




National Executive Council Elections 2023: Nomination requests

<p>Maggie McGuire Dundee City Mem#: 5513847 Standing for a UNISON Scotland NEC Female seat</p> 	<p>Debbie Boyd Glasgow City Mem#: 21184762 Standing for the UNISON Scotland NEC Reserved seat</p> 	<p>Ian Mullen City of Edinburgh Mem#: 10279654 Standing for the UNISON Scotland NEC General seat</p> 
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Dear Branch Secretary,

We are writing to ask your branch to consider nominating us for the following seats for the 2023 NEC elections:

- Maggie McGuire, UNISON Scotland Female seat
- Debbie Boyd, UNISON Scotland Reserved seat
- Ian Mullen, UNISON Scotland General seat

All UNISON members face the threat of an uncontrollable cost-of-living crisis with fuel, food, and in-work poverty, and now we face further austerity from a Tory Government that is determined to make us pay for an economic crisis they have created. These elections are hugely important in determining the way that UNISON tackles these issues. We are standing in solidarity with the Time for Real Change majority on the current NEC.

We are standing as candidates for the 2023 NEC Election because we want to see a strong campaigning union, fighting for workers' rights, good pay, terms, conditions, job security, repeal of the anti-trade union laws, and solidarity action for all trade unionists taking industrial action. We want all workers to be treated with the respect and dignity they deserve regardless of race, disability, or sex. We need to fight for full equality and a properly-funded, resourced and accountable NHS and public sector instead of lining the pockets of multi-national companies and millionaires. Contrary to Keir Starmer's statement that there is no alternative to a robust private sector, creating wealth in the community, there is: it's called a properly funded and resourced Public Sector.

As we enter the start of 2023, there is no sign that the industrial action taken in many service sectors will end. Like many other UNISON comrades, between us we have attended picket lines in support and solidarity with our sister unions, speaking at several, and will continue to do this.

Experience and background

Ian Mullen: about me

In 2017, I was nominated and elected as a Service Conditions Officer; in 2018 I took on the role of Health and Safety Officer and in October 2020 became Education Officer holding the three positions to date. Since 2018, I have been on full facilities time and represent the City of Edinburgh Branch at the Scottish Local

Government Conference and Scottish Council. I have an active role on the Scottish Health and Safety, Learning and Organising Committees, Housing Issues Group and Green UNISON Network. In 2021, I was seconded to the Education Issues Group, highlighting the health and safety work I was doing in Edinburgh's schools and Early Years during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In addition to council and UNISON work, I am involved in several campaigning groups:

- Edinburgh TUC executive member.
- Trade Unions in Communities, Trade Union Liaison Officer. A community initiative funded and staffed by the trade unions.
- Founder member of Edinburgh End Fuel Poverty Coalition.
- Another Edinburgh is Possible campaign group.
- Co-convenor of Edinburgh Stand Up To Racism.
- COVID Action Scotland (previously Zero COVID Scotland).
- Employers Indie SAGE Safety Pledge Task Force, encouraging employers and trade unions to sign up to the COVID Safety Pledge, and I have recently given evidence to the Scottish Governments COVID-19 Recovery Committee, and hope to be involved in the public enquiry.
- Edinburgh Climate Coalition (previously Edinburgh COP26).
- Council's BAME, LGBT+ and Disabled Networks, which give me a good insight into the difficulties our members have within the workplace.

Maggie McGuire: about me

I have been active within my branch since joining UNISON in 2004. I have held a number of positions within the branch and am currently Treasurer. I am also a member of the Scottish Committee and strive to attend each meeting.

My role at branch level is important: members are the lifeblood of our union and we need to ensure the resources are available so we can provide our members with the service they deserve. However, I truly believe that it's time our union changed. The change has started to happen but we need to build on this. UNISON must be a lay-member led organisation.

Our public sector continues to be the whipping boy for the Tory establishment and for over ten years now we have seen our funding slashed by outrageous levels. We have had pay freeze upon pay freeze and worse now, below-inflation pay rises. This is throughout all public service sectors and it has to stop!

I will continue to support our members locally but want to ensure our members' voices are heard at national level.

Debbie Boyd: about me

I work as a Care Assistant in a private sector care home in Glasgow. It's a health role where I give personal care in a dementia unit. I earn just £10.50 an hour for a 46-hour week. I have some serious health conditions including Crohn's disease which can impact on my daily life. It's not possible though for me to work in a way that suits my disability and health; I have to work hard and push my health to its limits as I cannot afford to drop shifts. I know very well how poverty pay impacts not only on material wealth but on personal health too. Our union must never let up its focus on low-pay and particularly on the women who work in these roles.

In my job, I've seen the difference between care homes that are private run versus those which are run by councils. Everyone deserves the level of care and attention, with a nice environment and good activities, that's more often available in publicly provided care homes. Where there is more funding available, there is a vast difference in my experience between the two models of care: private and public. Everybody vulnerable or at the end of their life deserves this dignity. I believe we need to refresh UNISON's work on

insourcing and how we get a National Care Service in Scotland that is fit for purpose and meets the needs of those who work in it.

I'm a workplace UNISON rep at a respite centre for people with learning disabilities, where these days I pick up casual shifts due to recently needing to focus on the dementia unit full-time. I am currently the Chair of the Campaign for Socialism, the group which campaigns and tries to influence Scottish Labour to be more radical, and true to the needs of our working class communities. As a member of the Labour Party, I have held roles such as Constituency Labour Party Vice-Chair and Women's Officer, and I was the Disability Officer for Scottish Young Labour. I believe UNISON needs to change and also to have a bigger, progressive impact on the political scene. If elected, you can count on me not to talk Left/Progressive whilst in Scotland but to then go on and vote Right/Reactionary every time I am in London for UNISON NEC meetings.

What we stand for

UNISON must be a member-led union – We believe this means that elected members should run our union, not selected full-time officials. We want to work with all our paid officials, but it is members and their elected representatives that should be the real leaders. **We need to be an organising, not a servicing, union** – we cannot solve all of our members' problems on a one-by-one basis. Members will always need individual support, but the focus should be on collective action. We need to increase UNISON's collective and organising activities and to empower our members. **Every large city and county** should have a proud UNISON resource centre in the high street: we need to make it as easy as possible for members to find us. We must present UNISON as a vibrant, democratic, fighting and organising union.

The pay crisis – UNISON must end the scourge of low pay. For too long UNISON has failed to adequately fight poverty pay, pay freezes and below-inflation deals. We cannot simply approach pay negotiations the way that UNISON's leadership has done in the past. Hikes in the price of fuel, heating and food are seriously impacting our members. No UNISON member should have to rely on food banks. We need fully funded and staffed public services. Members should not pay the cost of Tory austerity. To achieve this, we want **more cooperative relationships with other unions**. We should work together whenever we can.

We must support members needing to take industrial action. Strike pay rates have increased substantially, but there is more to do. UNISON only has a national strike fund of £21 million. This must change if we are to show employers and government we mean business. Also, we need to ensure that every region supports branches who need to carry out effective strike action.

UNISON's finances – We need full disclosure and transparency as to how members' money is spent. We must make best use of the surpluses made nationally and locally during the pandemic. Also, we must review UNISON's large property estate and where appropriate, free up resources for organising. We must continue to bring the UNISON Staff Pension scheme deficit down to manageable levels. Members' subs should not be required to keep the scheme afloat. **We should insource all outsourced UNISON services wherever feasible**, based on our trade union values and our aspirations for our union. **We need a green agenda within UNISON**, including an audit of UNISON company cars and the proliferation of meetings requiring members and staff to travel long distances.

We believe that UNISON should play a positive but challenging role in the Labour Party. UNISON resources and influence should be used to promote the removal of anti-trade union laws, public delivery of public services and a green new deal that tackles the climate emergency through the creation of green, well-paid, union jobs.

Equalities in UNISON are central to our vision. There have been some major developments over the last two years. But there is much more to do to make equality a reality through our entire union, not just its NEC but at all tiers of our union, including within its staffing.

Legal advice – We must review UNISON’s main legal services contract and particularly the difficulties branch secretaries have accessing timely employment law advice.

We need a robust and effective review of staffing to ensure that the great work our staff do is as efficient and meaningful to members as it can be. **We believe UNISON members should decide whether our most senior roles should be elected.**

We must end once and for all the punitive culture of disciplinary action. Disciplinary investigations into members take far too long, with no regard for welfare. We must continue to look at these processes from top to bottom and end their use to resolve political differences.

We are confident that the ideas we support will build on the progress made over the last eighteen months on the NEC. We are a team and would ask UNISON branches to nominate all three of us. However, if there are particular reasons why your branch only wishes to nominate one or two of us, of course we welcome those nominations. Thank you for reading our request letter.

In solidarity

Maggie McGuire

Debbie Boyd

Ian Mullen