

Unison Inverclyde Branch Newsletter April 2023

Bread & Roses

Solidarity is Our Strength

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



Local Government

NO to pay offer

YES to action

Email pay ballot. Vote now.

**BALLOT
closes
26 April**

A consultative ballot is to find out if UNISON members are prepared to take strike action. To strike we need to run a formal postal ballot.

The Local Government pay ballot is open

Check your email inbox and vote now

No to the Pay Offer, Yes to Strike action

Full details on Pages 2 & 3

Local Government Pay

Local Government members have been sent an email link for their Pay Ballot April 2023. Please note that you can only vote with your unique email link.



Your UNISON Scotland Local Government Committee recommend you vote to REJECT this pay offer and vote Yes, to take industrial action up to and including strike action.

Frequently Asked Questions

What are we being offered?

The offer is made up of two parts:

a 5% full year increase on all Spinal Column Points (SCP) from 1 April 2023

plus an additional, grade dependent, increase from 1 January 2024.

This additional amount would be:

An additional £0.45 on SCP2 to SCP18 (annual full-time salary of circa £20,933) and the underpinning Scottish Local Government Living Wage rate. This will raise the SLGLW by £0.99 over the course of the financial year.

An additional 2.5% on SCP19 to SCP43 (annual full-time salary of circa £28,862), with smoothing consisting of slightly higher up-lifts applied to SCP19, 20, and 21.

An additional 1.5% up on SCP44 to SCP64 (annual full-time salary of circa £38,585).

An additional 1% on SCP 65 and above.

Why are the Local Government Committee recommending rejection of the offer?

UNISON local government committee recommend you vote to REJECT this offer because:

Falls short of the Joint Trade Union's claim, which was submitted on 26th January 2023.

Falls far short of the current rate of inflation, which remains above 10%. It would therefore amount to a real-terms pay cut for our members during the current cost of living crises and as such will plunge more of them into debt.

For those on the lowest pay, falls short of the offer made to local government workers in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Has a cost envelope which falls short of that which has applied to other areas of the public sector.

Fails to address other items contained within our claim including any real proposals to move to a minimum rate of pay of £15 per hour.

We asked for:

A settlement that runs for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024

An increase of 12% or £4,000 whichever is the greater to all spinal column points (based on a nominal 35 hour working week). This would equate to a £2.20 increase on the hourly rate.

An underpinning minimum rate of pay of £15 per hour.

An increase to the mileage rate to ensure parity with NHS colleagues.

A no compulsory redundancy agreement.

Completion of the review, established as part of our 2021 settlement, of professional fees (beyond the SSSC fees which are now paid for local government workers) incurred by members in the course of their employment.

Early completion of the review, established as part of our 2021 settlement, on how we achieve a no detriment reduction in the working week to enable members to achieve a better work-life balance.

Agreement to change the national calculator for the normal working week to 35 hours.

No less than parity with other local government bargaining groups.

Early commencement of negotiations with a clear expectation of settlement implementation by 1 April review date.

Does industrial action mean strike action?

Not necessarily – industrial action can cover a number of things including working to rule and strike action. The Local Government Committee would review the response to this consultation and the strength of feeling expressed by members and take a view on next steps based on that and a number of other factors.

If we vote Yes when will be taking industrial action?

This is only a consultative ballot at this stage – we hope that by indicating your willingness to take some form of action the employer considers their position and puts forward an improved offer. If the employer's position remains unchanged following the outcome of this ballot your local government committee may decide that we move to a formal industrial action ballot.

We would be required by law to hold a formal industrial action ballot before taking action. The legislation governing how and when trade unions conduct formal industrial action ballots is very strict – it means they can only be held by post and requires us to achieve a 50% turnout of those balloted with a majority of those voting in favour of taking action. Only when, and if, those requirements are met would we be able to take action.

What happens if we say we are not prepared to take action?

We would convey that message to your employer. However indicating to the employer that you are not prepared to take action to challenge their decisions is unlikely to encourage them to put forward an improved offer.

What about people who aren't UNISON members – can they vote?

New members joining UNISON before the 18 April 2023 will get a vote in this ballot. If they provide an e-mail address to the union when they join they will be sent an e-mail with a link to their ballot after on 20th April 2023.

I haven't received my vote – where is it

If you've not received an e-mail with your voting link please, in the first instance, check your junk/spam folders. If its not there and you still have not received it log in to MyUnison <https://www.unison.org.uk/my-unison/> to check that the details we hold for you are up to date or please contact your branch <https://branches.unison.org.uk/> or call 0800 0 857 857

I don't have an e-mail address on your system/my e-mail address has recently changed – how do I get a vote?

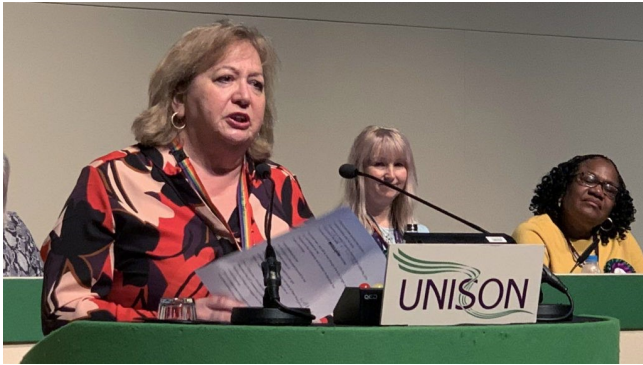
As long as your membership records are updated before 18 April 2023 you will receive an e-mail with your voting link. To update your details call 0800 0 857 857 or log in to MyUnison at <https://www.unison.org.uk/my-unison/>

I accidentally voted Yes when I meant to vote No (or vice versa) – can I change my vote?

No. You should read the e-mail and ballot link you receive carefully before casting your vote. The vote is anonymous and the system quite rightly therefore does not allow us to make changes to it.

Public Services a Priority

Scotland's largest public services union, UNISON, has called on newly elected SNP leader and first minister, Humza Yousaf, to ensure public services remain top of his list.



UNISON general secretary Christina McAnea said: "Congratulations to Humza Yousaf. UNISON looks forward to building on the good working relationship the union has shared with him. It's vital that public services are central to his vision for Scotland.

"Public services are suffering after years of under-investment, with problems mounting. Local services will continue to suffer unless councils get a sustained increase in funding. NHS waiting lists will continue to rise unless urgent action is taken to solve the staffing crisis.

"Profits will come before people unless the proposed national care service bill is scrapped. Students will suffer if college staff vote to strike, and communities will be less safe if police staff cuts go ahead. And so, the list goes on.

"UNISON members don't just work in public services, they and their families use them too. They'll all be watching closely to ensure public services remain top of the government's list."



Branch wins Communications Awards



The Branch was delighted to receive Bronze awards in the Unison Scotland 2023 Communications Awards for the Best online Presence and Best Long Running Campaign categories.

Branch Vice-Chair Gemma Eardley is pictured above collecting the awards on behalf of the Branch at Scottish Council.

Branch Communications Officer Dougie Maclean said 'It's great for the Branch to receive recognition for all the hard work that the Branch Stewards and Officers undertake. Our Social Media platforms will continue to have a vital role in getting information out to and highlighting vital issues for our members in all the employers the Branch covers.'



Scotland in UNISON

The latest edition of UNISON Scotland's Scotland in UNISON is now available on the UNISON Scotland website



Articles this month include:

Celebrating women in UNISON

Moray branch win for pupil support members

Health branches answer call to support Malawi appeal

Fond farewells to retiring stalwarts including our own Pat Clark!

Labour Link taking our priorities to the heart of Labour

Health members accept pay deal but more to do

Police staff branch campaign against cuts

College workers ballot for strike action

Apocalypse postponed but campaign continues

How to be an anti-racist ally in Year of the Black Worker

Talking about Palestinian rights

Disability employment charter – key to workplace equality

Busy time for Scottish Young Members



UNISON
Scotland

**Update
your details
online today**

unison.org.uk/my-unison

How to contact the Branch



If Members have any concerns or issues please contact your workplace steward or the Branch by telephone on 01475 715900 or by email to unison@inverclyde.gov.uk

We will respond to requests for advice and assistance as quickly as possible.

Branch Social Media

Remember that the Branch also has Facebook and Twitter pages where you can catch up with the local Branch news and national UNISON news as it happens.

Facebook : Unison Inverclyde Branch

Twitter : @unisoninver

There is also the Branch website with regular updates in more depth of the issues that will affect our members.