

MANCUNION

THE UNISON NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2009

Pay news....

At a previous meeting of the National Joint Council, where local government pay agreements are negotiated, the local government employers offered a 0.5% pay offer and threatened to withdraw it unless we accepted before 1 June.

Insulted by this demand, and the very low offer on the table, the trade union side refused to be bullied into accepting and told the employers to go away, think again and come back with something more sensible.

Since then, talks have proved more productive. Following six hours of constructive pay talks at the end of May, the trade union side has been waiting for a response and a possible revised offer from the employers.

In light of the continuing talks, the unions have been reassured that the employers will not carry out their threat to make no offer at all if agreement was not reached by the end of May. We will update branches as soon as we receive a response from the Employers, which is expected soon after the local elections. As ever, it will be for members to say whether they wish to accept any the offer, so the Branch will be consulting on it as soon as it emerges.

Two things we can be certain of; whilst the new, conciliatory

approach from the employers side is to be welcomed, it doesn't mean that any final offer is likely to be a lot more than what was on the table the first time round. Secondly, unless the employers start thinking hard about pay, the severity of recruitment and retention problems for key jobs in local government is simply going to increase.

UNISON, as the key trade union in the talks, will continue to argue for a decent pay increase for all our members in these difficult times.

Creditworthy

The City Council is now working with the Manchester Credit Union to offer financial services for its employees.

The mission of the Credit Union is to promote the financial well being of its members. To achieve this purpose the Credit Union is committed to providing a broad range of innovative financial products supported by the excellent service of a dedicated, well-trained staff. Manchester Credit Union is a financial co-operative, owned and controlled by its members. It is open to anyone who lives or works in Manchester and offers a range of fair and affordable financial services.

It is backed by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme.

Manchester Credit Union was known as East Manchester Credit Union until February 2007. The change of name reflects the success and growth of the credit union which is now able to welcome members who live or work within the City of Manchester. Having started in 1991 as Beswick & Openshaw Credit Union, Manchester Credit Union is one of the most successful community credit unions in England.

There are over 450 credit unions in Britain with a combined adult membership of over 600,000, plus 100,000 junior savers. "The link-up with Manchester City Council is fantastic news for Manchester Credit Union," said Chief Executive, Christine Moore. "Not only will it help us to create a stronger asset base, providing long term security for the credit union, but it will enable us to provide access to fair and affordable financial services to council employees across the city and will create a number of jobs in the credit union, which is also good news in the economic climate."

To find out more visit www.manchestercreditunion.co.uk or call 0161 231 5222.



**MANCHESTER
CREDIT UNION**

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 directly on the number below.

**UNISON Manchester, Sixth Floor,
Sunlight House, Manchester M3 3JZ
Tel: 0161 254 7500
Fax: 0161 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: Noel Bayley

Vice Chairs: Kate Russell & Eddy Redmond

President: Mo Baines

Vice Presidents: Rodney Lund & Kate Russell

Branch Secretary: Tony Caffery

Assistant Branch Secretaries: Pete Banks, Cath Donnellan, Evelyn Doyle, David Hall, Pat McDonagh, Jane Slater, Brian Stangoe & Rena Wood.

Equality Officer: Sonia Stewart

Branch Treasurer: Bob Oram

Communications Officer: Rod Fawcett

Mancunian Editor: Noel Bayley

Proofreader: Mark Bowden

Education Officer: Steve Swift

Chair & Secretary of Health and Safety Committee: Geoff Archibald & David Allwood

International Officer: Isobel McVicar

UNISON/TUC Learner Representatives' Lead Officer: Peter Wilkinson

Welfare Officer: Helen Clarke

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.

In my view...



While it sounds as dull as ditchwater, the changes to Part 3 of the Green Book will actually be of interest to all staff working for Manchester City Council. Part 3 is all about locally determined terms and conditions, like leave entitlements, overtime rates and flexible working i.e. the rules that can make so much difference to your working life.

UNISON Manchester secured 35 hours a week for all staff some years ago, but we knew that there were other issues that management wanted to raise. So Branch Officers have been in tough negotiations with Corporate Personnel to ensure that all staff get fair terms and conditions of service. That's what trade unions are all about, and that's what this Branch delivers.

I think we've got a good deal, certainly the best that we can get through negotiation. We've got a better leave deal for a large number of staff, with no-one losing any entitlements, plus a more sensible and generous overtime and stand-by regime. So I, along with the Branch Executive Committee, would recommend the deal. As ever the last word is with the members. It's for you to decide in the forthcoming ballot if you wish to accept it.

BNP leader Nick Griffin's election as a NW MEP is truly depressing news, but one thing is for sure: he doesn't represent me or this trade union, nor indeed the 97.5% of the NW electorate who didn't vote for this racist party. The campaign against racism and fascism will continue.

... SOMEONE KEEPS TAKING
UNEXPLAINED BITES OUT
OF MY PAYCHEQUE...

🍏 We might not know where you live! Have you changed your address? Don't forget to let the Branch know, as employers - including Manchester City Council - do not advise us of changes of workplace or home address. You can notify the Branch by email, phone or by post of any changes to make sure we can keep you informed...



HOPE not hate Campaign continues

The HOPE not hate campaign against the BNP, supported by many trade unions, the *Daily Mirror* and a wide range of other organisations, was phenomenal. Over 3,400,000 newspapers and leaflets were distributed and over 50,000 people have now signed into the campaign. Anti-BNP articles were placed in the national newspapers on a daily basis and our eve of poll email was sent to 600,000 people.

The campaign did make a real difference. The BNP set out believing that they could win seven or eight MEPs. As the expenses scandal broke they increased this to 12. That they failed to reach these numbers



is testament to the thousands of people who took part in the HOPE not hate campaign. And Nick Griffin was very nearly stopped in the North West. He only got in by 1,200 votes.

The BNP actually received a lower vote compared to their last Euro results, but the low turnout alongside a collapse in the Labour vote meant it was just enough.

The work however continues, with the HOPE not hate campaign regrouping and

planning the next steps. They are keen to bring some of the thousands of new supporters together with existing activists and local anti-BNP groups. And to turn outwards and go into the communities where the BNP got their support and do the hard unglamorous work that will be vital if we are to reduce the BNP vote in the future. As ever, if you want to get involved in this vital work, check www.hopenothate.org.uk

Knowledge is Power

For over 80 years, Thompson's Solicitors have been supporting trade unions and providing a wide range of legal services. And whilst they provide specialist legal advice to national, regional and local branches of many trade unions, including

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*For quality and protection your call will be recorded. We exchange information with other insurance companies and the police to prevent fraud. **Compared to the standard price you would be quoted if you called us. This only applies to home (buildings and contents) and travel insurance. UNISON is an Introducer Appointed Representative of UNIA (Insurance Services) Ltd and UNIA (Insurance) Ltd, which are both authorised and regulated by the Financial Services Authority. Travel Insurance is underwritten by Fortis Insurance Ltd. Pet Insurance is arranged by Thornside Plc and is underwritten by Allianz Cornhill Insurance plc. All these companies are authorised and regulated by the Financial Services Authority. USNLC/07

+ Part 3 Update + Part 3 Update +

New terms and conditions proposed? Have your say, use your vote...



For those with long memories, Job Evaluation (JE) was just one part of the Single Status deal, introduced to bring in common terms and conditions for all workers within the City Council. Given that JE has been a mammoth and very controversial task, and that the Branch secured a 35-hour-week-for-all deal some time ago, work on looking at the other parts of our job contracts - known as Part 3 of the Green Book - has taken a bit of a back seat.

However, over the past year, our Branch officers have had regular weekly meetings with City Council Corporate Personnel staff, and have now got the basis of an agreement that covers the following areas:

- 🍏 Overtime rates
- 🍏 Annual Leave
- 🍏 Standby and call-out payments

- 🍏 Flexibility Payments; for example, Shift Allowances and payments for work done in the evening and weekend as part of the normal working week
- 🍏 Criteria for Competency Increment (as per 2005 Agreement)
- 🍏 Review of Flexible Working Hours Scheme

The Branch Executive Committee (BEC) were presented with details of the proposed arrangements at their meeting at the start of June. On balance, these were well received by the BEC, particularly the aspects which saw entitlements protected such as annual leave. And it unanimously agreed to have the proposed arrangements put to a ballot of the membership, with a recommendation that they be accepted as the best that can be achieved through negotiation.

The BEC also asked for all members to be provided with a full briefing note which details the proposed changes in full along with ballot papers. These are expected to be issued in around the third week in June.

What follows is a brief summary of the proposed changes:-

Overtime rates

Currently, overtime is paid at time-and-a-half for weekdays and Saturdays, and double time for Sundays and Bank Holidays. There is a bar on overtime payments at the top of the old Scale 6 at Spinal Column Point 28, with staff above this grade receiving equivalent time off in lieu. Following detailed negotiation, the employer's side moved significantly from their opening position. The final offer is similar, i.e. time-and-a-half for weekdays and Saturdays and double time for Sundays and Bank Holidays, but with a bar on overtime at the top of the new Grade 6 at SCP 31, with staff above this grade receiving equivalent time off in lieu.

Annual Leave

At the moment, the amount of leave to which an employee is entitled is linked to their grade and length of service. Additional leave is granted for length of service after five years and 20 years, and employees receive more leave at the higher grades. This arrangement clearly favours those employees who are paid more, but it's questionable how fair this is.

Therefore, Branch Officers pursued a more equitable

distribution of annual leave across all grades, but were equally clear that we were not prepared to see members lose annual leave and so we were particularly keen to deliver protection arrangements for current entitlements.

The proposed new arrangements are that annual leave will be harmonised at a basic 25 days for all staff with a further five days' leave awarded after five years' service. This will give a maximum leave entitlement of 30 days after five years' service with no further service and/or grade-related increases thereafter.

Under this proposal all staff currently receiving less than 25 days' annual leave (2,650 employees) will see an immediate increase in their leave entitlement. There are currently over 6,500 employees who receive less than 30 days annual leave. However, the proposal also ensures staff have their existing leave entitlement protected.

Standby and Call-Out Payments

A limited number of Council staff are required to be on 'Standby' outside of normal working hours. Currently, there are a number of separate arrangements across departments which are to be standardised in the interests of fairness. The Council has calculated that the average payment is currently £1.21 per hour of standby, and the Branch negotiated a new rate, applicable to all, of £1.25 per hour of standby.

Call-out payments are paid to employees when they are actually required to attend work at short notice outside of

normal working arrangements. It is proposed that staff will be paid the appropriate overtime rate for hours worked if they are called out.

Flexibility Payments

There are a variety of working patterns across the Council, some of which exceed the parameters of the current 6.7% flexibility payment designed for staff contractually required to work scheduled hours between 06.00 and 22.00, Monday to Sunday. However, the original parameters established for the flexibility payment system are not broad enough to capture the range and frequency of all the different non-standard working patterns required.

Therefore the employer proposed that the current myriad of shift allowances and weekend enhancements and the current flexibility payment be replaced by an expanded flexibility payment arrangement, with four different levels of payment depending on the level of flexibility required.

The Branch carried out a detailed analysis of these proposals and, based on current working arrangements, around 84% of staff currently working flexibly would gain financially through this arrangement, around 12% would remain broadly the same, and only 4% would suffer any overall detriment.

Competency Increment

The current pay scale contains a point within each grade, which were to be designated as a competency increment. However, no proposals have

been agreed since 2005 and so staff reaching the final incremental point since that time have progressed as normal, and will not be subject to any new procedure.

The Employer has presented some draft proposals which were effectively unworkable, and as such they were swiftly dropped. The new set of proposals are more acceptable to the trade unions, being based firmly on supporting employees to meet the competency criteria. Essentially, the new scheme is designed to ensure that employees who have been in post for at least three years can fairly demonstrate that they have reached an acceptable level of competency in performing the full range of duties for their post, and hence are entitled to the competency increment.

Review of Flexible Working hours Scheme

The Flexible Working Hours Scheme (commonly known as the Flexi-time scheme) has been in operation since 1974. The scheme is outmoded and needs to be updated to take into account changes in lifestyle, working patterns and the need to offer better work/life balance for employees. Branch Officers are particularly keen to see improvements to the scheme, such as greater flexibility for employees in terms of start and finish times, and the ability to earn more than one 'flexi' day per month. Negotiations on this will continue, with a full review of the Flexitime scheme taking place as part of the Town Hall Refurbishment Project, which is already looking at significant organisational change.

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UNISON, they also provide services that can help stewards and members. For example, they produce a range of useful legal factsheets and guides as well as a weekly Labour & European Law Review. Every week, Thompson's publish the latest employment law news affecting trade unions and their members. If you're interested in keeping up with the latest in employment law or just want a guide to consumer law, check their website <http://www.thompsons.law.co.uk>

UNISON Discount Card

We would like to introduce you to the UNISON Discount Card (see page 8). The key facet of the card is that you as a member take it into local retailers, of which there are over 15,000 across the UK, and presents it to achieve a minimum of 10% discount on products and services. Discounts are available across a variety of categories including restaurants, beauty salons, gyms, clothes shops, jewellers, garages, cafes, takeaways etc.

We also create the opportunity for members to personalise their own discount card following the card launch by suggesting they recommend retailers they would like to see offer a discount, it could be the local restaurant or indeed the gym used two or three times a week or a carpet fitter or children's entertainer only every required once!

In addition we also have key relationships with almost 200 national high street brands. Whereas all the local discounts are redeemed on production of the card in-store, the nationals are redeemed in four different ways, either on production of the card in-store (Tenpin, Spirit Health Clubs, AUTOGLASS, Baron Jon, Moss Bros etc), online or over the phone quoting a code (Thorntons, Virgin Experience Days, Alton Towers, LEGOLAND, Sealife Centres, West Midlands Safari Park, Camelot Theme Park etc) or via pre-purchased vouchers from our UNISON cardholder helpline (Post Office multi-redeemer gift vouchers, Comet, Boots, M&S).



Good to meet you...

Name: Steve Swift

Job: Admin Officer

How long have you been a member of the Branch? Since 2004

What do you like about your role in UNISON Manchester? I get to do things that I've never experienced before, which is very challenging but it helps make me a better person. And helps other people too, of course.

Where do you live and where would you want to live? I live in Levenshulme and really like it, although I hear Emmerdale's nice...

Best thing about UNISON? That it's a place to turn to when things are difficult. That it gives a voice to the real drivers of the economy in Britain.

Who or what is your inspiration? Although it sounds cheesy, my parents. My mother - because she struggled to bring me up the right way; my father - because he worked shifts in a hosiery factory to give me things he never had. He was the shop steward there and always made progress through negotiation, not strike action. A short time after he stepped down, redundancies started, including his.

If you were Prime Minister, what would you do first? I'd sit back in my sumptuous leather chair, look through *The Sunday Times*' 'Rich List' and calculate how much I could tax them all.

What would your superpower be? To make Ryvitas tasty.

What's the worst job you've done? It was probably when I was sales manager of a department in a security printing company. Not overly physically demanding, but it almost destroyed me mentally. The pressure of targets was intense and there was a 24-hour factory on site, so I was woken up throughout the night with questions about jobs to be printed. It made me realise there was more to life than money and so I joined MCC!

Favourite holiday destination, film, football club? Holiday destination is probably Portugal because of the slower, more enlightened pace and attitude to daily life. Film is *This Is Spinal Tap* because the work in it is so good and because I'm a bit of a rocker (I write for a rock mag) and loved bands like that in the early '80s. Still do... Footie team is Liverpool. I've supported them since 1975 and I've been accused of glory-hunting more times than I can be bothered to count, but it's been a long bleak few years: since 2005 when we were Winners of the Champions' League. Just thought I'd mention it...

Why do unions matter? Because no-one else will stand up for workers.

What is the trait you most deplore in yourself and what is the trait you most deplore in others? I think I worry far too much. In others it's greed, bullying and willful stupidity.

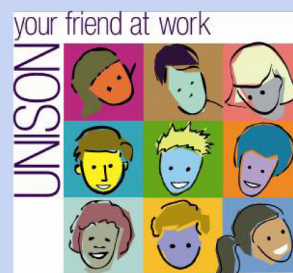


With more than 1.3 million members working across the public services, being part of UNISON means you have the full weight of the UK's biggest trade union behind you.

We have more workplace representatives than any other union in the country - backed up by experienced full-time regional and national experts. Together we can help ensure that your rights are protected at work and that you are in a safe environment.

UNISON members include staff working for the NHS, the Police Service, Colleges and Schools, the Electricity, Gas and Water Industries, Transport and the Voluntary Sector.

UNISON campaigns to keep services public and strengthen the voice of public sector workers. Join us and make sure your voice is heard.



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Surname	Date of Birth / /
---------	----------------------

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Postcode

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--

How would you describe your ethnic origin?

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bangladeshi | <input type="checkbox"/> Asian Other | <input type="checkbox"/> Black Other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese | <input type="checkbox"/> Black African | <input type="checkbox"/> White UK |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Pakistani | <input type="checkbox"/> White Other | |
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☐ Please tick this box if you require materials in a different format (e.g. 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

2. YOUR EMPLOYMENT DETAILS

Employers Name

Job Title/Occupation

Department/Section

Workplace Address

Postcode

Payroll No.

When completed please send to:-
UNISON Manchester
Sixth Floor Sunlight House
Manchester M3 3JZ
Fax: 0161 254 7515

3. WHAT YOU WILL PAY FROM 1 OCTOBER 2003

Please tick your earnings before stoppages

Weekly Pay	Annual Pay	✓	Band	Per Week	Per Month
Up to £38.47	Up to £2,000	<input type="checkbox"/>	A	£0.30	£1.30
£38.48-£96.16	£2,001-£5,000	<input type="checkbox"/>	B	£0.81	£3.50
£96.17-£153.84	£5,001-£8,000	<input type="checkbox"/>	C	£1.22	£5.30
£153.85-£211.53	£8,001-£11,000	<input type="checkbox"/>	D	£1.52	£6.60
£211.54-£269.23	£11,001-£14,000	<input type="checkbox"/>	E	£1.81	£7.85
£269.24-£326.92	£14,001-£17,000	<input type="checkbox"/>	F	£2.24	£9.70
£326.93-£384.61	£17,001-£20,000	<input type="checkbox"/>	G	£2.65	£11.50
£384.62-£480.76	£20,001-£25,000	<input type="checkbox"/>	H	£3.23	£14.00
£480.77-£576.92	£25,000-£30,000	<input type="checkbox"/>	I	£3.98	£17.25
£576.93-£673.08	£30,001-£35,000	<input type="checkbox"/>	J	£4.68	£20.30
£673.08 +	Over £35,000	<input type="checkbox"/>	K	£5.19	£22.50

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- ☐ Weekly
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☐ 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.

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.

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Now please sign and date below.

Signature

Date

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

DATA PROTECTION

UNISON will process your membership information together with other information for administration, statistical analysis, conducting ballots and other statutory requirement purposes. We may also send you newsletters, journals and surveys and let you know about educational and campaigning matters. We will disclose your information to our service providers and agents for these purposes.

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We may share your information with organisations with whom we have a business relationship for your benefit. We, or they may contact you by mail, telephone, SMS, fax or e-mail to let you know about goods, services or promotions which we think may be of interest to you.

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- ◆ Furniture Stores
- ◆ Garden Centres
- ◆ Bedrooms
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- ◆ Theme Parks

There are a number of national and thousands of local discounts available that you can access simply by presenting your card. You can easily find out where you can make the most of the card at **www.unisondiscountcard.com**.

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Lealta Benefits - A Rewarding Experience

