

The Update

10 Aug 2021

The latest news and announcements from Derbyshire UNISON

Pay

Pay is coming to a head and we need all of our members and activists to take part in every ballot and every consultation



Fighting for pay across the union, writes the general secretary Christina McAnea

UNISON is now fighting high profile pay battles across our public services and across the UK to get the fair pay rise you deserve.

We, in UNISON, didn't need reminding about the value of our public service workers, but COVID-19 has woken the world up to the unrelenting efforts of low-paid workers.

Keeping people and communities safe and cared for, delivering vital vaccination programmes, and keeping children and young people educated and supported has been your daily mission.

And let's be clear, all our vital public services rely on valued and supported workers. But when we

can't count on the Westminster government and employers to recognise and reward your work, even after this overwhelming crisis, we risk losing a dedicated and skilled workforce.

Nearly a year ago, UNISON delivered our claim for a £2,000 pay rise for all NHS staff to Downing Street. Health staff across the UK have campaigned ever since for a decent pay rise and, last week, we finally heard the government's announcement that NHS staff in England will get

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a 3% pay uplift.

That's well short of our OneTeam2k claim, so we're consulting our members in health who are covered by this pay award. We're also calling on private companies with outsourced NHS contracts to pay their staff an increase in line with directly-employed NHS workers.

Our members in health in Scotland have voted to accept an offer that delivers an average of 4% with additional payments for the lowest paid, after UNISON health branches campaigned to force the Scottish government to improve their pay offer.

The forgotten frontline of local government staff working in councils, schools and the community in England and Wales have had a final offer – 1.75% from 1 April 2021, with 2.75% for lower pay points. We are recommending that our members vote to reject this pay offer.

I've written to the Prime Minister asking him to make the money available to fund fair pay, because councils have been drained of money for 11 years by central government. They can and should make the political decision to change direction.

In Scotland, the campaign is underway in local government over the rejected offer of a flat rate payment of £800 for all employees earning up to £25,000, 2% uplift for those earning £25,000 to £40,000, and 1% rise for those earning up to £80,000, capped at £800.

Higher education staff are already balloting on strike action against the insulting 0% pay award for last year and are about to take on another battle over the 1.5% offer for this year. We've rallied, we've campaigned and now we need everyone to vote yes in our ballot to force employers to reconsider.

The final insult landed on police staff, a workforce with a headcount down by around 14% over the last decade. They're stretched to their limits, have seen their salaries' buying power reduced by a third over the last 10 years and now they're being told to expect 0%.

Not one of these pay 'offers' keeps up with the cost of living. Inflation is running at way over

3%, so every offer amounts to a pay cut.

After our members across all sectors have kept this country going, you're being offered nothing in return. And what's the backdrop? A Westminster government responsible for the complete mishandling of the pandemic.

Now, more than ever, we need our activists to be organised, recruit more members, take part in every ballot and consultation and know that you are not alone.

You have the backing of every member in UNISON. The whole country relies on our public services and the governments across the UK rely on you to deliver them, but it's only our great union that will stand up for you.