

UNISON Matters

Aberdeenshire

January 2019

UNISON WELCOMES IMPROVED PAY OFFER FOR COUNCIL WORKERS



CoSLA has tabled an improved pay offer for local government workers which if accepted will deliver 9.5% cost of living increase over 3 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 council workers, something UNISON has been campaigning for for years.

UNISON has welcomed the move and its local government committee agreed this morning to ballot our members in the new year, urging them to accept the offer.

The improved pay offer has come after months of campaigning and negotiations by UNISON and sister trade unions (GMB and Unite) and

years of below inflation pay increases.

Johanna Baxter, Head of Local Government (Bargaining) said: *"This revised and improved offer would never have been achieved without the resolve, campaigning activity and political lobbying efforts of UNISON members up and down the country."*

"Whilst the offer does not make up for the many years of austerity, the provision of cost of living increases which meet current and projected levels of RPI is welcome as are the commitments to fully consolidate the living wage and maintain parity across the local government workforce."

UNISON Scotland's local government members had voted overwhelmingly to reject the employers' previous pay offer of 3% for workers earning up to £80,000, and to move towards

strike action in support of their claim for fair pay.

The result of the consultative ballot was:

- 79% of those voting voted to reject the offer
- 67% of those voting voted to take industrial action, up to and including strike action in pursuit of the Joint Trade Unions pay claim.

UNISON and the other trade unions, had urged the employer (CoSLA) to reconsider and offer a bigger pay rise which takes account of the £4000 on average lost from our pay packets over the past 8 years.

Branch secretary, and Scotland negotiator Inez Kirk said, *"Thank you to all members and activists who voted in the recent pay ballot and for all your hard work in getting out the vote."*

Those with email addresses on the system will be emailed with the link but if people do not have an email address you can access using this link: <http://www.unison-scotland.org/local-govt-pay-online-ballot-call-to-accept-offer/> or ask any steward to help. Remember we need a 50% vote for any action to be taken."



Demonstrating outside CoSLA left to right Inez Kirk, Kate Ramsden & Steve Gray

N. E. CARE CAMPAIGN – ORGANISING & EDUCATING

This year Aberdeenshire Branch Community, Voluntary and Private care sector members have had the benefit of an investment of a targeted organiser team to help support, organise and educate our members.



"The past 11 months have flown by and we have had great success in accessing

many of our members in care homes across the North East of Scotland. However there are many employers who have refused us access which is of great concern as UNISON have had a positive impact in workplaces where we work in partnership with the employer", says

Susan Kennedy,
Local Organiser.

One of the issues identified through the organiser work is the impending impact of Brexit. Karen Davidson, Area Organiser expressed the

teams concern for our European Union members working in the care sector across the North East



of Scotland. *"We have members who are worried about their future in Scotland and we have started to meet with those members to see how we can support them through the governments*

'Settled Status' applications from next April. It's important that we hear from our members to find out what the impact of Settled Status means for them and their families, we will also explore positive ways in which we can campaign to access funding for the cost of a Settled Status application. We hope to hold meetings for all of our EU members, including those from Local Government and Health branches in the near future".

For the latest updates please check our website: aberdeenshireunison.org

: 'Unison – North East Care Campaign' and 'Aberdeenshire Unison'

UNISON CALLS FOR URGENT MEETING ON COUNCIL'S ADVERSE WEATHER GUIDANCE

Aberdeenshire UNISON has called for an urgent meeting after the council circulated updated Adverse Weather Arrangements Guidance without consultation with or agreement of the trade unions.

The branch has called on the council to withdraw the Guidance until discussion has taken place and the customary notifications taken place

The joint trade unions had raised a number of concerns about the proposals, primarily the requirement for staff who cannot get to work or work from an alternative work base to take annual leave, a flexi or unpaid leave on the first day of adverse weather.

Inez said, *"There were issues that were raised a number of times at Trade Union Liaison where we were not in agreement with these changes to this policy. We were*

particularly concerned about the impact on school based staff and workers unable to work from home which would generally be our lower paid female workforce in care, catering and cleaning.

"We did discuss possible ways to mitigate situations with the roll out of ALDO and training during snow days but it seems this has not been included in the updated guidance which is very disappointing."

COURSES FOR ALL OUR MEMBERS

You might have known that your union rep/steward is able to attend a wide variety of training courses. But did you know that you as a member are also able to attend training courses.

UNISON members can get a taste of these courses by taking part in a variety of lunch time short courses and the following is a list of what is available UNISON provides a wide range of learning opportunities for our members. Our courses can help you:

- **develop self-confidence**
- **teach you about yourself**
- **become more active and involved around issues that concern you**
- **tackle change and uncertainty at work**
- **progress your career**
- **learn for fun and personal development**

Many courses are free and you may be entitled to time off work to attend them. They are



designed to be friendly and informal, with practical exercises and no long lectures or exams.

Morag Lawrance, UNISON Aberdeenshire is a learning representative who can offer guidance and signpost you to local courses. You can also use the following link to read about lunch time short courses and if I get enough interest from members I will endeavour to arrange that course: <https://learning.unison.org.uk/member-learning/>

CORNERSTONE'S DECISION TO DERECOGNISE UNISON

Aberdeenshire branch and UNISON Scotland are in solidarity with our Cornerstone UNISON members. UNISON President Gordon McKay pledged his support at the Scottish Council of branches.

In order for UNISON to negotiate with Cornerstone on your pay and conditions, we need to be 'recognised' by Cornerstone. This recognition can be achieved either through a voluntary agreement or forced by UNISON taking legal action to secure statutory

recognition where we can demonstrate support of more than 50% of the whole workforce. Recognition is important as it gives you the staff the legal right to use your collective strength to negotiate better pay and terms and conditions.

What is UNISON doing and what can you do?

UNISON has taken legal advice that establishes any proposed changes to your pay, terms and conditions that avoid the collective bargaining process may be unlawful during this dispute. Members who require

legal support must have been in UNISON for four weeks, so it is crucial that non members join now. UNISON is moving to enforce recognition through the government body (CAC) Central Arbitration Committee.

What you can do

- **Attend any UNISON meetings that we call**
- **Follow UNISON through our social media channels**

Keep up to date with UNISON and the twitter campaign

 [#cornerstoneunionbusting](https://twitter.com/cornerstoneunionbusting)

UNISON 2019 AGM

Tues 12 February

1730 – 1930

Apex City Quay Hotel
1 West Victoria Dock Road
Dundee

Buffet & refreshments 1700

Wed 13 February

1200 – 1400

Woodhill House
Committee Room 1
Aberdeen

Light lunch will be provided

Wed 13 February

1900 – 2100

Kintore Arms
High Street
Inverurie

Buffet & refreshments 1830



GREEN UNISON DAY RAISES AWARENESS OF CLIMATE CHANGE

The first UNISON Scotland Green Workplaces Day took place on 13 September, sparking debate and raising awareness on climate change.

The event was created through the UNISON Scotland Green Network to highlight the importance of environmental issues in our branches and when working with employers. Each branch was asked to complete a survey on their own activities, their employers',

and to appoint a dedicated environment rep. We adopted Steve Gray as ours and on the 13th he and Marnie Thomson the Council's Sustainability and Climate Change Officer collected 14 pledges from staff in Gordon House.

These reps will form a vital network to drive forward future action, engaging with branches and employers on climate change issues. Branches across Scotland hosted information

stalls and raised issues at branch meetings with

members making pledges to live more sustainably and encourage their colleagues to do the same.

Pledges included ditching single use cups, cycling and using public transport more often, and reducing our energy consumption.



Check out Facebook

@greennetworkunionscotland

UNISON: HERE WHEN YOU NEED US

Write to: UNISON Aberdeenshire, Grampian Resource Centre,
7 Alford Place, Aberdeen AB10 1YD Call: 01224 620 624

or email: aberdeenshire@unison.co.uk

web: <http://aberdeenshireunison.org>