

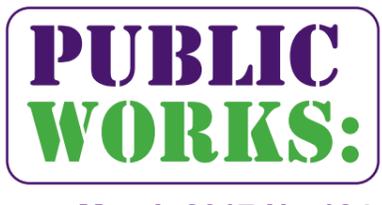
Communications Awards Winners
More entries than before and judges praise standard - p4



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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

Branches stand up against more council cuts

by John Stevenson
SiU editor

UNISON branches across Scotland turned out throughout February to fight for local services as the central funding axe fell on councils yet again.

Demonstrations were held in Edinburgh, Glasgow and Dundee and branches from across Scotland backed colleagues in Angus as they lobbied against home care cuts.

In Glasgow, where cuts of £35 million were faced on top of £300 million in recent years, branch secretary Brian Smith told the media: "We don't think people should have to suffer more cuts in services and more job losses in this city."

"Politicians in Glasgow and indeed in the Scottish Government should be standing up to fight back."

He called on politicians to use the powers they have in a more sensible way to hold off cuts for a year and unite with the trade unions to fight for more money.

In Edinburgh, where up to £40 million in cuts follows 1,400 job cuts, branch secretary Tom Connolly said:

"Services are now on a knife edge and workloads in some



Clockwise from top left: Edinburgh and Glasgow lobbies and colleagues from Glasgow Dundee and Aberdeenshire join Angus Council members on their lobby.

areas are unsustainable.

"We will not accept unacceptable workloads or unsafe working practices and will not tolerate any form of bullying and harassment or discrimination.

President John Stevenson added: "It's time for the Scottish Government to stop fiddling the figures while piling austerity on to local councils and come clean about the cuts and their effects."

The branch had called on the council to publish a parallel budget to show what services could be like if properly funded.

Angus, Dundee, Clacks Page 2

FE staff win battle for fair pay

Further education members in Scotland have won an improved pay rise after a sustained campaign including industrial action.

Scottish FE college staff in administration, admissions, funding, catering, cleaning, welfare and security, as well as

teaching assistants, will now receive a £450 flat rate rise for 2016-17, backdated to April 2016.

This follows months of campaigning, including strike days and action short of a strike, which culminated in a negotiating meeting on 8 December at which the employers' association,

Colleges Scotland, accepted that staff deserved the same flat-rate increase as their lecturer colleagues.

The support staff had rejected the employers' first offer of £230 a year – just over half the £450 awarded to teaching staff.

Turn to Page 2

Stand Up To Racism on 18 March in Glasgow

UNISON is backing a major Stand Up To Racism demonstration against racism, Islamophobia, antisemitism and fascism in Glasgow on Saturday 18 March.

The event assembles at 11am

in Holland Street, marching to George Square for a 12 noon rally.

Stand up to Racism Scotland is calling on everyone to mobilise to ensure that the March 18 demonstration in Glasgow is a massive success.

Victory as cleaners come back to NHS

from Steve Faulkner
Lothian Health Branch

UNISON NHS Lothian has hailed as a victory an agreement to bring back domestic services to the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary.

The hospital will be cleaned by NHS employees for the first time since opening in 2002, putting it in line with other hospitals in Lothian.

The move is a win-win for both patients and staff as a unified domestic service is vital in the fight to reduce the spread of infections throughout the hospital.

It also ensures better pay and conditions for the staff as well as increased career opportunities..

The move will see almost 300 domestic staff transfer to NHS Lothian from private cleaning contractors Engie under TUPE regulations from 1 March.

As sole representative of the domestic workforce throughout the negotiations with NHS Lothian and Engie, local UNISON stewards believe this underlines the strength of the branch to get things done at the grass-roots level.

Lead steward Mick McGahey, who played a leading role in the negotiations, believes the result justifies the need for a "long-term political strategic approach to protect the NHS from profiteering."

This is an important step in a long-term campaign to reverse the privatisation of ancillary services under previous PFI contracts.

It also underlines the moral case for ending privatisation of public services like the NHS to ensure that patients come before profits.

However, there is still work to be done to ensure that other out-sourced members employed in portering, security and catering services are brought back into the NHS.

UNISON branches standing up against council cuts

From Page 1

Angus Help to Live At Home Campaign

In Angus, branches from across Scotland turned out to back the local branch's lobby against 170 social care job cuts, cuts to low-paid staff's hours and conditions, changing full time jobs to part time and plans to privatise services.

The branch won some concessions on the plan to ditch fleet cars and force low paid staff

to provide their own. Some fleet cars will be kept for people who started before 2008.

Branch secretary Chris Boyle said: "Even with voluntary redundancy and early retirement being offered, compulsory redundancies will be unavoidable should the proposals go ahead."

There has been little consultation thus far with service users and their families about these far reaching and unpalatable proposals.

"We should expect nothing less than the facts about the changes to

care provision to be shared with those who use the services provided and those who care for them", he added.

The branch is campaigning against the cuts with other unions. It is lobbying local MSPs and has written to all local councillors, the Scottish Social Services Council and the Care Inspectorate.

Dundee rally

Chris Boyle went on to join colleagues at a rally in Dundee on Saturday 18 February when unions

and community groups marched through the city protesting at cuts to council services.

Clacks compulsory redundancy turnaround?

It was high drama in Clackmannanshire on 23 February as the Labour Group took the welcome decision to reverse a previous vote that would have allowed compulsory redundancies.

A change in leadership saw the group attempt to put through an

amendment that would have stopped compulsory redundancies. However, this hit a problem because standing orders didn't allow a council decision to be overturned within 6 months.

Attempts to suspend standing orders were opposed by SNP councillors and so the Labour Group voluntarily resigned the administration and the SNP took over.

As we understand it, the decision to allow compulsory redundancies still stands.

Additional Support Needs Response

UNISON Scotland has responded to the Scottish Parliament Education and Skills Committee call for evidence on additional support needs in schools, saying more needs to be done to support staff.

In its submission, the union quotes its 'Hard Lessons' survey of school staff which revealed: "a dedicated workforce committed to supporting children to reach their potential but who are under enormous pressure."

"Much more needs to be done to ensure that we are Getting It Right For Every Child."

FE staff win fair pay

From page 1

The agreement reached also includes consolidation of a previous £100 payment from April 2017. That will bring the total increase for the 2016-17 pay round to £550 for all further education employees in Scotland.

UNISON Scottish organiser John Gallacher praised UNISON's members in Scotland's FE colleges, who "have stood together and stood strong".

"We are delighted that the employers have finally negotiated a pay offer that is fair for all hard-working college employees," he added.

Two days of strike action in September, talks at ACAS, then directly with the employers on 7 December had seen no resolution so on 22 November, members voted by 89% to 11% in a ballot to reject the most recent offer and deliver further action.

Shirley Sephton, vice chair of UNISON Scotland's Further Education committee, said:

"This strike has always been about equality of pay and terms and conditions. The employers' last offer rewarded the high earners and not the lower-paid support staff – the majority of whom would receive no more than the previous offer."

Chris Greenshields, chair of UNISON Scotland's FE committee said: "Support staff are the backbone of Scotland's colleges and don't deserve to be treated as second-class citizens."

Branch backs award for NHS modern apprentices

by Watty Gaffney

Comms and Campaigns Ctee

NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde were finalists in a HMPA Social Partnership Forum Award for developing the modern apprenticeship programme in partnership with unions.

101 modern apprentices (MAs) have been employed across 13 different frameworks - in both clinical and non clinical roles.

All receive mentor support and are given role-specific training packages which ultimately lead to SQA qualifications.

Frances Carmichael, assistant branch secretary of UNISON NHS Glasgow Clyde and CVS Branch, said: "We are proud that NHS GGC & CVS Branch supports the Board's MA programme by sponsoring the Modern Apprentice of the Year prize."

"Modern apprenticeships provide us with the means to recruit young people into



UNISON NHS GGC&CVS branch secretary Cathie Miller (centre) with the apprentices

permanent employment within our organisation.

"We recognise the exceptionally high standard of employees who have been recruited through this programme and highlight the

dedication and enthusiasm of each individual, and their exceptional performance on the job and in their approach to their studies.

"UNISON NHS Glasgow Clyde and CVS Branch is

honoured to have sponsored and supported these apprentices over the last three years, and will continue to support this innovative programme with a new campaign starting for 75 additional modern apprentices."

Glasgow jannies fight on after 62 days of strike

Glasgow school janitors began another two week strike on Wednesday 22 February.

They have taken 62 days of strike action since last March in a dispute over Cordia's failure to award a working context payment.

The janitorial reform proposals from Cordia and Glasgow City Council are not good enough to end the current dispute.

The reform proposals also include the clustering of janitors across more than one school.

The cluster model is a real problem in operational terms.

Leaving schools without a janitor at certain points of the day compromises so many aspects of health and safety and security.

UNISON's view is that "One School - One Janitor" is the best



way to provide the janitorial service in our schools.

The branch has now invited parents' reps to a meeting to explain its concerns and hear their views.

A Glasgow branch spokesperson said: "UNISON offered Cordia a way out of the current industrial dispute by

suggesting a de-coupling of the arrangements for a working context payment from the wider reform proposals. Cordia and the council rejected this suggestion. The fight goes on."

Cordia is refusing to pay a Working Context and Demands Payment (WCD) to school janitors and is using spurious

arguments to justify not making this payment.

Glasgow City Council and its ALEOs pay structure awards payments to workers who undertake duties which are dirty, unpleasant, involve working outside on a regular basis or heavy lifting.

There are five levels of annual WCD payment ranging from just over £500 to over £1000.

UNISON is very clear that school janitors meet the criteria to be awarded this payment. Cordia's current position is that school janitors have the same working conditions 'score' as a senior manager located in the front of the city chambers who never leaves their office, gets wet, lifts anything heavy or cleans up.

UNISON to consult on local government pay final offer

On 3 March, the day we went to press, local government employers tabled a final pay offer.

They upped the two previous offers to £350 flat rate for those earning up to £35,000 and 1% for those above, but it fell short of the union's demand for a flat rate across the board.

Previous offers had seen

£250 up to £25,000 and 1%, then £300 up to £30,000 and 1% for those above.

Councils would continue to pay the Scottish Local Government Living Wage, ensuring it applies to all pay related enhancements and is pensionable.

Dougie Black, UNISON lead negotiator, said: "The joint trade

union position was united behind the need for only a flat rate claim and not a mixed offer.

"We had persuaded the employers to go back to the COSLA leaders and seek a fresh mandate on the basis of the trade union position."

He also made the point that since the offer was tabled the local government settlement had

marginally improved.

Negotiators will now feed back to UNISON's Local Government Committee on how best to consult members on the offer in the coming weeks.

Branches are being urged to raise pay as an issue with members in workplaces, look out for bulletins and check the website for developments.

North Lanarkshire latest to sign up to UNISON's Ethical Care Charter

UNISON has congratulated North Lanarkshire Council which was the latest to adopt UNISON's Ethical Care Charter in January.

This will ensure high standards in homecare, and better conditions for homecare workers.

North Lanarkshire follows Aberdeen City and North Ayrshire councils, Inverclyde Council and Health & Social Care Partnership and Renfrewshire who have all signed up to the charter.

The Ethical Care Charter was developed by UNISON following concerns raised about the standards of homecare vulnerable people were getting.

Research highlighted fears that poor terms and conditions for staff were leading to lower standards of care for mostly elderly and vulnerable people who use homecare services.

With North Lanarkshire Council adopting the charter, it means UNISON has recognised the high standards of care delivered and the emphasis on recruiting and retaining homecare staff.



UNISON's Marie Quigley (front left) and North Lanarkshire sign up to the union's Ethical Care

The Charter's aim is to ensure social care workers have the time they need with clients rather than be restricted to a specific time slot.

It will also mean they are paid for their travel time and costs. Where possible people will see the same homecare worker and zero hour contracts will not be used in place of permanent contracts.

Staff will also be paid at least the Living Wage and will be covered by an occupational sick pay scheme to ensure that

staff are not pressurised to work when they are ill – which also protects the welfare of their vulnerable clients.

Marie Quigley, secretary of UNISON North Lanarkshire branch said: "We're delighted that North Lanarkshire Council is one of the first councils in Scotland to adopt UNISON's Ethical Care Charter.

"Social care workers provide a lifeline service for vulnerable people. Signing up to the UNISON charter shows commitment to a highly

skilled workforce and those they care for.

"The workforce need fair work, better pay and ethical employment practices. This charter will help improve standards and retain highly valued staff in all homecare providers across North Lanarkshire.

"Today is a good day. It demonstrates our shared commitment to ensure improved quality of care for some of the most vulnerable people in North Lanarkshire."

UNISON slams plans for huge rises in fees for social care staff as a 'tax on compassion'

UNISON has hit out after an announcement by the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) to hike registration fees.

Annual fees will rise by 66% for social care support workers and 75% for supervisors, with rises of up to 166% for the most qualified staff.

The decision will be a further blow to workers struggling to provide high quality care services in a sector already blighted by low-pay; insecure employment; unsafe staffing levels; and poor career development.

Stephen Smellie, UNISON Scotland depute convener and chair of the Social Work Issues Group, has set up a petition calling for the SSSC to rethink and is urging all registered or soon to be registered workers to sign it.

You can sign the petition via the link on our website at



unison-scotland.org/social-work

The SSSC registers workers across social care services including: social workers; social service workers; those managing and working in children's services; day care and residential care.

The proposal for a rise in fees has been approved by the Scottish Government and will be applied in September.

Stephen said: "This is a slap in the face for hard-working social care and social work staff who are already facing a real-terms pay cut.

"An increase in fees is nothing more than a tax on

'Slap in the face for hard-working social care and social work staff'
STEPHEN SMELLIE

compassion and we urge the SSSC to review their decision as a matter of urgency.

"Care could and should be a profession. We want a professional body with the standing and influence to recognise the value of care work and care workers - but this is not the case in Scotland.

"Our members have raised many concerns over the role of the SSSC which is seen as a way to police the sector rather than offer support and development.

"So why would workers choose to endure low pay, unfair working practices and job insecurity and then have to

pay for the privilege of being policed by the SSSC?

"A fee hike increases the negativity surrounding the sector and is a direct contradiction to the wider policy goal of promoting social services as a rewarding place to work.

"We made it very clear when this was first proposed that any increase in fees would hit the lowest paid workers hardest and have a detrimental impact on recruiting and retaining staff.

"The SSSC also suggest this is the first increase of many, which will only add to the negativity that surrounds employment in regulated care."

Joe Lynch, UNISON's regional organiser, said: "A better way forward would be to waive the fee entirely for low-paid registrants until such time as low pay, discrimination and unfair work that blights the sector has been eradicated."

Glasgow IT staff win deal to protect jobs and conditions

Glasgow council IT workers have voted to accept a deal that protects their jobs, terms and conditions and current employment status in any new set-up with CGI, the global corporation seeking to take over the running of the city's IT service.

Workers who are currently council employees will be seconded and thus remain council employees.

Workers who are currently council-linked employees in the present joint partnership venture set-up will remain council-linked employees in any new arrangement with CGI.

The previous guarantees of no compulsory redundancies and no relocation from Glasgow remain for all workers including the small number of our members directly employed by the current joint partnership venture with no linkage to the council.

The deal will also see a workforce board created with senior council officers and council politicians which will govern over matters related to the workers' jobs.

UNISON will collectively bargain directly with Glasgow City Council via this unique arrangement.

The council also state that they accept the principle that any new workers recruited to the posts should be council-linked employees although the practical arrangements for this are still to be agreed.

All UNISON members took one day of strike action in November followed up by selective strike action from 1 December by 39 members. A further 15 members joined the selective action on 17 January.

The deal is a positive outcome for the 230 members. UNISON membership has increased by 40% in the past six months.

Against a background of key senior council officers pushing for CGI to take over the running of the city's IT service and a political leadership unwilling to rule it out, the UNISON members should be congratulated on what they have achieved.

New holiday pay deal at Cornerstone

Cornerstone is implementing a positive change to Holiday Pay following successful negotiation with UNISON.

Starting on 1 February, all workers in Cornerstone will be paid for the first 20 days of their leave according to a revised calculation.

Holiday pay will now include additional hours, sleepover allowance, waking night allowance and the on call allowance.

The revised calculation has been paid in February salaries and is also being backdated to 1 April 2016.

Cornerstone is a Scotland wide organisation providing care and support for people with disabilities.

COMMUNICATIONS AWARDS 2017

Great publicity work so important for the union

UNISON Scotland celebrated the high standard of communications and campaigning work in branches at the union's Scottish Council in February.

The annual Communications and Campaigns Committee awards saw more entries than before and, introducing the event, Jane Aitchison, vice-chair of the committee, said the standard was such that she wished everyone could have got a prize.

This year the judges were Jane Carolan, National Executive Committee, David Malcolm, communications activist with Police Scotland Branch and Jane herself.

Jane told delegates: "What a standard of work – folk involving, enthusing members, taking forward local and national campaigns, fighting for jobs, pay, conditions, safety and equality.

"Folk taking the time fighting against the cuts to services, the job losses, the inequality and unfair treatment that gets more and more rife in these difficult times.

"And the time they are taking is more often than not their own time – activists giving up their own time to help build a stronger union, sometimes winning big campaigns, sometimes against all odds chipping away and making small victories, continually putting forward an alternative to austerity, and promoting that with our members, the public and our politicians.

"So congratulations to everyone who entered the competition. What good work, please know what a good job you are doing and how important it is for the union. I just wish we could give everyone a prize."

So let's see who the winners were.

Best Printed category

LVE The Liverpool Victoria Gold Award went to NHS Glasgow and Clyde and CVS Branch for a "well designed, and well written magazine with an excellent mix of branch material and content relating to local and national campaigns, from car parking to NHS slash and burn cuts, not just informing but involving members."

UNISON The Committee's Silver Award went to Highland Healthcare for "an informative magazine, jam packed full of local branch information, some good advice to members on registration and pensions, and linking into



Clockwise from top left: Martin Edgerton from Liverpool Victoria presents UNISON NHS Glasgow, Clyde and CVS Branch with the Gold Award in the Best Printed category; Lilian Macer, UNISON Scottish Convener, presents Ayrshire and Arran Health Branch with the LV Recruitment Prize; the Further Education Sector with the Thompsons Solicitors' Gold Award for the Best Campaign; and Falkirk Branch for the Uia Gold Award for Best Online Presence.

national campaigns".

BRANDING GROUP The TC Branding Bronze Award, went to NHS 24 branch

for "a good wee magazine that would keep you well informed about the branch and links into national campaigns – and wee bit of humour too."

The Uia Best Online Presence Awards

Uia Home Insurance The Uia Gold Award went to Falkirk Branch for a web

presence with a "well designed website again linking into social media, another strand in their Cuts Hurt campaign, involving members encouraging them to write to their MSPs and linking into survey monkey to gather workers' testimonials."

Uia Home Insurance The Uia Silver Award went to Scottish Regulation of

Care Branch for a new website with "a clean design linking into social media, including a member restricted area too, using member surveys to direct their design and development of the website."



Uia The Uia Bronze Award went to NHS Glasgow Clyde and CVS

Branch for "a nice clean website, with good use of branch pictures, linking in to Facebook and Twitter, with good coverage of local and national issues."

Best Campaign

T The Thompsons Gold Award went to the Further Education Sector for "an impressive and successful pay campaign, members organised and held out for fairness, and took on intransigent employers and WON! Striking coupled with effective communications including and involving the membership."

UNISON The Committee's Silver Award went to Falkirk

Branch for a campaign that saw all the different strands of communication come together to further an anti cuts campaign, reaching the press, the public and their politicians, and very importantly not just informing but involving members and the local community.



Lighthouse The Lighthouse Financial Bronze Award went to the Scottish Young Members Committee's Gonnae Nae Dae

That anti bullying campaign. An exciting, bright, catchy campaign, engaging members young and old.

Liverpool Victoria Recruitment Prize

LVE This year's special recruitment award went to Ayrshire and Arran Health Branch for "a very well planned and comprehensive recruitment campaign. A huge number of themed events over the year across at venues across the branch. Fun, raffles, and informing and involving members and potential members."

A special merit went to Gas Branch Scotland's Love Your Rights recruitment campaign highlighting the historical achievements of unions, and having fun too.

Another special merit award for Borders Public Services Branch's Recruiting a Friend campaign across the branch with some specific targeting with

'UNISON cares for Home Care' seeing a whopping 19% increase in membership in the Branch.

Sign up as an influencer

Commenting on the awards, Jane Aitchison said: "Websites, twitter, facebook, emails, newsletters, bulletins, noticeboards, leaflets, press releases, pictures – you name it we saw it.

"Activists making sure they use whatever means possible to inform and involve members, never forgetting the importance of speaking to members face to face.

"Effectively communicating the basics – about the branch, who are the stewards, and what they do. Personalising the publications with pictures and quotes.

"Writing clearly and simply, remembering it's all in that first paragraph, getting across complex messages, showing a real eye for design.

"So much more than just informing members, but also involving members in local issues and campaigns to defend jobs and services, and tying in with the National Campaigns.

"We see the fight against the Trade Union Bill turn into how we best deal with it and practical campaigns to make sure members update their details. We see branches pick up on positive campaigns such as the Public Service Champions.

"The anti austerity messages never go away, and unfortunately they are going to have to echo for some time yet."

The Communications and Campaigns Committee has just agreed to build upon the thousand influencers to make sure that the union's priorities are being put forward in the run up to the Scottish Local Government Elections 2017 and to reinvigorate attempts to get a social media army together to get the union's key messages out.

"So if you haven't signed up already please do so. We're also looking for potential case studies to give a personal aspect to our campaigns, highlighting who our members are and what important jobs they do", added Jane.

"We greatly appreciate the awards sponsors so yes they are going to get a plug.

"But not just because they are sponsors but because the insurance deals, free wills, discounted legal assistance, free financial advice, and using the branded merchandise from our sponsors, should all help to recruit and retain members."

We want to hear your news

SiU is your paper, we want to hear your stories. Contact John Stevenson (Editor)
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