

MANCUNION

THE UNISON NEWSLETTER

OCT 2010



m people special



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,
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Fax: 0161 274 7365

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

www@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.

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Vice Chairs: Kate Russell & Eddy Redmond

President: Mo Baines

Vice Presidents: Rodney Lund & Kate Russell

Branch Secretary: Pat McDonagh

Assistant Branch Secretaries: Debs Christie, Evelyn Doyle, Eddy Redmond, Jane Slater, Brian Stangoe, Julie Stockley, Steve Swift & Rena Wood.

Equality Officer: Sonia Stewart

Joint TU Nominee to m people: Pete Banks

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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.

FRONT COVER: The new UNISON Manchester banner gets a seal of approval from General Secretary Dave Prentis during its first outing in Liverpool on a wet Sunday dinner time during a trade union rally at the Lib-Dem Conference in September. (All photos in this issue are from the rally.)



In my view...



We are currently waiting for the Government's announcement of the Comprehensive Spending review, which is due on 20 October, 2010. We will then know the reality of the scale of the ConDem planned cuts across public services over the next four years. Various levels of cuts have been trailed, from 25% to 40%, and anything close to the latter will lead to the devastation of our services.

The Government is using the excuse of the public borrowing deficit to justify a politically based assault on our public services. The Tory Government, disgracefully supported by the Lib Dems, would rather target those services our communities rely on than deal with tax evasion and tax avoidance. These two areas alone would do a great deal to cancel the borrowing deficit on their own. But tackling such abuses would mean challenging the Government's own backers including multi-millionaire off-shore tax avoiders. The Government is aided by the rabid groups who represent the rich few such as the Tax Avoiders' Alliance who also advocate attacking our public service pensions.

Our Greater Manchester Pension Scheme is the most successful and financially viable scheme in the country but this does not stop the calls for our very modest pensions, which we have contributed to ourselves, to be reduced and the Hutton Report threatens our final salary scheme. Against this background some Councils have panicked and issued notice of possible redundancies already, even before any announcements are made. In Manchester we have worked towards a process to try and best deliver services and defend staff against compulsory redundancies; this is called *m people*.

I would urge every member to consider the information in this issue and that which will be in the forthcoming ballot. Our Branch Executive is asking members to support *m people* as a way forward, but above all use your vote so the decision reflects the view of the majority of members.

Pat McDonagh (Branch Secretary)

m people update

UNISON and the other trade unions have been working hard to develop ways of working in the future which will allow services to be delivered as effectively as possible while aiming to avoid compulsory redundancies and maintain the existing pay protection agreement.

This is a tremendous challenge for unions, staff and Manchester Council, not least given the sheer size of the cuts expected to be announced by the ConDem Government in their Comprehensive Spending Review on 20 October.

Threats of cuts of up to 40% have already led to notices of compulsory redundancies in some parts of the country.

In the last week in Greater Manchester we have regretfully seen Oldham and Bury Councils announce their proposals around possible compulsory redundancies - even before the scale of the ConDem cuts have been announced.

In Birmingham all staff have been told that there will be redundancies unless they accept major cuts in their terms and conditions. The redundancy notices in other areas may have already impacted on your families and friends.

Manchester City Council has reaffirmed that it is

committed to working to protect its workforce while, equally, seeking to maintain and improve delivery of services wherever possible.

The *m people* pathway is the Council's intended way of enabling the workforce to work more flexibly and is also a recognition that the present redeployment process - though a very useful mechanism to deliver workforce movements in the past - has not always worked well and has been viewed by some employees as negative in terms of their experience of the process.

A different approach is vital if we are to be able to best maintain and improve, wherever possible, our services to the people of Manchester in such a way that we can also defend our workforce from the threats that workers in other areas are already facing.

The proposed *m people* process has been the subject of a great deal of consultation over many months.

Should it be agreed by our membership, it is a process that will, at some point over the next few years, involve all employees.

It will support the Target Operating Models (TOMs) that are currently being drawn up in Directorates by Directorate Management Teams (DMTs) to look at

how the anticipated budget reductions which will be imposed by the ConDem Government can be addressed and ways in which services can be reorganised and costs reduced.

Manchester City Council has made it very clear that it is committed to having a highly skilled workforce both to help deliver quality services and to improve workers' skills and employability.

These are not just words.

Money for training from various sources of up to £18 million (from skills fund and internal training budgets) will be available to allow staff to develop their skills. This is a massive commitment to the development of individual staff in the face of what we expect to be savage Government attacks on local government as a service.

The start of everyone's introduction into *m people* will be to have a skills assessment by way of a competency assessment based on the new Council values of 'People, Pride and Place.'

The *m people* protocol is the product of a consultation process which has been open and positive.

The final procedure has been subjected to more than 15 draft versions in looking to agree the most effective process through

which the Council can ensure more effectively that the right staff are in the right role at the right time.

However, trade unions have ensured that individuals who may have concerns either about their skills' assessments or any proposed new role can have this reviewed as detailed in the *m people* protocol.

Where the procedure appears to have been misapplied, either in the skills' assessment or in the nature of a temporary placement or job offer, trade unions will raise any relevant issues.

The trade unions are also part of the Quality Assurance Panel which will monitor the development of *m people* and evaluate overall outcomes and equalities impact.

Trade unions will be fully involved in the development of *m people* and will raise the need for any changes necessary in the light of experience as *m people* is implemented throughout the Council.

Protracted delays over restructures - which, in the past, led to the slow movement of staff to areas where they were needed - will no longer be sustainable in the future if we are to defend both services and the ability to continue to protect staff from redundancies as well as cuts in pay and service conditions, which we are

already seeing being threatened elsewhere.

The procedure (the *m people* protocol), Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), the new employment flexibility clause and the joint statement from the Chief Executive, the lead Member for Personnel and Finance and the trade unions are being sent out for your information.

Essentially there are two changes which permeate throughout:

- * As a process, *m people* will replace our existing redeployment agreement.

- * The latter served both the Council and staff well in many ways in the past, but it was also weakened by delays in the process and it was not seen as a positive process by some.

However, the essential point is that the redeployment procedure itself simply could not cope with the sheer scale of the future need to allocate staff quickly and effectively to where they are most needed.

While *m people* is about an entirely different way of staff moving as needed across the Council, in terms of an organisational procedure, the second major change is what it means to staff as individuals.

At present all staff know that they could be asked to work in any Council workplace. In future staff could be asked

to work in any reasonable alternative role, on the same basis with reasonable notice.

This, however, is not new as it underpins moves within the existing redeployment scheme and many staff have experienced a number of moves during their employment with the Council.

The difference comes in the scale of the potential number of staff who may need to be moved to different roles, and more quickly, than may have been the case in the past.

To defend staff and reduce costs the Council has committed itself to recruiting to vacancies and new roles primarily through only considering existing staff in the first instance.

In the future only specialist posts where we do not have the particular skills needed readily available and cannot quickly train staff, for example qualified social workers, and gaps at entry grade will be filled externally.

The trade unions will have a place at weekly vacancy panels to ensure that we can raise concerns at any proposals to fill posts externally when we believe that such posts could be filled internally with training if this is necessary and achievable.

Where there are any concerns that assessment

outcomes were incorrect or where placements or new jobs/roles are not appropriate (this will not normally be the case) trade unions will clearly represent members concerns.

In addition to improving the best use of our staffing resource the use of consultants is being reviewed and in future they will only be contracted where absolutely necessary.

Even where their use is required there will be a planned skills transfer to existing staff so the use of consultants will be lessened in the future when faced with similar circumstances.

Apart from the above, the Council is looking to meet expected Government

cuts by utilising better procurement, the joint sharing of services with other Councils - where this makes sense - and more effective use of Council assets and buildings.

Prior to and during the ballot period we, as a Branch, committed ourselves to holding as many local meetings with members as possible to answer questions and, so far, over 30 meetings have been held.

Details of the final proposals are available on the Branch website, which has been recently revamped.

The Branch is committed to defending members against compulsory redundancies, retain our pay protection arrangements and to work

with the Council to best provide services using available resources to the maximum.

The Branch Executive considered the proposals on 22 September and agreed unanimously to approve the m people proposals and to recommend all members to support them in this ballot of Council UNISON members.

All members are urged to take part in this ballot so that, whatever the outcome, we have a clear view of our membership's feelings on this issue. It is vital to all of our futures, so please take the time to return your ballot paper by noon on 15 November, 2010.

Pat McDonagh

Good To Meet You... Iris Short

How long have you worked at the Branch for? 29 years.

What do you like about it?

I love the work... always want to come to work... never bored... every day's a plate-spinning challenge.

Where do you live?

Altrincham.

Where would you like to live? Florence or Liverpool; not too much to choose between!

Best thing about UNISON?

For officers who are elected, it's not a career move; they have a genuine desire to help and change things. Try to walk a month in their shoes and see how you would do things differently.

If I was Prime Minister? I'd



practice what I preached.

Personal superpower? Eat less and sleep more!

Worst job you've had?

Cleaning a pub when times were hard.

What's your ideal job? I have already got it.

Favourite holiday destination/drink/football team? Italy/Cava/Liverpool FC.

What is the trait you most

deplore in yourself? Thinking I have got to get things done NOW!

What is the trait you most deplore in others? Cruelty.

Why do unions matter?

'Nothing was ever freely given.' Men and women have fought hard for what we all take for granted; the fight still goes on.

Who is your inspiration? Bill Shankly.



Clockwise from top left: the Manchester Branch arrive in Liverpool on a wet Sunday morning in September for a rally outside the Lib-Dem Conference; Steve Swift & Patrick Taylor; Clayton Doyle & Eddy Redmond; Frank Duffy & Noel Bayley.



Clockwise from above left: Bob with Frank Hont and General Secretary Dave Prentis wait in the rain; Dave Prentis takes to the stage; a cold and wet Tim Isherwood; Evelyn Doyle, Julie Stockley & Jane Slater are homeward bound at last!



Greetings From Keele!

I t's hardly dreaming spires... mostly 1960s concrete. At this time of the year there are more squirrels around than people. The early-morning lectures will be the death of me, especially after the first night! And I can't get my mobile phone to work anywhere on campus. But, all that aside, Keele University really is a marvellous place.

Set in 640 acres of rolling Staffordshire countryside, the university is home to 12,000 students of all ages. For years the university has been famous for its work in industrial relations and management theory (and no, the two are not mutually exclusive!). In the 1970s it had a very hard-left reputation, so much so that it was nicknamed 'The Kremlin on the Hill,' although only one or two of the politburo's old guard remain. And among those 12,000 students and the two dozen or so studying Industrial Relations is me. Me... at Keele University!

How did I do it? All through my friendly neighbourhood trade union, of course! For those of you who don't know, UNISON and the TUC run training courses for activists and reps like myself. It was while learning the ins and outs of being a rep in 2008 that I first realised that there was more to this union business than met the eye. That autumn I went off to

night school to study TUC History at the Manchester College. I loved every single minute of it. After History I moved on to Employment Law and although the course was very hard work I really enjoyed doing it.

It was while doing the history course that I first got the idea that I could actually use all this learning to get back to university (having very irritatingly run out of money last time round in 1999). So I applied. And I got it. Which is why, on a perfect September morning, I found myself inside the bunker-like Darwin Building with six other students filling out forms and formally enrolling at the University.


The Certificate in Industrial Relations lasts for ten months. Aside from the three residential weekends at Keele, you receive two huge workbooks a term to read, and are given two assignments to do based on these. By the end of the course, if you reach the 40% pass mark, you are offered a place on the MA degree course. After the MA... well, that's up to you.

Unfortunately, the course isn't exactly free. The fees are £750, plus the £40-a-night accommodation on the residence. Plus you have to get yourself down there (not exactly easy without a car). But if you apply before 30 June, 2011 there are UNISON bursaries of up to £1,000 that you can receive. As for qualifications, you don't

need any: just a willingness to learn. In fact, the course is aimed at those who've never done any higher or further education. That's the whole point of it.

I'm the first one from our branch to do the Keele course. But it isn't fair on the rest of you if I'm the only one who goes. So if anyone else fancies a go, or would like to know more, get in touch. If you'd like to visit, let me know and I'll show you around. And if you want to apply, get your skates on so you qualify for that bursary! Keele may be the first university course you've ever done but I promise you it won't be the last. It certainly won't be mine! In fact, I may put in for one of those PhD things next year, who knows?

Anthony Mullen (UNISON steward, Adult Social Care)



Venezuela Under Threat
Manchester Branch & Manchester Community & Mental Health Branch proudly presents Oliver Stone's *South Of The Border*, 1-4pm on 13 November at the Dance House Theatre, Oxford Road (opposite the BBC).
Film showing at 1.30pm.
Guest speaker Colin Burgon (Chair of Friends of Venezuela).
Free admission to UNISON members.

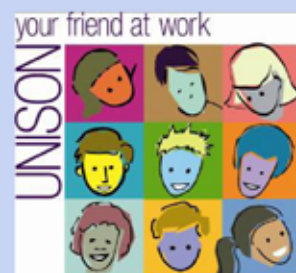


With more than 1.3 million members working across the public services, being part of UNISON means you have the full weight of the UK's biggest trade union behind you.

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 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)		
<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>		
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
<input type="checkbox"/> Indian	<input type="checkbox"/> Black Caribbean	<input type="checkbox"/> Irish
<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	<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

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

- ☐ Weekly
☐ Fortnightly
☐ Four Weekly
☐ Monthly

☐ 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.

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 to UNISON information to keep my records up to date.
- ☐ I authorise deduction of the following political fund payment as part of my subscriptions: *Tick one box only*

Affiliated Political Fund ☐

General Political Fund ☐

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.

☐ 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.

☐ If you do not wish to receive such information please tick this box.

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.