

MANC UNION

HERE WE GO AGAIN?

The UNISON logo features the word "UNISON" in a bold, sans-serif font. To the left of the text are three stylized, horizontal wavy lines that suggest movement or a flag.

UNISON

**MAY 2007
ISSUE**

In the first instance, if you have a work problem or query then get in touch with your local UNISON steward or workplace representative. Otherwise, telephone the Branch Office direct on the number below.

UNISON Manchester, 3-5 St. John Street, Manchester, M3 4DN
Tel: 0161 254 7500
Fax: 254 7515

If you have a membership query, please contact the Branch on the number above or you can email at this address: branch@unisonmanchester.org

UNISON Manchester is organised by the Branch Executive Committee and is supported by skilled staff - locally, regionally and nationally. The UNISON Manchester Branch Officers are listed below.

Branch Chair: Pat McDonagh

Vice Presidents: Rodney Lund & Jane Slater

Branch Secretary: Tony Caffery

Assistant Branch Secretaries: Wendy Allison, Pete Banks, Cath Donnellan, Jim Mackrell, Brian Stangoe, Danny Wilson, Rena Wood and Libby Campion.

Black Members Group Secretary: Sonia Stewart

Branch Treasurer: Bob Oram

Equalities Officer: Wendy Allison

Communications Officer: Rod Fawcett

Mancunio Editor: Noel Bayley

Education Officer: Heather Fairbanks

Health and Safety Officer: Geoff Archibald

International Officer: Isobel McVicar

UNISON/TUC Learner Representatives' Lead Officer: Peter Wilkinson

Women's Officer and Welfare Officer: Gwen Colgan

The Branch Executive Committee, the Branch's decision-making body, comprises of stewards from across all the workplaces represented by the Branch, plus elected Officers. All members of UNISON Manchester are encouraged to attend meetings, vote in Branch elections and get involved in our campaigns and activities. We are always looking for people who feel they can contribute to the work of the Branch and help other members. This could be a regular commitment or you could be a 'mailbox' steward and help pass on UNISON information to members in your workplace. The Branch provides training courses, advice and support for all our stewards and officers.

Contact the Branch if you'd like to get more involved.

From the Branch Secretary...



"There are a number of reasons why most of us choose to work in the public sector but you can be sure of one thing - it wasn't for the attractive salaries on offer.

This makes the employers' pay offer of a miserable 2% pretty hard to stomach, especially when inflation is currently at 4.7%.

In fact, when you look at our claim of 5% or £1,000, whichever is the greater, we seem entirely justified in our claim given the inflation rate.

We cannot allow our pay to fall behind in this way. Our UNISON colleagues in the NHS have just voted to ballot for industrial action on pay. I believe we need to do the same.

Another unattractive feature for Town Hall-based employees has been the emergence of non-PC mice! UNISON has been urging Corporate Health & Safety to do all they can to eradicate problems resulting from the mice infestation in the building and they are now committed to spending an additional £12,000."

Tony Caffery



Defending members working in schools

As members working in schools will be aware, UNISON has been meeting regularly with City Council management to resolve issues relating to working hours and other matters.

The second meeting of the School based staff terms and conditions working party was held on 16 April 2007.

Management opened the meeting by restating the need to harmonise staff terms and conditions. A paper was distributed which showed the number of full time staff (administrative, teaching assistants and technicians) and the number of hours worked, whether they were all year round or term time only.

As part of the ensuing discussion, Brian Stangoe, UNISON Manchester Assistant Branch Secretary made the following points:

- no information had been provided covering part-time staff and this information was still required.
- UNISON believe that both administrative staff and technicians who are on all-year-round contracts either work all-year-round or annualise their hours. We therefore foresee no major problems in this area.
- for teaching assistants and

those staff still referred to as nursery nurses or support workers, it is UNISON's view that a large majority of them work over and above their contracted hours during term time. Both head teachers and the local authority must recognise that this is the case and they should look seriously at the introduction of contracted annualised hours.

This would protect the current position of those staff on all year round full time contracts and actually pay staff for

“Head teachers and the local authority must look at the introduction of contracted annualised hours...”

doing the hours for which currently it could be argued they receive no pay. For term time only teaching assistants it is the case they are working additional hours for nothing unless they actually make a claim for payment. Following further heated discussion management stated that they would continue to support and promote the annualising of hours where there is the work to justify this.

- Heads should audit hours of all year round staff to satisfy

themselves that the work was there or consider altering individual's working arrangements to cover the required hours

- for those individuals who could not reach agreement with their Head they have the option of taking an appeal to the Governors Appeal Panel
- Management now accept that there will be pay protection for any staff who may be affected financially in line with the agreement covering other City Council workers.

Following further discussion, UNISON stated that:

- we welcomed some of the movement in management's position, especially on annualised hours and pay protection
- UNISON required an overall package of agreements that covered all issues including revised job profiles in line with national agreements.

- UNISON will be consulting further with our members in schools

The next meeting of the Working Party will take place on 3 May 2007 to try to get real progress on these issues.

OTHER ISSUES:- There will be further stewards' meetings in the UNISON Office. If your school does not have a steward or a rep, please ensure that someone attends the meeting.

10 reasons to vote against the British National Party

The local elections are taking place on 3 May, and this year the British National Party are standing double the number of candidates they stood last year - including two in Manchester.

As UNISON members and public servants, we know that bigotry and racial hatred are wrong. But the BNP disguise themselves as legitimate politicians rather than showing their true colours. We want you to know what really happens in the BNP, and what would happen if you had a BNP councillor.

1. The BNP are always helping police with their enquiries. Their activists include a convicted paedophile, a convicted wife-beater, an arsonist who tried to burn down a mosque, a

fraudster and a whole host of people convicted of violent assaults, harassment and football hooliganism. Would you want these kind of people to represent you?

2. The BNP don't turn up to council meetings. Many BNP councillors have appalling records of attendance at the council meetings which decide on policies which affect their voters.

And even when they do bother to turn up they don't have their voters' interests at heart - Burnley BNP leader Sharon Wilkinson recently opposed money being spent on building new schools as children who attended them would be 'forced' to integrate.

3. House prices have dropped in areas where the BNP have won seats. People from Burnley and Barking and Dagenham wards, where the BNP has had the most success have reported that house prices

dropped when the BNP were elected to council seats - whilst they were rising in the rest of the country.

4. The BNP has links with terrorists. Robert Cottage, who stood for the BNP in Colne during last year's local elections was recently convicted of possessing explosives and bomb-making manuals. A police officer involved in the investigation described the BNP's behaviour as "appalling".

Others convicted for terrorist-type activities who have links with the BNP include London nail bomber David Copeland and Nick Griffin's right-hand man Tony Lecomber, who was convicted of five explosives offences.

5. The BNP wants an all-white Britain: "The British National Party stands for the preservation of the national and ethnic character of the British people and is wholly opposed to any form of racial integration between British and non-European people" - BNP constitution

6. Several prominent members of the BNP claim the holocaust did not happen - including their leader. Nick Griffin described the holocaust as the "hoax of the twentieth century", whilst a BNP newspaper called *The Holocaust News* refers to the holocaust as "The Holohoax".

How offensive is that to the millions who suffered and died under the Nazis?



Deal or No Deal?

The local government employers have rejected the trades unions' pay claim of 5% or £1,000 and have instead tabled an offer of just 2% - an offer described by Manchester UNISON Branch Secretary Tony Caffery as: "insulting and demeaning".

"This miserable offer will drive down the morale of staff even further. This is effectively a paycut. At a time when we are seeing above inflation increases in the cost of housing, fuel and energy, council tax and childcare it is a gross insult to get an offer like this".

The joint trade unions submitted our pay claim last month. The claim included:

- The deal to be for one year only
- An increase of 5% or £1,000, whichever is the greater
- A guaranteed minimum hourly rate of £6.30
- An increase in the basic annual leave entitlement
- An increase in night shift and sleep-in allowances

However, the employers have rejected the claim out of hand, ridiculously stating that there is no problem of low

pay in local government. This statement is sure to be met with anger by many UNISON members. Tony Caffery further stated: "it is outrageous for the employers to claim that low pay doesn't exist in local government. The national minimum wage is shortly due to be increased to £5.25 per hour - the lowest local government scales are not much more than this amount."

"The employers say that our claim is unaffordable. No doubt we'll soon be treated to their usual scare stories about cuts in jobs and massive council tax increases if the employers were to agree our claim. Yet last year local government as a whole saved over £3billion in 'efficiencies' - twice the target they were asked to save by central government. It's clear that our modest claim could be met in full."

However, Tony Caffery is well aware that members will be very concerned about the employers' attitude: "Pay is one of the major issues for our members and if the conversations I've had with members about pay are anything to go by, it's crystal clear that they are absolutely outraged by the employers' offer".

The employers and trade unions are due to meet again in the near future, but it looks increasingly likely that some form of action will have to be taken to force the employers to increase their offer.

There will be more information regarding the pay negotiations in the next issue of the *Mancunion*.

NEC elections

Use your vote for a democratic and strong UNISON. National Executive Council (NEC) elections are taking place. All members will have received a ballot paper at their home address.

The NEC is responsible for the day-to-day running of the Union, ensuring that members get proper support and that the Union is well organised. It oversees our relationship with employers, government and political parties.

The Manchester Branch has nominated the following candidates who have great track records of union work and full commitment to UNISON members rather than external political groups or unofficial factions.

Please support the following: Carol Lukey, Angie Bowen, John Mackey in the North West; Lynn Poulton, Carole Maleham, Julie Robinson and Mark Fysh in Local Government; Mark Clifford and June Nelson for Additional Members

Please remember to return your vote by post ASAP but no later than 10 May.

- 61% of UNISON members earn just £15,825 or less per year - £8,000 per year - less than the average wage
- 75% of these members are women
- Between 2004-07 local government pay rose by 8%. In the same period inflation rose by 9.3%, and average earnings rose by 12.4%
- The current rate of inflation is 4.7% - over twice the employers' offer of 2%.

Corporate Services' update

Following a recent re-organisation, Assistant Branch Secretary Danny Wilson (above) has taken over from Jim Mackrell in supporting members within the Corporate Services department.

Danny will be developing the Stewards Committee over the next few months, and is keen to ensure that Stewards continue to get all the assistance, advice and training they need so that they are well equipped to support members. Danny's also keen to launch a new look news sheet for Corporate Services members with the help of Stewards and improve all forms of communications.

The election of the Corporate Services Departmental Convenor is due to run from 23 April – 14 May 2007 and the Branch would urge all Corporate Services' Members to participate in the ballot and use their vote. And if you want to know more, contact your local steward...

Manchester Working

Post TUPE general update
The partnership between Manchester City Council (City Works) & Morrison's Facilities Services has now been running for several months. During this time UNISON has been in regular contact and dialogue with Manchester Working management. All

UNISON members are fully represented at regular meetings with Human Resources' manager George Korneki by Assistant Branch Secretary Danny Wilson along with Convenor, Derek West.

The main purpose of these meetings is to focus on negotiating improvements to UNISON members' terms and conditions. UNISON is also striving to secure career development opportunities for as many staff as possible, including better access to training. Manchester Working staff have full and regular access to other vacancies within the Morrison's Facilities Services Company.

Issues under discussion at April's Branch Executive Committee:

- The pay deal
- Pensions
- Equal pay & Single Status/Job Evaluation
- Working hours for school-based staff

Many Manchester Working staff are shortly due to relocate to the Universal Square Complex (part of the previous GUS Building). The newly refurbished building will provide "a new, clean and bright environment to work" and UNISON will monitor the situation and consult with staff regarding working conditions, in order to ensure safety and welfare. UNISON will continue to be involved in regular meetings with the Morrison's HR Team and will be visiting

members at the new building on a regular basis during the year.

Housing AGM

After a gap of a few years Manchester Housing Stewards have organised an AGM for all of our members in Housing.

The changes we have seen recently and continue to see are massive. Not only HIO and stock transfers, but also Job Evaluation and equal pay.

Everyone in Housing has been or will be affected by these changes. We have special recruitment procedures to handle the job changes and budgets are being reviewed in all sections.

Now is the time to really get organised and to ensure that we can meet the challenges that will face us. We need the best possible organisation and structures to keep the pressure up on terms and conditions and jobs.

We've organised the meeting because we want to help our members, so come along to the Housing AGM – it's your chance to have your say. Tony Caffery, Pat McDonagh and Jim Mackrell have made a commitment to attend, so there's no better time to make a suggestion, get something off your chest or get the answers you need.

It's your union – use it!

1. YOUR PERSONAL DETAILS

Please tick or fill in the boxes below

Mrs Ms Miss Mr Other

First name Other initial

Surname/Family name Date of birth / /

Home address

Postcode

National Insurance number (from your payslip)

Please tick this box if you require materials in a different format (eg large print or Braille) – be sure to supply contact details below.

Please give a telephone number/voice/text/email address for UNISON to contact you – indicate if work or home

Contact tel/voice/text/email

2. YOUR EMPLOYMENT DETAILS

Employer's name

Your job title/occupation

Department/section

Workplace name and address

Postcode

Payroll number (from your payslip)

PLEASE RETURN YOUR COMPLETED FORM TO:-
UNISON Manchester, 3-5 St. John Street, Manchester, M3 4DN

3. WHAT YOU PAY – CURRENT RATES (SET OCTOBER 2003)

Please tick the appropriate box for your earnings before deductions.

WEEKLY PAY ▼		ANNUAL PAY		YOUR SUBSCRIPTION—WHAT YOU PAY		
				PER WEEK	PER MONTH	BAND
Up to £38.47	<input type="checkbox"/>	Up to £2,000	<input type="checkbox"/>	£0.30	£1.30	A
£38.48–£96.16	<input type="checkbox"/>	£2,001–£5,000	<input type="checkbox"/>	£0.81	£3.50	B
£96.17–£153.84	<input type="checkbox"/>	£5,001–£8,000	<input type="checkbox"/>	£1.22	£5.30	C
£153.85–£211.53	<input type="checkbox"/>	£8,001–£11,000	<input type="checkbox"/>	£1.52	£6.60	D
£211.54–£259.23	<input type="checkbox"/>	£11,001–£14,000	<input type="checkbox"/>	£1.81	£7.85	E
£259.24–£326.92	<input type="checkbox"/>	£14,001–£17,000	<input type="checkbox"/>	£2.24	£9.70	F
£326.93–£384.61	<input type="checkbox"/>	£17,001–£20,000	<input type="checkbox"/>	£2.65	£11.50	G
£384.62–£480.76	<input type="checkbox"/>	£20,001–£25,000	<input type="checkbox"/>	£3.23	£14.00	H
£480.77–£576.92	<input type="checkbox"/>	£25,001–£30,000	<input type="checkbox"/>	£3.98	£17.25	I
£576.93–£673.08	<input type="checkbox"/>	£30,001–£35,000	<input type="checkbox"/>	£4.68	£20.30	J
£673.08+	<input type="checkbox"/>	over £35,000	<input type="checkbox"/>	£5.19	£22.50	K

Please tick this box if you are a student member in full-time education (including student nurses or Modern Apprentices). Your subscription is £10 per year.

Please tick the appropriate box to indicate how often you are paid
Weekly Fortnightly Four Weekly Monthly

4. POLITICAL FUND

UNISON's **Affiliated Political Fund (APF)** is used to campaign for and promote UNISON policy and the need for quality public services within the Labour Party, locally and nationally, in Parliament and Europe. UNISON APF affiliates to the Labour Party.

UNISON's **General Political Fund (GPF)** is used to pay for campaigning at branch, regional and national levels of the union and for research and lobbying in Parliament and Europe. It is independent of support for any political party.

It is important that you indicate a choice of fund by ticking one of the boxes below. Your subscription shown above includes a political fund payment so you do not pay any more by being in one of the funds.

If you have been a member of a trade union before, please state which one:

The information provided by you shall be recorded by UNISON for statistical purposes and used for sending you UNISON publications, ballot forms and otherwise communicating with you. If you do **NOT** want any mailings from UNISON, besides those required by statute, please tick this box

To keep you fully informed of the services we arrange for members we want you to receive details of benefits offered by or in conjunction with UNISON's affinity partners. The affinity partners are organisations with close links to UNISON that share our ambition to provide you with the best possible range of benefits. Under the Data Protection legislation we can only disclose your details to our affinity partners with your explicit consent. Therefore if you **WANT** to receive details of the full range of benefits you **MUST** tick this box

5. YOUR AUTHORISATION

- I wish to join UNISON and accept its rules and constitution.
- I authorise deduction of **UNISON** subscriptions from my salary/wages at the rate determined by UNISON in accordance with its rules to be paid over to them on my behalf and
- I authorise my employer to provide information to UNISON to keep my records up to date
- I authorise deduction of the following Political Fund payment as part of my subscription: Tick one box only

Affiliated Political Fund **General Political Fund**

Now please sign and date below.

Signature
Date

OTHER WAYS TO PAY (please tick if appropriate) direct debit cheque