



Happy festive season - especially to those delivering services over the holiday.

UNISON ACTS ON PROBLEMS WITH COUNCIL 'MODERNISING PAY' SYSTEM

## Branch funds equality review of pay system

**E**dinburgh UNISON branch has commissioned an equality assessment of the council's 'Modernising Pay' system which was imposed in October 2010.

The union is angry that a system that was meant to bring equality for women has seen many of them lose money through the scheme.

Some male workers

have also lost huge amounts as pay protection ended in October this year.

While there were always going to be winners and losers in any scheme, the council had argued that those extremes would be minimised by using their scheme instead of the nationally agreed one. That was clearly wrong.

**See the full story on page 3**



**Our hope is that our action will force our employer to the table again'**

*Tam McKirdy.*

### PAY PROTECTION ENDS

## UNISON wins deal to reduce pay losses

**A**s the council's imposed 'Modernising Pay' three year protection ends, UNISON has won increases to the top of the Development Zone and an extra 10% on working time payments to protect many members from pay losses.

Many members will now see no loss and others will see the cut greatly reduced, but some are still suffering significant pay cuts.

UNISON believes the level of these losses can be avoided while keeping the pay scheme equality-proofed.

That is why, along with the equality assessment (see main story) UNISON is pushing for changes in the scheme.

## YOUR UNION YOUR AGM

Once a year your union asks you to come out to the Annual General Meeting so you can elect your officers and set the policies and priorities for the year. It costs a lot of your money to set up the AGM and if it is inquorate, we have to spend all that again for another meeting. So please come to the AGM first time this year.

**Thursday 27 February  
6pm Augustine Church  
George IV Bridge  
Edinburgh**



**PAY: THE REAL STORY AS UNISON CHALLENGES IMPOSITION - page 3**

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

[www.unison-edinburgh.org.uk](http://www.unison-edinburgh.org.uk)

## EBS stores privatisation

**our City's  
NOT for sale**

**PUBLIC WORKS:  
KEEP EDINBURGH PUBLIC!**

**E**dinburgh Building Services (EBS) stores workers are facing privatisation as a result of decisions taken by the last council administration.

UNISON and the other unions are set to mount a joint campaign starting with a petition being launched as we went to press.

# Pay: We're WORTH it

**A**s UNISON launches its 'Worth it!' pay campaign, research is showing just how much public service workers are being fleeced while the rich get richer.

Figures in the last month show the richest getting obscenely richer while the average family will be £2,000 a year worse off by 2015.

The money is there, it is just in the wrong place. The government's so-called 'hard-working families' are paying the price while the people who caused the problem are getting richer. Top directors' pay is up



40% and UK bankers' pay tops the European league.

We cannot allow this to go on, especially with the chancellor pledging even more and more cuts - not because the economy needs it - but because they want to slash public

services.

UNISON Scotland has started the campaign by pledging to lodge a council pay claim for £1 an hour for next year despite the employers imposing a two year rise. (see page 3).

**RACE**  
LAW  
POLICY  
LGBT  
WOMEN  
RACISM

**ASIAN**  
LAW  
POLICY  
LGBT  
WOMEN  
RACISM

**FAIR**  
EQUALITY  
GAY  
WOMEN  
RACISM

**WOMEN**  
SEXISM  
BLACK  
WOMEN  
LAW

**LAW**  
MEN  
WHITE  
WOMEN  
RACISM

**ASIAN**  
POLICY  
RACE  
DIVERSITY  
WOMEN  
RACISM

**MEN**  
RACE  
POLICY  
RACISM  
WOMEN  
RACISM

by Malcolm Parnell  
Equalities Officer

**O**ne size fits all?  
Not really. 'Don't discriminate - treat everybody the same.' That's just stupid!

The point about equalities is that we are all different. We have different needs, different interests and different abilities.

Equalities is about treating people 'appropriately', appropriate to their needs and abilities.

If everyone is treated the same then who decides what that treatment should be? It will be good for some but less good for others. One size fits all is a myth!

UNISON, your trade union, believes in equalities. It believes that

we all have the right to be treated fairly and appropriately at work.

Look around at your colleagues. We aren't all the same, you probably have male and female colleagues, some will be parents, some may have a disability, some may be from a different racial or ethnic background and some may be gay.

Everyone will have different needs and abilities. Everyone has the right to be treated with dignity and respect at work and be valued for the work they do as well as valued as a human being.

If we can't get this right with our colleagues then

what chance of getting it right with the diversity of people who live in Edinburgh and use Council services?

There are a raft of policies and laws that are designed to prevent discrimination and create equality of opportunity. It is not about equality of outcomes but about equality of opportunities, no-one should be held back or prevented from reaching their full potential because of who or what they are.

The term 'reasonable adjustment' is often used as it is the key to removing barriers that prevent this happening. Usually this is seen in

relation to those with disabilities but it can also apply across the board for all equalities groups, it is a key concept in equalities legislation.

To dismiss equalities as political correctness is to miss the point, policies and legislation protect everyone regardless of who or what they are. That means every single person, every single one of us!

UNISON doesn't believe that our employers set out to deliberately discriminate against or disadvantage anyone in the workforce. However it can happen through accident or ignorance.

If this has happened to you then get in touch with your steward or the branch office. Your union is on your side and will do everything it can to put matters right.

**Keep up to date with UNISON Edinburgh**

Website: [www.unison-edinburgh.org.uk](http://www.unison-edinburgh.org.uk)

Facebook: [unison.edinburgh](https://www.facebook.com/unison.edinburgh)

Twitter: [@unisonedin](https://twitter.com/unisonedin)

Blog: [www.unisonedinburgh.blogspot.co.uk](http://www.unisonedinburgh.blogspot.co.uk)





## UNISON forces council PVG U-turn

**O**n our third attempt at Council committee we were successful in forcing a U-turn by the employer on payment of retrospective PVG checks.

As a result we have seen staff employed as

school crossing patrols getting their monies refunded as well as ensuring that around 9,000 staff will not have to fork out the fee.

This shows that when your union is persistent

and is active in protecting members interests significant gains can be made.

"This has been a great success for the unions", said Tom Connolly, staff side secretary.

## UNISON to lodge pay claim despite imposition

**U**NISON is to lodge a pay claim of £1 an hour plus consolidation of the living wage in 2014 despite CoSLA's imposition of two years at 1%.

It will also mount a 2015 campaign on pay **and** the protection of locally delivered services.

Branches from across Scotland overwhelmingly backed the move at a meeting in Glasgow.

They reacted angrily to the employers stepping outside the agreed bargaining structure.

Dougie Black, UNISON's regional organiser, said: "COSLA's claims that UNISON is dragging its heels is utter nonsense.

"Our members were balloted and had accepted COSLA's one year pay offer. It's completely unacceptable for COSLA to renege on the deal and it's a real kick in the teeth for Scotland's council staff who work hard to deliver Scotland's council services.

"Imposing a deal is no way to conduct bargaining and our members deserve more than these underhand tactics.

"COSLA needs to get



**'Imposing a deal is no way to conduct bargaining and our members deserve more than these underhand tactics', Dougie Black**

back around the negotiating table and conduct their business in a fair, open and transparent manner and show our members the respect they deserve."

Branch president John Stevenson explained further issues facing the union: "In an unprecedented move, the Unite union accepted the

two-year 1% outwith the agreed bargaining structures, committing to 1% next year irrespective of inflation or any change in financial circumstances.

"As a result, to get fair pay for local government workers, critical work will have to be done not only with the employers but with the other local government trade unions."

### Campaign on living wage

UNISON welcomed the living wage implemented by the council this year but it will also be negotiating for a 'no strings attached' living wage, bringing the bottom of council grading structure to £14,088.60.

### PAY: Workplace meetings

Workplace meetings on pay will start from the new year. Make sure you hold one in your workplace and branch officers will be only too glad to come along and get your views.

## Pay system challenged

*From page 1*

Branch negotiators believe there are improvements that can be negotiated.

They have a shopping list of draft proposals they believe will make the scheme fairer, deal with the extremes that have cost some already low paid members thousands, and still maintain a scheme that delivers equal pay.

The detail will depend on a number of issues and the commissioning of the equalities assessment is the first part of that process.

Anything the branch seeks to negotiate must be in line with the goal that we have always had and that is fair and equal pay for women and men.

### Real single status

Branch lead negotiator Tam McKirdy said: "At long last we are on the verge of delivering what we owe our members - answers to their questions about his unfair and unequal pay and grading structure.

"It has left many of them feeling undervalued and many of them on less wages than they had in 2009.

"Our hope is that this exercise will at least force our employer to the table again and ultimately result in changes to the whole 'Modernising Pay' model that will finally deliver real single status."

# Every cut is a person

**A**nother £36 million in cuts this year. £210 million by 2017/18 - and all this on top of £90 million over the last three years. It is time to ask whether local government in Edinburgh can survive at all.

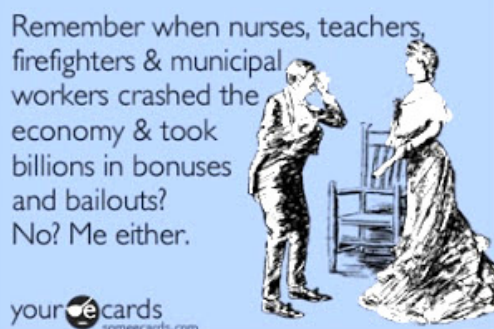
That is not a silly question with even Tory councils in England and Wales warning that 84 councils are already at the point of being financially unviable.

The big cuts in Edinburgh will come in the big departments, Health and Social Care and Children and Families, but everyone will suffer a hit.

UNISON is urging councils across Scotland to admit that we are at an end of salami-slicing cuts and they need to own up to the fact that whole services have or will disappear.

In Edinburgh those services are the ones the most vulnerable rely on. We face cuts in care of the elderly, disabled and children and the early intervention to address problems affecting children before things get worse.

In H&SC alone there are at least five staffing reviews and increased charges are on the cards. UNISON is examining the details and



will brief members in the coming weeks.

## BOLD refusal

UNISON has refused a seat on the Better Organised Leaner Delivery (BOLD) board set up by the council to oversee cuts.

"We cannot be part of saying 'cut there instead of here' when we know there is an alternative to cuts", said Tam McKirdy, UNISON service conditions coordinator.

"However, we will engage with the Council, examine their plans in detail and make sure our members' views are heard", he added.

Branch president John Stevenson said: ***"We must get the message across that every cut is a person, be they a service user or the worker that provides that service."***

UNISON is campaigning against the 'big lie' that the country is broke (see p2). It says that investment in public services would not only

protect service users and workers, it would help boost the economy as more wage earners pay tax and spend their wages in local communities.

That is why UNISON is calling on councillors to challenge Holyrood and Whitehall, to set out a budget that shows what could be saved if it was not for central government cuts and join the union in its campaign.

The first step of that will be a meeting of community groups and unions and hopefully councillors on 16 January and a union submission to the Council meeting on 13 February.

## Home care ballot brings result

**A** huge ballot vote by home care members against electronic monitoring has blocked the roll out of plans at least until a joint evaluation by UNISON and the Council in January.

## DOG EXPOSES BENEFITS



**A new TUC animation tackles some of the media and political myths about the benefits system, with the aid of a talking dog.**

It outlines how, for every £100 spent in benefits, just £2.50 is spent on jobseekers allowance.

The biggest amount goes on old age pensions followed by benefits for people in work, subsidising employers paying low wages. See the video at [www.tuc.org.uk](http://www.tuc.org.uk)

See the story of our branch banner on YouTube at **UNISONEdinburgh**



## New pension scheme accepted

**M**embers have voted overwhelmingly in a ballot by 94% to 6% to accept the new Local Government Pension Scheme.

Lead negotiator Dave

Watson said: "In these negotiations we have worked to preserve the value of your pension. We believe the proposals will achieve a better pension for the vast majority of members".

It is a career average scheme that will be fairer and contributions will be unchanged. In other words, most members will get a bigger pension at no extra cost.

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