

Unison Inverclyde Branch Newsletter May 2018

# Bread & Roses

Solidarity is Our Strength

Old Library, 30 Bawhirley Road, Greenock, PA15 2BH



## Public services need a pay rise

The tide may be turning on your pay. The Scottish Government recently announced it will end the 1% pay cap on public sector wages, but there is no indication of what the new cap will be.

UNISON is leading the fight to get you the pay rise you deserve by calling for:

- An end to the pay cap
- Government money made available for an immediate pay rise for all public sector workers
- Fair pay for all public sector workers.

We can't miss this opportunity. They won't pay up if we don't all speak up. Get involved in our campaign and help us win. Together we can do it.

## Pay 2018/19 Update

As Local Government Pay negotiations continue a joint trade union letter has been sent dated 15th May 2018 to Derek Mackay MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Finance and the Constitution, regarding the COSLA 2018/19 Pay Offer for local government workers.



Johanna Baxter SJC Joint Secretary Unison represents Unison in the negotiations.

The letter covers: Public sector pay, Public sector pay policy, Equity and pay parity across the local government bargaining groups and the Consolidation of the Living Wage.

The text of the letter is detailed below :

“The full correspondence between the joint trade unions and Derek Mackay MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Finance and the Constitution, can be read on our page: local government pay 2018

Dear Derek,

We write further to our meeting with you on 10th May, regarding the COSLA pay offer for local government workers.

Thank you for meeting with us - we appreciated the opportunity to talk with you directly about the concerns our members have with local government funding and the consequential impact on this year's pay negotiations with COSLA.

There were a number of issues raised during our discussion that we thought would be useful to follow up with you:

### *Funding of local government*

You will be aware from our previous correspondence and our discussions that we re-

main concerned about the level of funding provided to local authorities by your government.

COSLA have consistently stated to us that they need £545m just to 'stand still'. In our discussions you stated that this might be what they would need in 'an ideal world' and

that COSLA had not in fact requested this money from the Scottish Government.

Our understanding is that COSLA's figures take account of demographic changes to their workforce and that they continue to dispute the figures quoted by Scottish Government in terms of funding received to date and that which they still need to provide an improvement to the current pay offer.

If it is indeed the case that COSLA have not requested £545m we would be grateful if you could confirm for us what figure they have requested and how the monies already provided to them to date take account of workforce changes and pay pressures.

### *Public Sector Pay Policy*

Much of our discussion focused on the terms and application of your public sector pay policy.

Whilst you state that there has been no variation to the public sector pay policy we drew your attention to the news that Civil Servants are to receive 4% uplift as part of their settlement

You stated that this offer has been misrepresented in the media and that in fact there has been no deviation from the published policy – if this is the case we would be grateful if you could provide a breakdown of this offer and how it complies with the current public sector pay policy.

We would be also be grateful if you could also provide us with information on how the Scottish Police Authority, Scottish Children's Reporter Service and Prison Officers offers compare with the current public sector pay policy.

Additionally, we drew your attention to the 1.4% GDP deflator figure stated in the public sector pay policy. We believe this under estimates the cost of implementing this policy by about half (given that inflation is currently running at double that estimate) and asked where this figure had come from. You stated that you would get us further information on this and we look forward to receiving that.

### ***Equity/Parity Across The Local Government Bargaining Groups***

Our understanding is that you remain in discussion with Teachers and their representatives and that you are ‘mindful’ of the Deputy First Minister’s priorities with regards to the Government’s Education agenda. None of our members would dispute the value of a good quality education but, as we pointed out in our discussions, our members are key to delivering that – our classroom assistants, janitors and early years workers are just as valuable, and play as significant a part, in children’s education as teachers and deserve to be rewarded appropriately.

You will appreciate that our members, who deliver a valuable public service to communities up and down the country, simply want to ensure that they are treated equitably with other hard working public servants and so again we must press you on the issue of parity across the local government bargaining groups.

### ***Consolidation of the Living Wage***

We made the point in our discussions that, despite an agreement to do so, COSLA have not yet consolidated the living wage for our lowest paid members. We would ask you to investigate whether this is the case in other public service bodies. We know that the living wage has been consolidated in the NHS for some time now and would ask why local government yet again seems to lag behind in the protection of our most vulnerable workers.

### ***Next Steps***

We hope that you will be able to come back to us on these issues and thank you for your offer of a further meeting.

We look forward to meeting again in the near future and look forward to hearing from you.”

You can keep up to date with the Pay Negotiations on the Branch website, Facebook and Twitter pages which are updated with any news as it happens.

## **Quarriers Unison Update**

### **QUARRIERS UNISON UPDATE**



MAY 2018

#### Welcome

Thank you for taking the time to read this important newsletter where you will find out what UNISON is doing to protect and improve your pay, terms and conditions with your employer. UNISON is also looking to develop our method of communication with members and given the fact that social media is being used by more and more of our members, we'd ask that you follow UNISON on Twitter and Facebook to get the very latest updates. The social media links for UNISON in the Community Sector and the Inverclyde Branch which represents members within Quarriers are listed below:



<https://www.facebook.com/groups/unionscotcommunitysec>

<https://www.facebook.com/unisoninverclydebranch>

An important newsletter for our members working in Quarrier’s was issued recently detailing what UNISON is doing to protect and improve their pay, terms and conditions with their employer.

Please discuss UNISON membership with any colleagues who are not yet members of UNISON. Increasing our union membership in Quarrier’s not only helps to protect those new members in a time of need but it also helps us all to secure better pay and conditions as our voice is stronger at the negotiation table.

UNISON is always looking to develop our method of communication with members and given the fact that social media is being used by more and more of our members, we’d asked that members in Quarrier’s follow UNISON on Twitter and Facebook to get the very latest updates.

The social media links for UNISON in the Community Sector and the Inverclyde Branch which represents the members within Quarriers are detailed in the newsletter.

The newsletter is available on the Branch website and copies are available from any Unison Steward in Quarriers.

## International Workers Memorial Day

UNISON Inverclyde were represented at the memorial event on the 27th of April in Clyde Square by the Branch Health & Safety Officer George Steele who laid a wreath on behalf of the Branch.



This year's theme was 'unionised workplaces are safer workplaces'. We all know someone whose life has been lost or touched by work related ill-health, incidents and accidents.,



If any members have any Health & Safety concerns please contact George Steele through the Branch Office, the telephone number is 01475 715900.

## Help With School Uniform Costs



UNISON is once more launching a scheme to help members on low incomes deal with the cost of buying school uniforms.

Families living on low income with children struggle constantly to make ends meet – and this can be particularly acute before the new school year begins when the extra costs hit hard.

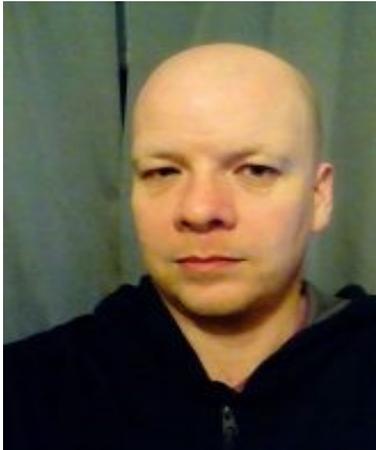
The union's welfare charity There for You has a limited fund to help members deal with the costs of school uniforms. Applications are open now. Closing date is Friday 20 July 2018.

Full details are on the Branch Website and the Branch contact is Carole Watt who can be contacted through the Branch Office on 01475 715900.



Standing up  
for public  
services

Wednesday the 16th of May was the UK's first National Numeracy Day and Unison would like to invite all members to check if they have the "Essentials of Numeracy" by accessing the online toolkit which is detailed below.



Branch Life Long Learning Officer Calum McLellan writes

### What's the issue?

Attitudes towards numbers have been negative for far too long, but with your help, we can change that. We want to help make people feel confident and recognise the value and presence of numbers in everyday life.

We know that poor numeracy can fundamentally affect people's lives and the wider economy.

- Nearly half the working-age population have the numeracy skills of a primary school child.
- Those with poor numeracy are more than twice as likely to be unemployed.
- The average cost to individuals with poor number skills is £460 a year.
- Research has revealed that good number skills can help people better manage their money and avoid debt.
- Estimates indicate poor numeracy costs the UK economy £20.2 billion each year.
- Low numeracy levels cost UK employers £3.2bn each year.
- Data from the British Cohort Studies has shown a link between depression and poor numeracy.

### What can you do?

Check whether you have the 'Essentials of Numeracy' using our free online toolkit:

[www.nnchallenge.org.uk/invc](http://www.nnchallenge.org.uk/invc)

If you would like to brush up your Numeracy skills, please contact your Lifelong Learning Officer Calum McLellan to discuss how Unison can help.

He can be contacted on 07775221601 or by email at [calum.mclellan@inverclyde.gov.uk](mailto:calum.mclellan@inverclyde.gov.uk)

