

'Modernising Pay' appeal deadline 17 Dec

Get your appeals in now

The Branch has set a deadline of 17 December to get your job evaluation appeals into the Appeals Team so that they can be properly prepared for submission.

It is essential that branch officers have the time to scrutinise appeals to avoid any being rejected due to inaccuracy or missing information.

It is also important that members discuss their appeal fully. Grades can go up but they can also go down on appeal.

"The unions are disappointed that the council have reneged on the agreement to a three

stage appeal process but we felt it important that the trade unions continued to have representation on the two remaining stages of the process", explained Branch lead negotiator Kevin Duguid.

"We will monitor the effectiveness of the process and reserve the right to withdraw from it should it be proven to be just a paper exercise", he added.

The branch officers who will be coordinating appeals are Wattie Weir, Elaine Wishart and Tam McKirdy.

See Page 2 for details and guidance on appeals.



Thousands joined the STUC 'There is a Better Way' march and rally against cuts on 23 October in Edinburgh. See back page for reports and photos.

Stand up for jobs, services and conditions

DEMONSTRATE ON 16 DECEMBER

The Council meeting on 16 December will make the biggest decisions we have ever seen on cuts, redundancies, privatisation and closures.

UNISON is urging you to turn out and lobby the council from 8.30 to 9.30am at the City Chambers in the High Street.

"The cuts are not inevitable, as experts across the country are pointing out. They could in

fact make things worse", said John Stevenson, Branch President.

"But even if you believed cuts were inevitable, privatisation is certainly is not.

"We need members to turn out in force to tell the Council 'There is a Better Way' and that we will defend our jobs and services."

Join the lobby on 16 December

Appeals - Full Guidance

Privatisation - what's happening and how it could affect you

Join the pension fund now

Pay protection - dispute lodged

Experts say there is an alternative to cuts

For any breaking news and updates, check our website at...

www.unison-edinburgh.org.uk

Council reneges on pay protection

UNISON headed into the disputes process as we went to press while members affected by the Council's backtracking on pay protection voted overwhelmingly for action in a consultative ballot.

The dispute has arisen because, instead of protecting full contractual earnings for bonus earners, the council is averaging the bonus payment.

This means that, if staff have had sick leave, maternity leave, dependancy leave, unpaid leave or have had



Kevin Duguid
'Double Punishment'

to take a rest day due to working out of hours, their protection will be reduced.

"This is double punishment because they will already have lost bonus for that in the last year via a wage deduction - they will now lose it for the next three years", explained

Kevin Duguid, Branch Service Conditions Co-ordinator.

A dispute was lodged with the council but meetings so far have brought little progress.

"It is likely we will now have to move on to a meeting of the Council's Appeals Committee", added Kevin.

The consultative ballot of the majority of affected members on industrial action gave a result of 95% in favour of industrial action.

The other unions involved have had a similar result.

Blindcraft fight

UNISON has fought hard alongside the other unions to find a solution for Blindcraft to save 70 jobs.

The union has lobbied councillors, MSPs and ministers. Green MSP Robin Harper lodged a Parliamentary Motion against "an unjustifiable decision" to consider closing the company and former Labour deputy leader John Prescott re-tweeted a link to the local campaign's GoPetition.

Blindcraft has made quality beds for 200 years and provides job opportunities particularly for those who have a visual impairment

STOP PRESS: Blindcraft not to close but move to 3 day week See website.

Job evaluation appeals guidance

The Branch has issued guidance for stewards and members on appeals on the website and there is a countdown on the home page to remind you of the deadline.

Before a member submits an appeal they should make sure they have the following documentation:

- A copy of the job description that was evaluated
 - Details of whether the post has been evaluated or allocated
 - A copy of the job profile the post has been allocated to
 - A copy of the job evaluation scores
- Make sure that the reasons for the appeal are

Get your appeals in to the Branch Office by 17 December

clearly defined and correspond to the reasons on the pro forma.

Remember that posts currently under review cannot be subject to an appeal. These posts will be re-evaluated once a new job description has been agreed.

Collective or group appeals should be subject to a full discussion with all members affected.

In group appeals a member should be identified who is willing to be the contact person and be present at the appeal

hearing. Stewards should liaise directly with the appeals team on behalf of their members. Detailed analysis of the scores should not form part of the appeal submission at the initial stage.

All appeals should be submitted to the branch office by Friday 17 December at the latest.

PROCESS

1. member contacts steward wishing to appeal
2. steward checks all relevant documentation is present

3. steward ensures member completes the appeal pro-forma
4. steward collates appeals for groups of staff
5. steward forwards appeal form to the appeals team at the branch office
6. appeal team check appeals pro-forma and documentation
7. appeal team liaises with stewards to gather any additional information required
8. appeal team advises stewards and members if the appeal is valid
9. appeal team lodges appeal on behalf of the member(s) with Council.

Privatisation: UNISON campaign says our city's not for sale

by Peter Hunter
Regional Organiser

Council plans to privatise 4,000 jobs are reaching a crucial phase with a key decision scheduled for full council on 16 December.

Here are some key developments you should be aware of.

There are actually three privatisation processes running simultaneously - environment, corporate services and facilities management.

You should be aware by now if your job is directly affected.

The privatisation is being pursued through a "competitive dialogue" - similar to competitive tendering but with slightly greater reference to service quality.

Each of the three privatisation projects is being shadowed by an in-house option and all the service options - public and private - will be evaluated in time for a report to full council in December.

But no final decision will be made this year, the most attractive service plans will be further developed in the New Year before bidding closes in the spring.

UNISON runs an ongoing series of workplace meetings and the clear concern from members is that the in-house option is window dressing and that the outcome will be



🗨 The key messages are - join the union, recruit your colleagues to the union, attend UNISON meetings and join the pension scheme now - before it's too late. 🗨

privatisation.

However, the council has repeatedly stated that it will only outsource if the private option can deliver a step change in both quality and cost.

In house bid

The branch negotiators remain deeply concerned but the reports from the in-house teams is that strong bids have been submitted in all three service areas.

It is not sufficient to let the in-house bids compete when the final choice is made, the next stage of the process requires the development of detailed service plans and that requires investment in time and expertise to ensure the in-house bids are the best they can be.

Write to your councillor demanding this investment.

We're getting to the stage where members terms and conditions will soon be under the microscope.

We want job protection agreements and security for your pay, benefits and pension rights.

Where service options have implications for working practices we insist on the statutory right to full consultation at the earliest opportunity.

Key messages

The key messages are - join the union, recruit your colleagues to the union, attend UNISON meetings and join the pension scheme now - before it's too late.

Bid rigging

You may already know that, unlike Bilfinger, many of the shortlisted companies have already fallen foul of the law.

Four of the bidders have been fined for illegal price rigging in public contracts and one of the companies is linked to the illegal occupation of Palestinian territories by the Israeli state.

Some of this information had been concealed from elected members so UNISON successfully lobbied for a scrutiny system whereby senior councillors from each party get unrestricted access to shadowy truth about privatisation.

We hope this will reduce the chance of a second Tram-style fiasco with a private contractor.

As for local services we say the people of Edinburgh have been left in the dark about privatisation.

Given the Tram fiasco we can understand why the council is reluctant to highlight that, having brought havoc to Edinburgh traffic and transport, a further wave of private contractors will be let loose on a wide range of council services.

But the council has an obligation to consult with the public to ensure the new service models take account of public need.

We are hammering this point home and the consultation will start soon.

Make sure your friends and family make their views clear about the impact of privatisation.

See more at www.unison-edinburgh.org.uk/citynotforsale

Cuts based on dogma, not financial need

The three main economists who actually predicted the recession all agree that huge cuts will only make the situation worse.

David Blanchflower, former member of the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee, predicted the crash and says, "this unnecessary and dangerous budget will push the economy back into recession."

In 2006 Nobel prize winner Joseph Stiglitz said there would be a crash

within 24 months. Now he says: "we're now looking at a long, hard, slow recovery.... if everybody cuts back at the same time."

Another Nobel prize winner Paul Krugman (who also predicted the crash) recently said:

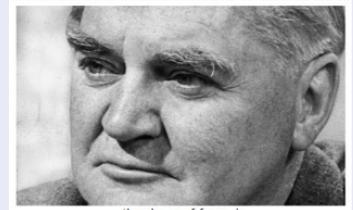
"Spend now, while the economy remains depressed; save later, once it has recovered. How hard is that to understand?"

Recently the Branch produced some cards to put the points across graphically.

The national debt was proportionately four times higher in 1948 but the government - with Nye Bevan (right) - could still afford to introduce the NHS, the Welfare State and a huge house building programme!

www.ukpublicspending.co.uk

They included the one above along with facts like, "For every one job cut in the public sector at least one is lost in the private sector. (Treasury report *Guardian* 29 June). Cuts don't just damage essential services, they damage the



'In place of fear...'

whole economy."

Along with, "About 70p of each £1 a public service worker earns is spent in their own community.

"Privatisation, pay cuts and job losses will damage local businesses and local jobs."

See the website for more.

Thousands march to say "There is a Better Way"

The turnout on 23 October exceeded expectations, such was the widespread anger against the unfairness and savagery of the cuts.

The anger at a government that "blames the excesses of the privileged on the poor", as the Rev Ian Galloway told the marchers.

As the march snaked down the Mound, the riot of colour from almost every union, from students, from the public, from churches and from community groups brought the city alive under an autumn sun. Over 100 buses from across Scotland

had delivered marchers since early morning.

It's not that we don't have the money" to create a fairer society, STUC General Secretary Grahame Smith told the rally. "It's just that the money's in the wrong hands".

"This is not a fight about public versus private", added Grahame. The fact that USDAW and a range of other unions organising mainly in the private sector were there was a testimony to that.

It was a fight for fairness against injustice.

It was a fight against job cuts in all sectors.

A fantastic turnout. A



fantastic demonstration. A great coming together of all walks of Scottish life against the unfairness of

the cuts. But as Grahame Smith warned, it was only the start.

But what a start!

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