

MANCUNION

THE UNISON NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2021

**THE NEC ELECTION BALLOT
RUNS FROM 4TH - 27TH MAY**



**IT'S TIME FOR A REAL
CHANGE IN UNISON
- YOUR VOTE COUNTS -**

Since our last Mancunion we met virtually for our Branch Annual General Meeting and as we were quorate (had the required number of members present to allow the meeting to make decisions) we were able to progress Branch business. We passed a range of motions including ones in defence of public service pay, around how UNISON should respond to Covid, including the Government's mishandling of it, and on a Green New Deal to rebuild our economy as part of Covid recovery. Branch Officers would like to thank all those who supported the work of the branch by attending.

The overwhelming mood of the AGM was angry but determined, to both continue to support our communities and services, but also to defend them and ourselves against any further cuts and attempts to make ordinary people pay for Covid. These motions, now the policy of our branch will shape how we work for the coming year.

Following the incompetence of this government with one of the worst outcomes in deaths from the Covid 19 pandemic, combined with the economy being devastated with poorest workers paying the heaviest price, it is clear in the coming year that Covid and recovery will continue to shape what we do.

The impact has been disastrous for young people whether they be students with their education being damaged and exploited paying huge fees for little return or those young people who face a bleak future in finding quality future employment.

Even in the midst of the pandemic the Tory government found time to develop proposals to cut local government workers

pensions under the so called £95k pension cap which in reality would have cut the pensions of our members with average earnings and long service.

Our branch pressured our union at region and national level to take action to oppose this attack on our members' pensions which resulted in our legal action that culminated in the Tory government dropping their proposals.

Whilst a great victory for UNISON it is clear this threat will not disappear.



IN MY VIEW EVELYN DOYLE BRANCH SECRETARY

When they were done with clapping for key workers the Tories have reverted to type and declared a public service workers' pay freeze whilst allowing private company profiteering from contracts awarded without transparency or tendering processes.

Our union must lead from the front to expose this and use every resource to defend our members and services from future

attacks.

To do that we need a national leadership that will publicly lead from the front to defend our members' pay and pensions and make sure that it is the absolutely overwhelming priority of our union.

Our branch has nominated candidates who we believe will provide that leadership and members are urged to use their vote to elect an NEC who will need to tackle the issues our members will face in the next two years.

It is your future that is at stake, please use your vote.



PUBLIC SECTOR PAY FREEZE

Throughout the past year of the pandemic once again more local government workers and key staff across all of the public sector including NHS and care staff rose to the occasion to keep essential services running and allow time for a vaccine to be developed.

The Conservative government announced that the reward for this vital and lifesaving service will be yet another public sector pay freeze.

This is not only an insult to all our members who worked tirelessly and selflessly on the frontline, and in support functions, but also demonstrates that the Tories are still wedded to the internationally discredited idea of austerity that has done so much damage to this country over the last ten years.

They have decided to make the public sector pay for the economic effect of the Covid pandemic crisis regardless of the vast amount of private sector profiteering from contracts awarded without tender to Tory party donors.

Our members at our branch AGM agreed that

Manchester UNISON Branch should continue to oppose pay 'offers' which in reality continue to result in further cuts in real living standards for our members and called on the Branch to campaign for action at every level of UNISON to provide the fair and equitable remuneration that our members deserve.

Members also agreed that UNISON should demand the funding that the sectors that they work in so desperately need in order to have a fair and equitable recovery from the pandemic and the damage done by the current government's mishandling of it.

Our Branch therefore submitted a motion to our special UNISON Conference to take place virtually in June calling on the union to campaign to achieve the best outcome possible for our members and their services.

Manchester UNISON will demand that the national Union must put public sector pay and the protection of our pensions as the central priority of our union.



UNISON NEC ELECTIONS 2021

On 4th May voting papers will be sent to your home address for this year's UNISON National Executive Council (NEC) elections. UNISON's NEC is made up of representatives from UNISON's different service groups (Local Government, Health, Community etc), the regions of the UK it covers and specific representatives for young members, black members and disabled members - due to historic under-representation from these groups.

Members have until 27th May to use their vote but past experience shows that the vast majority of those who vote do so within the first few days of receiving their ballot paper.

This election will determine the future priorities of your union so every member is urged to use their vote.

You are, of course, at liberty to vote for whoever you like, but in line with UNISON's rules, we can tell you that your Branch Executive after considering all candidates has agreed to support the following people for the respective seats because we believe that they, if elected, will best act in support of the views and priorities of our branch.

We believe the candidates over the next few pages share our view that we need a union leadership who will:

- Make fighting for better pay and protecting pensions the central priorities of the union.
- Increase the levels of funding and resources to branches where most of the work for members is actually done.
- Speak with a stronger voice in the Labour Party on the issues that matter to our members and their futures.
- Campaign against the privatisation of our services and the associated corruption and sleaze at every level of the process.
- Lead the union in improving internal democracy and prioritise the views of members in taking key decisions not simply just those of unelected unaccountable national officers.

Please use your vote in this important election.

NORTH WEST REGION



LUISETE BATISTA
Low-Paid
Reserved Seat



KAREN REISSMANN
Female Seat



JANE WILCOX
Female Seat



TONY WILSON
General Seat

UNISON NEC ELECTIONS 2021

NORTH WEST REGION



STEVE NORTH
Male Seat

LOCAL GOVERNMENT



ANDREA EGAN
Female Seat



JANE DOOLAN
Female Seat



DIANA LEACH
General Seat



PAUL HOLMES
Male Seat

COMMUNITY



SAORISE FANNING
Female Seat



KEVIN JACKSON
General Seat

HEALTH



SU EDWARDS
Female Seat



CLAIRE DIXON
Female Seat



JOE HALE
General Seat



KEVIN CORRAN
Male Seat

UNISON NEC ELECTIONS 2021

POLICE & JUSTICE



**JOANNE
MOORCROFT**
Female Seat



MIKE GARVEY
General Seat

BLACK MEMBERS



NIMISHA TRIVEDI
Female Seat



JULIA MWALUKE
Low-Paid
Reserved Seat

YOUNG MEMBERS



LILLY BOULBY
Female Seat



KIERA HILDER
General Seat



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STEPHEN LAWRENCE DAY EVENT

Stephen Lawrence was murdered in a racist attack in 1993, whilst waiting for a bus in London. A long campaign for justice followed, that was also supported by UNISON nationally. At the time, the campaign resulted in changes in attitude with regard to racism.

This event, hosted by Manchester UNISON Branch on 22 April, with the theme 'Racism – Where Next?', was about recognising Stephen Lawrence Day and exploring whether systemic racism had moved on since then, what the options were for going forward and collectively working together to effect real change.

We had a great panel of speakers lined up (shown below), with over 100 attendees. The event was open to all and was not just for UNISON members.

UNISON has long challenged inequalities and campaigned for fairness and transparency.

Equality campaigns have included 'Challenging Racism in the Workplace', with a view to ensuring Black workers' rights are not breached, they are not bullied, harassed or treated less favourably than their white counterparts, but with the dignity and respect they are rightly entitled to.

The challenge continues.

To read a full report and watch a recording of the event please visit our branch website: <http://www.unisonmanchester.org/>

Sonia Stewart
Branch Equality Officer

STEPHEN LAWRENCE DAY 22 APRIL 2021, 10.00AM-1.00PM

An online discussion on the theme Racism – Where Next?

This special event featured the following guest speakers:

This event was hosted by



Stuart Lawrence
Diversity, Inclusion, Grief, Youth Engagement Specialist

Professor Geoff Thompson MBE FRSA DL
Youth Charter Founder and Chair

Professor Gus John
Education and Human Rights Campaigner

Rena Wood
Assistant Branch Secretary UNISON Manchester and NW Region Deputy Convenor

Minister Kemoy Walker
Community activist and young member

UNISON LABOUR LINK UPDATE

As this reaches you the Local Government and Metro and City Mayoral elections will be just days away and there will still be chances for you to help get trade union policies into the heart of councils and mayoral teams by helping the Labour Party get elected.

While any support you can give will be appreciated in your local ward, city and region, there are also specific campaigns that Labour Link North West are supporting, so get in touch if you feel like travelling to help get campaigns over the line.

Just because a council is run by Labour does not mean that we as UNISON won't have to have difficult conversations or, at worst, have to take action.

But as any branch in an area not run by Labour will tell you, with Labour politicians we have a much better chance to influence policy and get the best outcomes for all of our members. Please support your local Labour campaigns and get out and vote on the 6th May.

Also, another reminder that the change to the Local Government Committees (LGC) will be happening within the Labour Party this

summer. The LGCs will be vital in ensuring trade union involvement in local government, there are new rules involved about how local election manifestos are written for instance, and if you are interested in how these will work and want to be more involved then please get in touch with me as soon as possible or respond to the regional email asking for expressions of interest.

As I've mentioned before, we have a difficult few years ahead with the Johnson led Tory government mismanaging everything from the pandemic response to the funding of social care, so UNISON will need as strong a presence in politics as possible to help our fight for services and for members pay and conditions.

Carl Greatbatch
Branch Political Officer



For more information on the Greater Manchester Mayoral elections, you can visit the following website: <https://www.gmelects.org.uk/>

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