

Branch Circular: Covid-19 Update #8

INTRODUCTION

The work of public servants throughout the Covid crisis has proved how vital their work is to support society. Workers seen as key such as doctors and nurses are also supported by the work of health care assistants, cleaners, porters, IT and reception staff etc.

Local government staff have shown how vital they are in maintaining vital services and supporting vulnerable people in our communities and responded tremendously to all the problems people have faced. The public have recognised more than ever the true worth of public sector workers and it is about time that was recognised in fair pay for them.

UNISON is now consulting members on whether to accept the local government pay offer or to support taking industrial action to get a pay increase members deserve.

The pay offer barely matches inflation this year and does absolutely nothing to repair the 20% plus in living standards through a decade of poor pay settlements.

Our Branch is organising a number of virtual pay meetings which members can take part in to hear the arguments and ask questions.

Members will then be balloted as part of the national pay consultation process.

Whilst it is positive that the economy is coming out of general lockdown it is vital that this is done without real risk to the public and our members.

The pandemic is not over and UNISON will work with all our employers to ensure safe working remains at the forefront of any changes being brought forward.

UNISON will not meekly accept assurances from a dishonest complacent incompetent government which has cancelled daily press conferences to avoid accountability, ended international tables exposing it's appalling negligence in responding to the crisis, which has gagged scientists and health experts who wont defend their appalling decisions and even now question the basis of their own government daily Covid death totals.

Your union will continue to put the interests of members first at all times and will ensure their welfare is paramount regardless of Government disregard for the safety of people.

Evelyn Doyle - Manchester UNISON Branch Secretary

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FIRST THEY CLAP US, THEN THEY SLAP US



UNISON is holding a [consultation](#) of local government NJC members across England, Wales and Northern Ireland to decide whether we accept or reject the NJC Employer's side offer of a 2.75% pay increase for 2019/20.

The consultation runs until 11 August and will be conducted by your local branch. UNISON's local government consultation procedures allow for branches and regions to make their own recommendations to members. **In the North West our Regional Service Group, made up of representatives from each branch, agreed to recommend to REJECT the offer.**

To set out the reasons why NJC workers are worthy of fair recognition UNISON North West have launched the **First They Clap Us, Then They Slap Us** campaign.

Throughout the pandemic local government workers, including thousands of UNISON members, have played a vital role in supporting people, communities and businesses and keeping essential local services going. From highly visible services such as bin collections, to less visible services such as processing benefit payments, to lifeline services such as preparing and delivering essential supplies to vulnerable and shielding residents, our members have shown the true spirit of public service and shone a light on the too-often-forgotten importance of local authority provision.

As millions of people and politicians of all parties stood on doorsteps to applaud key workers we heard Government ministers say that local authorities would be "given what it takes". We believe that has to translate to include fair recognition and a fair pay offer for our NJC members.

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LOCAL GOVERNMENT NJC PAY CONSULTATION

Which is why the 2.75% pay offer is a slap in the face for all NJC workers at this time. Here's just a few reasons why:

1. Since 2010, the average **loss of real pay value for a NJC worker is 22%**. Years of pay freezes and below-inflation rises have eroded our pay substantially. The 2.75% pay increase doesn't even scratch the surface of the earnings we've lost. We are worth so much more.
2. NJC workers have undertaken **incredible work during this pandemic**, going the extra mile then going again to keep schools open for vulnerable pupils, running key local services and often putting themselves at increased risk. If ever there was a time for fair recognition and a fair pay offer, that time is now.
3. **A fair pay rise is affordable**. The money has been found for HS2, for upgrading Trident, for a £900,000 paint job for the Prime Minister's plane and other Government vanity projects. Yet there is no money for us? It is simply a matter of priorities.
4. **MPs voted to give themselves a 3.1% pay rise** - taking their basic pay to £82,000 per year, an increase of nearly £2,500. On top of that MPs voted themselves an extra £10,000 in 'recognition of additional pandemic expenses'.
5. A decent pay rise pays for itself - 50% of the total pay bill increase would be directly recouped through generating additional income tax, National Insurance, VAT and a reduction of in-work benefits payments – which all goes straight back to the Treasury. Extra cash in the pocket also means extra money spent in local shops and businesses to support other jobs. But there is no money for us? It is simply a matter of priorities.

To ensure that your voice is heard in the ballot, we need an up-to-date email address so we can contact you about the consultation. Update your details online by visiting unison.org.uk/my-unison

CAMPAIGN LAUNCH EVENT: VIEW THE LIVE STREAM

On Thursday 9 July at 7pm, UNISON North West launched the **First They Clap Us, Then They Slap Us** campaign via a Facebook Live stream hosted by the [UNISON North West Facebook page](#).

The campaign launch was a live stream where members were able to hear about the inadequate pay offer, UNISON's consultation and why UNISON North West is recommending the offer should be rejected. Viewers of the live stream had the opportunity to ask questions of the panel using the comments function and you can [watch the archived stream on YouTube here](#).

The panel on the night:

Linda Boyer (Chair of UNISON North West Local Government Service Group)
Glen Williams (UNISON North West Regional Convenor)
Rena Wood (UNISON North West Deputy Regional Convenor)
Carl Greatbatch (Vice-Chair of UNISON North West Local Government Service Group)
NJC workers

You can also [view a copy of the presentation](#) that was shared during the live stream.

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NJC PAY CONSULTATION: HAVE YOUR SAY

As part of the national pay consultation of local government NJC members, Manchester UNISON are hosting a series of member consultation meetings. These meetings are intended to give our members an overview of the NJC employers' pay offer for 2019/20 and the reasoning behind the decision of our Regional Service Group to **REJECT** the offer.

Our consultation meetings will run from **Tuesday 21 July to Monday 27 July** and the ballot will be open from **Monday 27 July until Monday 10 August**. Due to Covid-19 we are going to use e-ballots wherever possible and a mailing has recently been posted out to members for whom we do not currently have an email address recorded to maximise our e-ballot capabilities.

If you have received a letter from us regarding this and are yet to respond, please do so as soon as possible. If we already have your email address recorded then you will receive further information on how to access your e-ballot in the near future. For those members without an email address who are eligible to participate in the consultation, we will be posting out a paper-based ballot to ensure your voice is heard.

To facilitate the attendance of as many members as possible throughout this process, we have decided to host the meetings via the Zoom video conferencing app. Some of you may already be familiar with the app if you have used it for your own team meetings.

We are planning to run 5 separate meetings across the following dates:

- **7:00pm on Tuesday 21 July**
- **12:30pm on Wednesday 22 July**
- **5:30pm on Wednesday 22 July**
- **12:30pm on Friday 24 July**
- **12:30pm on Monday 27 July**

In order to join the meeting, you have three options:

Use the Zoom desktop client app

1. [Download and install the Zoom video conferencing app](#) on your preferred device e.g. phone, home PC etc.
2. To join the meeting [click on the following link](#).
3. For detailed instructions please [refer to the relevant guide on the Zoom Help Center](#).

Launch Zoom from a web browser

1. Open your preferred web browser and go to join.zoom.us.
2. Enter the Meeting ID 851 082 8537 when prompted then click Join.
3. For detailed instructions please [refer to the relevant guide on the Zoom Help Center](#).

Joining a Zoom meeting by phone

1. Dial **0330 088 5830** and enter the Meeting ID **851 082 8537** followed by the # key.
2. For detailed instructions please [refer to the relevant guide on the Zoom Help Center](#).

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BLACK MEMBERS' SOG UPDATE

Black Members in UNISON

In spite of a degree of progress that may have been made over the decades, we still live in a world whereby people are treated differently - looked upon with suspicion and/or denied chances that others take for granted - based on things they cannot change. One example of this is ethnicity/race.

For far too long there has been an atmosphere of complacency, in which any attempts to raise awareness of and/or address ethnicity/race-related discrimination have been met with indifference or silence at best and hostility or denial at worst. Too often the likely response is to “just turn the other cheek” or “be the bigger person” and pleas are ignored or downplayed. Being unheard can become very frustrating. How is that frustration released effectively? Where do those emotions go? Stay silent and the status quo continues - voice your frustrations and risk being stereotyped as “an angry BAME person” and so the day-to-day experience continues for a significant number of BAME people. This process is mentally draining, can sap the spirit and have a negative effect on one’s feelings of hope, leaving you both physically and emotionally tired

However, despite this, we continue to get up after being knocked down and strive for better. Why? Those who came before us - who fought, struggled and endured to get us where we are now - we hope to honour their efforts and what they sacrificed. Those alongside us we hope to stand side-by-side with and make sustained progress together. For those that come after us we hope to leave behind a more positive legacy with the aim that any discrimination we may have suffered becomes a distant memory for future society. It’s with this and more that we continue to remain resolute when encountering resistance and move forward with the support of anyone who wishes for a fairer world.

UNISON Manchester’s Black Members’ Self-Organised Group (SOG) offers a safe space for Black members of UNISON from with the Branch to meet and discuss/share our shared and individual experiences and work in collaboration with interested parties to try to reflect and where required improve the experience of being a Black member of UNISON.

If you would like to join our Self-Organised Group and contribute in any way, please contact Sonia Stewart, the Chair of the Group via s.stewart1@manchester.gov.uk. Please also pass this message on to any other Black members of UNISON in Manchester who you think might be interested in participating in the group’s activities.

Manchester UNISON Black Members’ SOG

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UNISON DIRECT RE-OPENS



The UNISONdirect office re-opened its doors this week after running an online service from home during lockdown.

Some UNISONdirect staff have returned to the office to start taking essential calls from UNISON members on the frontline of the COVID-19 crisis. They were welcomed back by general secretary Dave Prentis (pictured left, with UNISONdirect office) and assistant general secretary Liz Snape.

UNISONdirect will be available for the following hours: 8am to 1pm, 1.30pm to 6.30pm and 7pm to 10pm. Breaks between operations ensure that cleaning can be carried out as shifts change over.

Members can contact UNISONdirect by calling **0800 085 7857**.

CORPORATE CORE AND GMCA UPDATE

Corporate Core

The Revs and Bens Services within the customer contact centre will go live on Tuesday 14th July at 9am. This will provide residents with the full-service offer that they had prior to Covid-19. The new soft telephony that is being used means that staff will be able to continue to work from home and comply with government advice of work to continuing from home where possible. There will be live support to staff via google hangouts from team managers in a similar way to how we have used floor walkers in the past.

The ongoing issue around flex time in the customer seems to be now resolved and staff can make flex in line with the services flex time agreement. We have had numerous emails around this and a second email was sent to the service last week to clarify again that it is business as usual in relation to accruing flex.

Combined Authority

The Building Back Better work is continuing and risk assessments of Churchgate House have been shared and these have been shared with the stewards. Also, at Fire Head Quarters work is ongoing and the Convenor there is getting regular information. There is to be a walk around of Churchgate House on the 14th July and one of the local stewards will be supporting this. The CA is still however encouraging staff who can work from home to do so.

Jane Slater - Deputy Branch Secretary (Corporate Core)

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TAMESIDE HOSPITAL SECURITY STAFF WIN NHS PAY RATES

UNISON members employed as security staff at Tameside Hospital by Engie were finalising plans for a 48 hour walk out on Monday 13th July when last minute negotiations brought significant changes to proposals from management.



The security staff submitted a pay claim in December 2019 for full Agenda for Change pay, including shift enhancements and overtime rates. Initially there was a flat refusal from Engie management to consider the pay claim. However, UNISON members stood strong together and voted to take industrial action in a formal ballot with a 100% turnout.

Management responded by coming back to the negotiating table, and following a couple of offers from the company which were rejected by the members, Engie finally offered to pay the full Agenda for Change pay rates, including enhancements and overtime payments. This will be implemented with immediate effect. As a result, some hospital security staff will now be paid several thousand pounds a year more.

Sue Glithero, UNISON North West regional organiser, said:

“It’s only right that all hospital staff get the proper rate for the job. Security staff perform a vital role at the hospital and it’s great news that they will be paid fairly from now on.”

BACK THE #10BILLIONBAILOUT

The government must fund local councils properly to keep communities safe and rebuild the country after the pandemic. Unless ministers fix the council funding shortfall of £10bn, there could be tens of thousands of job losses and catastrophic cuts to local services in England.

But in this week’s economic statement, the Chancellor failed to offer any support.

[Join UNISON’s urgent call for a £10 billion bailout by signing the petition.](#)



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A PERSONAL MESSAGE FROM DAVE PRENTIS

I've been so proud to serve as your General Secretary for 20 years. It has been the honour and privilege of my life to be able to represent our incredible public service workers from across our four nations, and never more so than in the last few difficult months of the COVID-19 pandemic.



Today I have advised the President that I will retire on 31 December 2020 when my current period of office comes to an end. In order to comply with trade union law, our NEC Development and Organisation Committee will meet this week to discuss a timetable to elect my successor and full details will be published once that is agreed. But I wanted you, our activists and the leading members of our union, to hear the news directly from me.

We have been through some tough times together. We've brought our union through the long years of austerity where we saw our public services decimated with hundreds of thousands of jobs lost. But we stayed strong and we built the union.

We are now the largest union in the UK and the fastest-growing union in Europe. We have a vibrant lay democracy with activists like you in more than 50,000 workplaces. Our finances are strong and I hope we are now in a position to channel additional support and resources to our branches – where I truly believe that we organise and support our members best.

Every day for the past 47 years, I have been proud to serve this union and I have always been driven by a belief in fairness and justice for all our members. Never more so than in the past five months when I have seen our members and our public services rise to the challenge of the pandemic. In the worst of all circumstances, I have seen our union at its very best.

New members are joining our union faster than ever before because they value what a strong union can provide – support when they need it, strength to fight for change and a community that means that even in the most worrying times, you are never alone. Our enduring values of caring and solidarity will be more important than ever in the coming years.

As the health crisis turns to an economic crisis, we will face more challenges. I will be here to continue to lead this union until the end of this year – we still have a great deal of work to do together. I hope to be able to resume visiting branches and to meet and talk with as many of you as possible – always my favourite part of the job!

It has been my pleasure, my honour and an absolute privilege to lead our union, UNISON.

Thank you,

Dave Prentis
UNISON General Secretary

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RECENT BRANCH TWEETS

In order to keep our members informed we are now posting more frequently on our branch Twitter account [@UnisonMcr](#). Please consider giving us a follow, if you do not already.

22 June 2020 - [Link to Tweet](#)

The Covid-19 fund has been setup by UNISON to help members suffering financially during the outbreak. If you're a member and you're eligible please apply - it's a quick process taking about 5 minutes.



COVID-19 response fund

there for you

Apply if:

- You or your partner have suffered a reduction in earnings as a result of the coronavirus crisis;

OR

- You or your partner are a key worker with increased work-related costs as a result of the crisis.

You must:

- Be a member with at least 4 weeks membership and have paid your subscriptions;
- Have savings of less than £800;
- Apply for any statutory help you might be entitled to.

UNISON
the public service union

24 June 2020 - [Link to Tweet](#)

This is really important for all members but especially for those who work in Local Government - please update your contact details online asap. [#payupnow @NorthWestUNISON](#)

3 July 2020 - [Link to Tweet](#)

After months of applause, NJC workers have been rewarded with a measly 2.75% pay offer by the Govt. Join our [#FirstTheyClapUsThenTheySlapUs](#) campaign launch on Thursday at 7pm to discuss the offer. We'll be streaming live from <http://facebook.com/UNISONNorthWest>

13 July 2020 - [Link to Tweet](#)

Communities face a £10 billion shortfall for services. Refuse collection, children's services and adult social care are vital services which could be slashed if the government doesn't find significant, emergency funding for councils. [#10BillionBailout](#)

14 July 2020 - [Link to Tweet](#)

Solidarity with [@UNISON_TwrHmlts](#) workers striking this week. Shame on [@TowerHamletsNow](#)

20 July 2020 - [Link to Tweet](#)

Solidarity to all the trade unionists, activists and supporters who are making their way to Pier Head in Liverpool this evening to show support for the US trade unions [#BLM](#) strike

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BRANCH OFFICER CONTACT DETAILS

Corporate Core

Please contact **Jane Slater** - Email: j.slater@manchester.gov.uk

Neighbourhood Services

Please contact **Pete Banks** - Email: p.banks@manchester.gov.uk

Children's Services

Please contact **Eddy Redmond** - Email: e.redmond@manchester.gov.uk

Adult Services

Please contact **Carl Greatbatch** - Email: c.greatbatch@manchester.gov.uk

Schools (Secondary Schools / Special Schools)

Please contact **Cath Baggaley** - Email: c.baggaley@manchester.gov.uk

Schools (Primary Schools - North)

Please contact Jane Wilcox - Email: j.wilcox@manchester.gov.uk

Schools (Primary Schools - South)

Please contact Rena Wood - Email: r.wood@manchester.gov.uk

HAVE YOUR DETAILS CHANGED?

In order to continue providing the most effective service to our members we need to ensure that all the information we have recorded for them is up-to-date and accurate. As an individual member there are some steps you can take to update your own personal information, but for certain things only the branch are able to make the necessary changes.

One of the easiest ways for a member to update their details is to logon to **MyUNISON**, which you can do by visiting the following website: <https://www.unison.org.uk/my-unison/>

When logged into **MyUNISON** you are able to make changes to the following personal details:

Name, DoB, National Insurance Number, Ethnic Origin, Disabled Status, Sexual Orientation, Contact Information, Mailing Preferences, Contact Consent, Home Address, Employer Name, Workplace Location and Job Role.

In addition to the above you can also request a new UNISON membership card, change your membership category and update your current salary range through **MyUNISON**.

Please note that to access the site you will need to register first and this process requires your UNISON membership number. You can find your number on your UNISON membership card, or in the welcome pack you received when you joined UNISON.

We hope you find this information useful and remember that you can always call the branch on **0161 254 7500** if you need further assistance and one of the team will be happy to help you.

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FURTHER INFORMATION

Manchester UNISON Contact Information

Telephone Number: **0161 254 7500**

Email Address: unison@manchester.gov.uk

Branch Website: www.unisonmanchester.gov.uk

Twitter Feed: twitter.com/UnisonMcr

Branch Secretary: **Evelyn Doyle** (email: e.doyle@manchester.gov.uk)

Branch Chair: **Pat McDonagh** (email: p.mcdonagh@manchester.gov.uk)

UNISONdirect

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Social Media

The social media accounts below are worth following for more information.

[@UnisonMcr](https://twitter.com/UnisonMcr) - our branch twitter account which will have regular updates during the crisis

[@manchesterheal1](https://twitter.com/manchesterheal1) - regular updates for all UNISON health workers in Manchester

[@NorthWestUNISON](https://twitter.com/NorthWestUNISON) - official twitter account of the North West Region of UNISON

[@unisontheunion](https://twitter.com/unisontheunion) - official twitter account for the national union

Mental Health Helplines

If remaining isolated is affecting your mental health, or you are concerned about a loved one who might be suffering themselves then have a look at this list of helplines and support groups that may be able to help: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/mental-health-helplines/>

Home Education Resources

The Government recently published a list of high-quality resources that parents and schools can consider to support education at home: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-online-education-resources>

COVID-19: What You Need To Know

[How to work safely – leaflet for members](#)

[Are you at risk? Risk assessment leaflet for members](#)

[Social distancing and hygiene in the workplace](#)



0161 254 7500



unison@manchester.gov.uk



www.unisonmanchester.org

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We use this address to send you information core to your membership such as your membership pack, UNISON election information and any information relating to ballots if relevant

We use this to contact you about trade union activities and services

This information helps us find the best UNISON branch to support you and represent your needs

This information helps your employer and us confirm your identity

Your subscription rate is determined by how much you earn

Please return the completed form to:-
UNISON Manchester
Peter House
Oxford Street
Manchester
M1 5AN

JOIN UNISON
To be completed by new applicant

RECRUITER Receive a £10 for each member you recruit!
To be completed by the existing UNISON member.
Name: _____
Membership Number: _____

1 Tell us about you

Title First name

Last name

Home address

Postcode

Email

Phone

Date of birth

2 Tell us about your job

Employer's name

Your job title or occupation

Workplace name and address

Postcode

3 What you will pay each month

Please tick the appropriate box for your earnings before deductions

Annual pay	Core subscription	£14,001 – £17,000	£9.70
£0,000 – £2,000	<input type="checkbox"/> £1.30	<input type="checkbox"/> £17,001 – £20,000	<input type="checkbox"/> £11.50
£2,001 – £5,000	<input type="checkbox"/> £3.50	£20,001 – £25,000	<input type="checkbox"/> £14.00
£5,001 – £8,000	<input type="checkbox"/> £5.30	£25,001 – £30,000	<input type="checkbox"/> £17.25
£8,001 – £11,000	<input type="checkbox"/> £6.60	£30,001 – £35,000	<input type="checkbox"/> £20.30
£11,001 – £14,000	<input type="checkbox"/> £7.85	£35,001 – and over	<input type="checkbox"/> £22.50

Instruction to deduct the subscription from my salary

By signing below I wish to join UNISON and authorise deduction of subscriptions from my pay by my employer

Signature Date

This information tells us whether you wish to contribute an additional 5% toward UNISON's campaign fund. This voluntary contribution will be taken annually in October as a single deduction by Direct Debit. Further information is available at www.unison.org.uk/changes

This information is standard direct debit mandate information

Please go to unison.org.uk/privacy-policy to see how we will protect and use your personal information

We are legally required to keep your information up to date. You can amend your details via My UNISON at www.unison.org.uk/my-unison

Email Text Phone
By ticking these boxes, you are giving your consent for UNISON to contact you by these means about how we campaign on your behalf.

4 Campaign fund contribution

UNISON stands up for its members and speaks out publicly on the issues that affect them. To continue this work we ask for an additional voluntary 5% campaign contribution by Direct Debit when you join. Please tick your preference below:

- Campaign Fund UNISON Labour Link No thank you
- The campaign fund promotes better public services, enables the union to talk with politicians of any party about the work our members do and supports the union's equalities work.
- Labour Link campaigns for UNISON policy on the NHS, your employment rights and for quality public services within the Labour Party locally and in Parliament.
- If you selected 'No thank you' - by ticking this box you are giving consent for UNISON to contact you in future about our campaign funds. We will do this using the contact details you provided on this form.
- I do not wish to contribute to campaigning at the moment. Those who choose not to opt in will not be disadvantaged in any way as compared with members who do opt in.

Instruction to your bank or building society to pay by Direct Debit



Please complete the form and send to:
UNISON, 130 Euston Road, London NW1 2AY

Name and full postal address of your bank or building society

To the manager bank / building society

Address

Postcode

Name(s) of account holder(s)

Account number

Branch sort code

Office use only
Service user no.

Office use only
Membership number

Please pay UNISON Direct Debits from the account detailed in this instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this instruction may remain with UNISON and, if so, details will be passed electronically to my bank/building society.

Signature Date

Banks and building societies may not accept Direct Debit instructions for some types of account