

# MANCUNION

THE UNISON NEWSLETTER

JULY 2010



UNISON

**+ STOP PRESS + NEW BRANCH SECRETARY  
ELECTED + TWO NEW ASSISTANT BRANCH  
SECRETARIES ELECTED + SEE PAGE 7 +**

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 274 7365**

If you have a membership query, please contact the Branch on the number above.

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, Debs Christie, Evelyn Doyle, Pat McDonagh, Eddy Redmond, Jane Slater, Brian Stangoe & Rena Wood.

**Equality Officer:** Sonia Stewart

**Branch Treasurer:** Bob Oram

**Communications Officer:** Rod Fawcett

**Mancunion 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

**Education Officer:** Steve Swift

**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...



**I**f it wasn't already obvious beforehand, it is now abundantly clear after the emergency budget just who wears the trousers in the Con Dem coalition. Make no mistake: this was an unashamedly Tory budget, and a massive attack on the public sector and the people who deliver public services.

As well as a public sector pay freeze for the next two years, at a time when inflation is nudging 5%, a commission has been set up to look at public sector pensions, with a view to making savings. That will potentially mean reduced benefits, increased employee contributions, closure to new entrants or a combination of all three.

However, the most worrying aspect of the budget was the government's announcement that all government departments will see budget cuts of up to 25%. To slash budgets in such an extreme way will have catastrophic results for our members and for the people who rely on our services. Such action will plunge the economy deeper into recession and we will potentially see hundreds of thousands of public servants thrown on the dole.

This budget was ideologically driven by the right wing of the Tory Party in pursuit of their dream of a 'low tax, small public sector' economy.

And how sickening it is to see the Lib Dems providing a fig leaf of respectability for the carnage that this budget will bring? Cuts of this magnitude are simply not sustainable, and we will campaign with other unions and within our communities against this butchery.

**Tony Caffery**



**FRONT COVER:  
UNISON's General Secretary, Dave Prentis, speaking at the AGM in the Great Hall back in February.**

## **The Coalition cuts into Public Services**

It was a full house for the Branch AGM back in February where Dave Prentis, UNISON General Secretary, was the guest speaker. He spoke powerfully about the challenges the public sector would likely face from an incoming government, forced to pay for the bankers recession. And he reminded members that it would be unions like UNISON who would be on the front line to defend public services and jobs. In his speech, Branch Secretary Tony Caffery, reminded members that, "this recession wasn't caused by teaching assistants or librarians, it wasn't caused by school cleaners or environmental health officers or social workers," and stated that it was only right that those responsible for the crisis - greedy and irresponsible bankers - should be the ones to pay.

Since the AGM In February, the Election has been and gone, and the political horse-trading has produced a ConDem coalition government that appears almost embarrassingly keen to cut, cut and cut again in spite of what the Liberal Democrats said before the election and despite the enormous damage this will do to jobs, public services and the wider economy.

This theme was powerfully echoed during the recent national conference. Dave Prentis opened annual conference, by vowing to back industrial action to fight the coming spending cuts. In his speech he singled out the Liberal Democrat leader Nick Clegg for having "lectured" low-paid workers in local government but had himself: "claimed for a biscuit tin." He said if Clegg came: "for our pensions, then we will ballot for industrial action."

"Now, six weeks after the election, the Tories say they can't ask big business to pay tax; they'll discourage enterprise. They can't regulate the financial system or there'll be fewer jobs in the City. They can't stop the bonus culture, or they're penalising success. But with breathtaking hypocrisy, they'll take away benefits, they'll undermine our job security, they'll let our communities take the pain while the City speculators get off scot-free. The public sector's asked to tighten its belt, more restraint, 'do more with less'. These pension myths are scare-mongering. There are no unreformed, gold-plated pension pots. The average pension in local government is just £4,000 a year, dropping to £2,600 for women."

Conference heard a

series of debates on Public Services, Taxation, Outsourcing, the NHS and Privatisation, three broad points were made by the Manchester Branch delegation and from branches across the country, representing all elements of public services.

Firstly, there is an alternative to the government's brutally aggressive cuts policy. UNISON itself has developed a sensible alternative budget which deals with the UK's structural debt by: stopping the massive tax avoidance, if not actual evasion, practiced by all too many companies; cutting expensive consultants; axing pointless spending programmes like Trident nuclear missiles; imposing a 'Robin Hood' tax on financial transactions, and shifting the economy away from financial services and speculation in the City of London to developing a greener manufacturing economy. Further, UNISON is not averse to finding better and more efficient ways of delivering public services.

Secondly, delegates were clear that the reason that this government is so keen to cut back so aggressively was because of its ideological belief that the state, nationally and locally, and its role in society must shrink. The private sector is superior in all ways, and we must rely on them for an

**Nick Clegg "lectured" low-paid workers in local government but had himself: "claimed for a biscuit tin."**

increasing array of public services, goes this view. And if you're not happy with your local school, you are free to set up another one outside of local authority control, and so on with all manner of public services from social care to refuse collection. That may be all very well in the leafy and very rich rural backwaters of the home counties, but in the North and in urban areas like Manchester, whose economy is still fragile after the last time the Conservatives tried radical economic shock therapy in the 1980s, it's only effective action by local government that is capable of regenerating our city. Try doing that when budgets get cut by 25%.

Finally, the point was made that trade unions are there for the bad times, to protect jobs and services when they are under assault. But for trade unions to be able to do this, we need to boost membership and increase activism. And we'll all need to engage and get the support of service users and the wider community in our campaigns to defend decent public services for all. If you've always thought about getting involved in your union, now is the time to act. If you haven't, then think on because the only defence ordinary public sector workers are going to be able to rely on to protect jobs and services is the one they can organise for themselves. More information on annual conference, and

on UNISON's Million Voices Campaign to defend Public Services can be found at [www.unison.org.uk](http://www.unison.org.uk)

## Osborne's first Budget?

It's wrong, wrong, wrong! And it's not just the trade unions who are worried about the Government's austerity programme. Many economists, including



Joseph Stiglitz, the Nobel prizewinner who predicted the global crisis, predicts the Chancellor's first Budget will take the UK deeper into recession and hit millions – particularly the poorest – badly. In a recent interview in *The Independent*, he said, "It's not just pre-Keynesian, it's Hooverite." By which he means governments are not just refusing to stimulate, they are making cuts, as Herbert Hoover did in the US in 1929 – when he turned the Wall Street Crash

into the Great Depression. "Hoover had this idea that, whenever you go into recession, deficits grow, so he decided to go for cuts – which is what the foolish financial markets that got us into this trouble in the first place now want. "If you have a household that can't pay its debts, you tell it to cut back on spending to free up the cash to pay the debts. But in a national economy, if you cut back on your spending, then economic activity goes down, nobody invests, the amount of tax you take goes down, the amount you pay out in unemployment benefits goes up – and you don't have enough money to pay your debts."

## Knowledge is Power

Steve Swift, the Branch Education Officer, is busy organising courses for new and experienced UNISON stewards. If you want to get more involved in the trade union, but want more information, think you could do with refreshing your skills or want to learn new ones, there's a free course out there that Steve can help you find.

Below is a list of courses available at the Regional Office in Manchester and in the surrounding areas in September and October which are designed for Stewards who have already been on the 'Organising Stewards' course.

- 7-9 Sept: Health & Safety

Starter, Manchester

- 8-10 Sept: Equality Reps, Preston
- 5-7 Oct: Health & Safety Starter, Liverpool
- 26-28 Oct: Equalities in Practice: Manchester
- 26th-28 Oct: Equalities, the Law and You: Manchester

There are also representation skills and negotiating courses available too, and Steve will be offering a 'springboard course' for Stewards, which covers those areas and will be based at the Branch

office. As ever, if you are interested in any of the above courses or want training on another area, get in touch with the Branch staff in the first instance.

### **Task One: Recruit more members**

**O**ne key message coming out of annual conference was... recruit as if your job depends on it. The only way for the Branch to be able to stand up for members at work, campaign effectively

against cuts and help defend good public services is to have a high number of members in every workplace we organise in. Whether this be a housing association, a department in the City Council, Manchester College or the many other institutions that UNISON is active in, we need a high density of membership, so we are in a strong position to be able to negotiate on your behalf. Have you checked how many members are in your workplace? And don't

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UNISON Plus

### **Frizzell Cricket Competition**

**U**NISON sponsors Frizzell have kindly donated two tickets for a County Championship game at Lancashire CCC of your choice. To enter this members' only competition, simply write to the Branch before 8 August 2010 and tell us who is Lancashire's current captain?

Frizzell was established in 1923 and has served the members of associations and unions throughout its existence. As part of the mutual organisation LV= Frizzell is committed to better service and greater convenience for customers. With no shareholders taking a share of the profits, Frizzell are committed to providing competitive products.

forget, "Nobody asked me!" is the single biggest reason people give for not joining a trade union. So do yourself a favour, talk to colleagues and join them up in UNISON.

## You don't have to leave UNISON if you're retiring...

Not many people know this but... Retired Membership of UNISON is available following retirement from work. There is a one-off fee of £15 payable, and forms

for Retired Membership can be obtained from Branch Office on request.

## General Secretary Election

Dave Prentis has been re-elected as General Secretary of the UK's largest public sector union. The Manchester Branch formally agreed to nominate and back Dave Prentis for General Secretary back in the Spring. Voting in the ballot was as follows:-

- Dave Prentis 145,351 votes (67.2%)

- Roger Bannister 42,651 (19.7%)
  - Paul Holmes 28,114 (13%)
- Dave has been UNISON's General Secretary since January 2001.

He said: "This is a vote of confidence in the union and the direction that we have been taking over the past few years. We face critical times as a union and it is important that we remain united, strong and focussed on dealing with the challenges that face our members. UNISON will stand in the way of any attacks on our public services."

## Good To Meet You



**Name:** Ruth Carr

**Job:** Library Information Officer

**How long have you been a member of the union?** 31 years.

**What do you like about your role in UNISON?** Meeting people from all over the North West with the same values and aims.

**Where do you live?** Urmston.

**Where would you want to live?** Venice, Nice or Bristol.

**Best thing about UNISON?** It's lay member led.

**Who or what is your inspiration?** Mike Harkin, ex-Branch Secretary, role model and ace librarian.

**What is the trait you most deplore in yourself?** Shooting my mouth off when it would be wiser to remain silent!

**What is the trait you most deplore in others?** Dishonesty.

**If you were Prime Minister, what would you do first?** Abolish the House of Lords.

**What superpower would you like?** 20/20 vision would do me as I've been short-sighted nearly all my life.

**What's your ideal job?** Vintner.

**What's the worst job you've ever done?** A Saturday job in a greengrocers.

**Favourite holiday destination, film, drink, football club?** Italy, *The Odd Couple*, Prosecco, Manchester City.

**What was your best day at work?** Tomorrow.

**And your worst?** When we received the news of the death of a much-loved colleague.

**Why do unions matter?** Because, as Clarence Darrow said: "With all their faults, trade unions have done more for humanity than any other organisation of men that ever existed. They have done more for decency, for honesty, for education, for the betterment of the race, for the developing of character in man, than any other association of men."

## Branch Officer Changes

**A**fter six years as Branch Secretary, Tony Caffery announced he would be standing down to take up a position as Regional Officer for the Regional Office of UNISON. After a call for nominations, the Branch Executive Committee (BEC) unanimously approved Pat McDonagh as the new Branch Secretary. Pat will take over from Tony in around six weeks time.

During July's BEC, Branch Chair, Noel Bayley, praised Tony's professional work over the past six years in keeping the Branch focused on delivering for members, saying: "He has been an outstanding Branch Secretary and, on numerous occasions, I have seen him lead by example. Be it representing members, be it speaking at the conference lectern, be it out on the picket line or be it in meetings with Town Hall chiefs (the Manchester

Minimum wage is proof of that and a lasting legacy), Tony has led by example."

**NUMBER  
CRUNCHING  
25,000** City  
Council staff  
**10,000**  
UNISON  
members

In a couple of other moves, the BEC also approved the uncontested nominations of Steve Swift and Eddy Redmond as Assistant Branch Secretaries, who will take over from Pat McDonagh and David Hall. Tony Caffery paid tribute to David's hard work as an Assistant Branch Secretary - a role he had undertaken for three years - and wished him well in his career in Adult Services.

## UNISON and You?

**T**he Branch will be organising quarterly meetings targeted

at all stewards. The aim is to bring together all activists, regardless of their workplace or background, to debate the big issues that our union, our public services and our communities face. The meetings will run for a maximum of an hour and a half, with a guest speaker and time for discussion. The first meeting will be held in October, and will focus on how we can best defend our public services. More details closer to the time.

## Branch Website

**A**s many members will have noticed, the Branch website has been dormant for a couple of months as we've been developing a new site. This is due to go live by the end of July, and we would welcome your views on it. Tell us what you want to see on the Branch website, what information you'd find useful and what you don't like. Check it out at [www.unisonmanchester.org](http://www.unisonmanchester.org)



Pat McDonagh



Steve Swift



Eddy Redmond

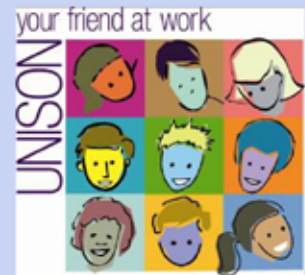


With more than 1.3 million members working across the public services, being part of UNISON means you have the full weight of the UK's biggest trade union behind you.

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.



Please fill in this application form form in BLOCK CAPITALS and send it to the address shown below.

### 1. YOUR PERSONAL DETAILS

Mr/Ms/Miss/Mrs/Other	First Name	Other Initial
Surname		Date of Birth / /
Home address		
Postcode	Home	
National Insurance No. (from your payslip)		

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     |                                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asian UK    | <input type="checkbox"/> Black UK        |                                      |

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**  
**Tel: 0161 254 7500 Fax: 0161 274 7365**

### 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	A	£0.30	£1.30
£38.48-£96.16	£2,001-£5,000	B	£0.81	£3.50
£96.17-£153.84	£5,001-£8,000	C	£1.22	£5.30
£153.85-£211.53	£8,001-£11,000	D	£1.52	£6.60
£211.54-£269.23	£11,001-£14,000	E	£1.81	£7.85
£269.24-£326.92	£14,001-£17,000	F	£2.24	£9.70
£326.93-£384.61	£17,001-£20,000	G	£2.65	£11.50
£384.62-£480.76	£20,001-£25,000	H	£3.23	£14.00
£480.77-£576.92	£25,000-£30,000	I	£3.98	£17.25
£576.93-£673.08	£30,001-£35,000	J	£4.68	£20.30
£673.08 +	Over £35,000	K	£5.19	£22.50

Please tick the appropriate box to indicate how often you are paid

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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. Your subscription shown above includes a political fund payment so you do not pay any more by being in one of the funds.

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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:

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If you do not want to receive any mailings from UNISON besides those required by statute as shown in bold above, please tick this box.

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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If you tick either of these boxes then you will be removed from the appropriate mailing lists as quickly as possible but for administrative reasons this may take a couple of months.