



Nominate Maxine Young for the Local Government Female Seat in UNISON's NEC Elections

Membership number: 13558874

Email address: maxine78@hotmail.co.uk

Dear Branch Secretary,

I am writing to ask for your Branch nomination for the Local Government Female Seat in the upcoming UNISON NEC elections.

I have been a rep within South Tyneside Local Government Branch for many years, and within that time I have been involved in many campaigns, particularly in relation to pay. Through Labour Link I raised concerns around the area reviews and the zero percent pay rises which were prominent in many colleges at the time. As a result, I became involved in assisting the launch of the Northern Region's Further Education manifesto, which focused on the major issues in colleges at that time. This led onto a national UNISON Further Education manifesto and I am now the vice-chair of the National Further Education and Sixth Form Committee. I also sit on the National Joint Forum, negotiation for pay with the Association of Colleges. I have also been elected to the Service Group Executive, to represent Further Education.

I am proud that after pressure from UNISON, further education institutions are to be reclassified as public sector rather than private institutions, meaning that colleges in England will need to adhere to Treasury guidance on senior pay. We now need to see the re-establishment of proper national pay bargaining that will address the years of low pay that has seen pay in further education colleges fall by approximately 35% since 2010, leading to the current recruitment and retention crisis.

After twelve years of Tory austerity, local councils and council staff are at breaking point and facing the harsh reality of even further budget cuts and redundancies. Social Care is in crisis and the government have no positive plans to address this. I am pleased to support UNISON's Living Wage campaign to see more of our employers become accredited Foundation Living Wage employers.

The NEC elections are taking place against the backdrop of the most significant industrial and political challenges for UNISON members, for more than a decade.

That is why I am standing and pledge to work alongside our General Secretary, Christina McAnea, to deliver for our members.

The Cost of Living Crisis has impacted all of our members and they must be the union's top priority, every day.

UNISON has done well to work across all sectors and with members to highlight the reality of life for public service workers.

The union has delivered industrial action ballots and has shown the strength we have in UNISON.

However, we must do much more to engage with our members in our ballots. This will increase our collective workplace strength and bring us more victories.

Public services are facing unprecedented funding cuts and this means staff are experiencing:

- Low pay;
- Staffing pressures;
- Attacks on terms and conditions;
- Privatisation.

That is why we need a strong NEC that works collectively to deliver for all our members.

UNISON is a member-led union and we must ensure more of our members are able to actively take part in our decision-making and our campaigns.

We are seeing an increase in Devolution both across Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, and also increasingly in English regions. We need an NEC that recognises the central role of our regions and also understands the impact of Devolution on how as a union we undertake our bargaining and organising.

We need to ensure UNISON is able to adequately engage with all political and Government structures.

We must continue to strengthen our commitment to challenging discrimination and promoting equalities in our workplaces and working with our self-organised structures is key in achieving this.

UNISON is the biggest union but we must not be complacent.

We must work with branches to support recruitment and a growth in the number of people active in our workplaces so we can continue to grow.

We need more initiatives such as the Branch Support and Organising Fund which is overseen by regions to provide additional support to branches.

We know that branches need support for activists to have adequate facility time, and grow UNISON in our workplaces.

These will be my priorities, member focussed, branch focussed, delivering for every member.

I want to be part of an NEC that will work across the whole union, with our focus on delivering for our members on the issues that matter to them.

Your nomination will greatly help my campaign and I am happy to discuss it more with you.

I can be contacted at maxine78@hotmail.co.uk

Yours in solidarity,

Maxine Young

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Branch: South Tyneside Local Government Branch