UNISON's and the campaigns' websites for regular updates.

Praise for Nancy at her last equality course

UNISON activists and staff were privileged to attend equality training in February at Nancy Kelly's final education session.

Nancy who has been education officer at UNISON for almost 30 years, delivered an emotional weekend course to an enthusiastic group of trainees.

The eight activists and staff completed the third part of the training to become fully fledged tutors and look forward to

working alongside more experienced tutors and staff to deliver training across the region.

Nancy has dedicated her career to the support of learning and education in UNISON to branches, officers and writing and developing regional education programmes.

Watty Gaffney, NHS Glasgow Clyde & CVS Branch communications officer said:

"Many thanks to our tutors who made the course great fun, and lightening

the mood on what can be a very emotional course. They helped to make it a thoroughly enjoyable experience."

Watty added: "We were delighted to have been participants in Nancy's final course, and wish her well in her forthcoming retirement. We hope we do her proud as we move forward supporting the education of new activists in our union and enhancing the education of our existing stewards. We can't wait to get started."



Nancy Kelly

Glasgow equal pay victory explained

By Peter Hunter
Head of Organising

After 12 years of litigation, 14 months of talks and the largest equal pay strike in history, UNISON's negotiators put pen to paper and clinched the largest single workplace pay out in Scotland.

There is much to digest, learn and share with colleagues about how to organise and win big.

But for now there is a mountain of further hard work to be done.

No less than 40,000 separate claims for 16,000 workers now need to be calculated, checked and double checked along with detailed arrangements to advise and assist members during the payment process.

It may be the largest single transfer of wealth to low paid workers but that doesn't remove the need for intense administrative work.

The exact timetable is unpredictable but it is hoped payments will start in the summer.

The branch is keenly focused on the fact that this is only the first of three equality challenges that require to be met.

The next is to craft, build and implement one of the largest pay systems in Scotland. UNISON has one very clear aim - pay justice for all our members.

That means robust pay equality for women and pay security for the workforce as a



UNISON area organiser Jennifer McCarey and legal officer Suzanne Craig celebrate the equal pay victory with the Glasgow women.

whole. There will be no race to drive wages down to the lowest common denominator.

The third and final challenge is a further round of compensation to cover the gap between this year's settlement and the date when equality is delivered.

The legacy of the campaign is a cocktail of greatly enhanced organising power and a strong legal position.

We know that pay reviews are always challenging, and a pay review on the back of years of austerity will be doubly hard.

So the training and organising around the pay review is well under way.

Implications for others?

A common question across the region is whether Glasgow has any direct implications for members elsewhere. The Glasgow pay system was unique to Glasgow, and Glasgow's intransigent defence of the scheme was similarly unusual.

That is why claim values are so high. Only workers employed directly by Glasgow will draw direct benefit from the Glasgow legal action.

However, UNISON rejected 24 of the 32 pay systems developed under Single Status.

All councils faced equal pay litigation and in 2016 all councils

pledged to use the SJC third edition of the job evaluation scheme to check that pay equality problems had been addressed.

The consolidation of the Living Wage into council pay structures now makes equality checking of low paid jobs a pressing priority in the year ahead.

The Glasgow case does have a relevance here - all councils must appreciate that unmanaged inequality is a risk they cannot afford to run.

UNISON Scotland is developing a strategy to support branches in implementing the new pay deal and consolidating the Living Wage.

This will include the required equality checks to verify compliance with the 2016 agreement on job evaluation. Briefings and training events will be announced shortly.

Meanwhile, the members in Glasgow await their offers and the reward for years of historic campaign work. Congratulations and thanks go to all the members, reps, branch officers and staff who combined to deliver such a memorable result.

Anger over delays to tenants' information rights

UNISON Scotland and The Campaign for Freedom of Information in Scotland have written to the Scottish Government criticising further delays in extending FOI to housing associations.

The Scottish Government announced that registered

social landlords (RSLs) would be designated under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 (FoISA) effective from 1 April 2018.

In December 2017, the Minister announced that there had been a delay to implementation. This pushed the designation date to 1 April

2019 but UNISON understands that date will not be honoured either.

The letter says: "We regret that promises made, and accepted in good faith by ourselves, have been repeatedly broken." Any further delay would be "unacceptable".

Child care expansion hampered by lack of staff

If the Scottish Government wants to meet its promises to expand free child care it will need to train more staff and increase their wages.

That is the result of a comprehensive survey by UNISON Scotland of the numbers currently being trained to deliver the expansion.

Responses to Freedom of Information requests to every council and college in Scotland show that there are just not enough people in colleges or on in-work training courses to meet the staffing levels needed for the promised extra hours.

Audit Scotland estimated that 12,000 whole time equivalent (WTE) extra staff are needed. Currently there are only 11,702 people in training

- meaning a significant shortfall even if every single person completes their training and goes on to work in child care.

Kay Sillars, UNISON Scotland Education Issues Group, said: "The Scottish government urgently needs to increase the number of college places, but this isn't enough.

"The key to recruiting and retaining staff in the numbers needed is to improve pay and

terms and conditions across the sector.

"The proposed benchmark of the Living Wage is far too low. You can earn the real living wage in many supermarkets without a qualification."

"If the Scottish Government wants a high quality early years service they need to value what this overwhelmingly women workforce does."

UNISON delivers the best local government pay offer in a decade

Negotiations with COSLA, led by UNISON, have delivered the best pay offer in a decade.

The revised and improved pay offer was delivered just before Christmas and will provide a 9.5% cost of living increase over three years: 3.5% for 2018-19, 3% for 2019-20 and 3% for 2020-21.

In addition it provides a commitment to fully consolidating the living wage, putting more money in the pockets of lower paid members, something UNISON has been campaigning on for years.

It also provides a commitment to re-open negotiations in the event that another local government bargaining group's total pay offer value is revised such that it becomes greater than the sum agreed between COSLA employers and the SJC trade unions for the period of the agreement. The award will be backdated to 1 April 2018.

UNISON Scotland local government members were consulted in a ballot in January - 91% voted in



favour of the deal and in record numbers.

At the time of going to press the Unite union had rejected the offer and the GMB ballot was still running, with the result expected on the 28 February.

As we went to press, a meeting had been arranged with the employer on 1 March where UNISON would be pressing for implementation as soon as possible.

UNISON Head of Local Government Scotland Johanna Baxter said: "This is a great outcome, delivered as

a direct result of the campaigning activity and political lobbying efforts of UNISON members up and down the country.

"The cost of living increases meet current and projected levels of RPI and we have secured commitments to fully consolidate the living wage and maintain parity across the local government workforce.

"Our members have been waiting on a pay increase for over a year now so look forward to receiving the money in

their pockets very soon."

Chair of UNISON Scotland's Local Government Committee Mark Ferguson said: "UNISON has campaigned hard to get the best deal we can for local government workers.

"While the offer does not make up for the many years of austerity, the offer, and particularly the commitment to consolidate the Living Wage, provides important safeguards for our lowest paid members. We will work to ensure this is properly delivered."

Joint Utilities: Just Transition to cleaner energy will avoid the past mistakes of lost industries

by Graeme Lyons
Gas Branch Scotland

January saw branch officers and stewards from Scottish Electricity Branch and Gas Branch Scotland hold their first meeting of 2019 in Stirling to discuss the challenges facing the energy sector in the coming years.

The Joint Utilities Group brings together UNISON branches representing members working in the energy industry across Scotland.

As well as the usual rumblings of cuts, redundancies, shrinking pensions and outsourcing, another hot topic was UNISON's campaigning on Just Transition.

This sees the need to plan ahead for the coming transition, ensuring workers and communities are not left behind, with a need for established workers to be retrained and redeployed into green, carbon free roles, such as renewable power, rather than the current fossil based fuel system, like oil and natural gas.

UNISON supports a range of policies including public ownership of energy and investment in the potential use of hydrogen gas.

Talking us through this ambitious project was Stephen Smellie, UNISON Scottish depute convener from South Lanarkshire Council Branch, who sees the vast potential in this shift and has become an early backer of the plan.

This forward-thinking roadmap has been a sticking point for some trade unionists, with understandable criticism of failed promises on green jobs, but in some cases an unwillingness to fully acknowledge the inevitable demise of some jobs or the urgency of the threat from climate change.

UNISON is keen to push Just Transition principles so as not to repeat the mistakes of lost industries such as coal or mining, that saw whole towns and communities devastated and destroyed when the jobs disappeared with no proper transition into a more modern equivalent.

The proposed transition will not only benefit workers moving into highly skilled roles but society as a whole,

by helping to combat rising deaths from air pollution each year, a shockingly quick melting of polar ice caps and aggressive geo political posturing and wars over resources.

It seems a no brainer really that UK workers should be on the forefront of new and cleaner technologies that could sustain us well into the future while oil and gas deposits begin to run out or become too expensive to extract, not to mention dangerous when it comes to fracking.

See how UNISON is protecting jobs and supporting innovation in the energy sector at <https://www.unison.org.uk/news/2018/10/blog-unison-protecting-jobs-supporting-innovation-energy-sector/>

Invest in staff to support children with additional needs

The needs of children and young people with Additional Support Needs (ASN), are not being fully met in our schools and early years settings.

This was the message from UNISON Scotland in its evidence to the Scottish Parliament Education Committee's follow up on its enquiry into support for pupils with ASN.

UNISON warned that there needs to be substantial investment in a range of different staff to support children in mainstream education with specialist schools for those children that need it.

Lorraine Thomson, Chair of the Education Issues Group said: "There is an urgent need to take action to ensure that we are Getting It Right For Every Child.

"This means providing staff who can identify pupils' additional support needs, for example educational psychologists, counsellors, school nurses and social workers.

"We also need staff in place to provide appropriate support, such as specialist teachers, specialist support staff, mental health workers, speech and language therapists, youth workers and medical staff to meet the healthcare needs of pupils."

UNISON also called for proper funding for training and ongoing professional development for all staff.

Registered with SSSC? Don't leave it too late to join UNISON

The Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) Newsletter has reminded people "Don't leave it too late to join a union" as it reports that only 40% of people in 400 hearings had representation.

The newsletter says: "If we are investigating your fitness to practise and you're facing an SSSC hearing we encourage you to have representation.

"We hear from people who have been through the hearing process that they have tried to join a union so they can have help, but often it is too late to join at that point."

UNISON, like most unions, has a qualifying period for representation. Members must have been in membership of the union for at least four weeks prior to the incident or occurrence that leads to seeking legal assistance from the union. So remind your colleagues, don't leave it too late to join UNISON

Cornerstone membership grows after derecognition

UNISON membership is growing in Cornerstone after the organisation derecognised the union on the eve of pay talks at the ACAS conciliation service in November.

This followed a massive 92% rejection of Cornerstone's pay offer and its refusal to meet UNISON about numerous issues during a period of massive internal change.

UNISON Scottish secretary Mike Kirby said: "We have asked Cornerstone to meet us at ACAS on pay and employment relations. They have declined.

"Both parties are scheduled to meet with the Scottish Government Cabinet Secretary and COSLA spokesperson on 12 March, meanwhile UNISON recruitment grows in leaps and bounds."

Glasgow's equal pay women top communications awards

Glasgow's equal pay campaign topped the UNISON Scotland Communications Awards in February, winning the best campaign and the Chris Barter Award for Creativity.

Introducing the awards, John Stevenson, chair of the Communications and Campaigns Committee, said: "As always these awards are about recognising the work done mainly by lay communications activists over the year. It is also about sharing best practice and learning from each other."

Announcing the Glasgow campaign award, he said: "The Committee's Gold Campaign Award goes to an exceptional campaign.

"When it comes to campaigns sometimes we only see the front end, not the work that furiously goes on to create it and maintain it. The staying power, the continuous imaginative thinking to keep your issue live with the members, the employer and the public.

"You won't be surprised that all that and more was in this winning campaign that built to the biggest equal pay strike ever and a window towards a just settlement."

The Silver Award went to Scottish Borders Public Services Branch's 'Please Do Not Be Quiet' school libraries campaign.

The campaign used great printed material, video work, social media and superb community engagement.

The TC Branding Group Bronze Award went to Lothian Health Branch for its approach to the NHS Scrap the Cap campaign.



The strength was that it tied into and linked with so many imaginative things the branch was doing, not least community initiatives, recruitment and UNISON's first and only mobile advice van.

The UIA Best Online Presence Awards

John said that judging this category had been particularly difficult.

He said: "It was so hard to pick the winners because it was such a close call with people using websites and social media so creatively. The judges would like to compliment every single entry in this category.

"We'd also like to mention Highland Healthcare, Scottish Borders and Argyll and Bute who missed out on the prizes but do great online stuff."

The UIA gold award was won by UNISON Inverclyde Branch for a lively newsy and informative website alongside topical social media making good use of graphics. The edge came from how the branch integrates the

platforms with social media as the front end for pointing people to a host of information on the website.

The UIA silver award went to NHS Glasgow, Clyde and CVS Branch for an informative website alongside lively social media on many platforms with great photos of members at work and great use of video.

The UIA bronze award went to Lothian Health Branch for its new website that is crisp, clear, makes great use of graphics and is packed with news. It also sits alongside a long established Facebook page.

Best Printed Publication

John said this was: "a tough choice. In the digital age, people often question why we need printed stuff.

"As I always say on courses, with digital stuff you have to rely on members going online to get it – whereas if you give them a newsletter, they have to at least actively throw it away!"

The Liverpool Victoria Gold Award went to NHS Glasgow,



Glasgow's Mary Dawson collects the Chris Barter award

Clyde and CVS Branch for a very well designed, and well written magazine with fantastic front pages, lots of information and people stories and great NHS 70 coverage.

"The fact that this will be its third win in a row is testament to the work put in to keeping up standards", said John.

The Communications Committee Silver Award went to NHS 24 Branch's magazine, edited by Colin Keys.

The magazine gives lots of news and information, has lively front pages, and likes also to have a bit of a giggle.

The Lighthouse Financial Bronze Award went to Aberdeen City Branch's magazine edited by Alexander Ryland with great front pages and lots of branch and national news.

Thomson's Solicitors Recruitment Prize.

The award went to **NHS 24 Branch** which through an annual summer themed recruitment campaign and a £500 prize draw, again managed to recruit 40

people into a branch just 590 in size.

Chris Barter Award for Creativity

Introducing 'The Glasgow City Equal Pay Campaign Women' as the winners, John said:

"Creativity takes many forms and is not confined to usual communications tools. It is also about how we communicate with our members, how we empower them and how we unlock their creativity.

"Creativity like women wearing moustaches to underline the gender issue at their Equal Pay demo.

"Like Made in Dagenham style costumes, candlelight vigils, suffragettes leading the huge march, the placard-making workshops, the Suffra' Jet City slogan, the End of Term Report Card for the council, The Dolly Parton sing-along in George Square, and much, much more.

"The constant ability to come up with something new and relevant to keep the campaign up front."

Delegates rose to applaud one of the campaign videos (see it at www.unison-scotland.org/end-of-year-video-bread-and-roses/) and gave a standing ovation to the winners.

Thanks

A big thanks to our sponsors, UIA Insurance, Liverpool Victoria, TC Branding, Lighthouse Financial, Thomson's Solicitors and of course the Communications Committee.

The judges this year were communications officer Trisha Hamilton, committee member David Stainthorpe and SiU editor John Stevenson.

UNISON West Lothian signs recognition agreement with Improvement Service

UNISON West Lothian has signed a recognition agreement with the Livingston based Improvement Service.

The Improvement Service supports all of Scotland's 32 Local Authorities by providing a range of advisory services including consultation and facilitation, learning and skills, performance management and improvement, and research.

The agreement was signed in December after a two month campaign period which involved a systematic approach to recruitment and organising.

Worksites were identified



Improvement Service Interim Chief Executive Sarah Gadsen and UNISON's Alison Ritchie, Stevie Dunn and Shaun Millar

and mapped, stewards were quickly recruited and a 60 percent membership density shortly followed. The branch

then entered talks with the employer to secure the agreement.

UNISON West Lothian's

recruitment and membership officer, Stevie Dunn said: "We are delighted to have agreed and signed a recognition agreement with the Improvement Service. Over the last few months we have recruited a large number of members, identified motivated stewards and have held positive discussions with the employer."

UNISON Local Organiser, Greig Kelbie said: "Meaningful recognition is part and parcel of a long-term relationship with an employer, which is exactly what we hope to continue build on with the Improvement Service."

UNISON wins personal injury settlements

UNISON Scotland won £317,044 in personal injury settlements for members in January alone.

They ranged from awards of £1,500 to over £71,000.

Another snippet to help you in recruiting new members.

We want to hear your news

SiU is your paper, we want to hear your stories. Contact John Stevenson (Editor) john.stevenson@unison-edinburgh.org.uk Danny Phillips d.phillips@unison.co.uk Trisha Hamilton t.hamilton@unison.co.uk

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