

## **YOU'RE SACKED... HANG ON WE'VE MADE A MISTAKE!**

***UNISON have criticised Bury Council for unnecessarily wasting tax payer's money and causing uncertainty to thousands of its workers.***

The union say that the council acted with undue haste in sending in the region of 4000 letters of dismissal to all council workers in the first few days of the New Year at an as yet undisclosed cost to the local council tax payers.

The dismissal notices have now had to be withdrawn because the union say that the council acted outside of the law.

UNISON has been negotiating with the Council over the last two years to introduce a new fairer pay system in line with a national agreement to end pay discrimination in local government. But last year discussions broke down and the union say that the Council locked them out of further talks on the new pay system.

UNISON Regional Manager Chris Jenkinson said "the council has been playing fast and loose with our members jobs for the past six months, we have been asking for talks on the new pay structure but they have been refused, and senior managers have been content to develop a pay system that delivers cuts in pay to at least a 1000 workers.



The Council delivered its dismissal letters on 6th January 2009. "Sending such a letter when workers had just returned from the festive break was a callous act. This is indicative of an uncaring Council that fails to value its staff and the quality public services that they deliver to local communities", said Mr Jenkinson.

On learning of dismissal notices had been issued UNISON immediately instructed its lawyers to act for members affected. As a result of legal representations, the Council has now agreed to immediately rescind the notice of dismissal and enter into talks with the union.

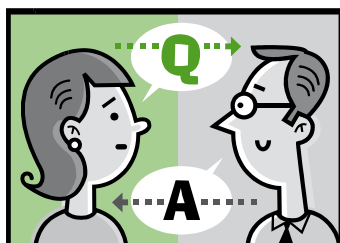
Mr Jenkinson said "We have always been seeking talks and we are now pleased to see that the Council has agreed to them although it is regrettable that the Council has had to be brought back to the table and that such a large amount of time and money has been wasted unnecessarily".

# And Now... It's Part 3

## Your questions answered on the Council Proposed changes to your Local Conditions of Service

### I've heard something about changes to other conditions of service (Part 3), what does this mean?

The implementation of Job evaluation is only one aspect of the Single Status agreement, and in order to fully harmonise the conditions of service



for all staff the Council claim they are looking at removing anomalies and bringing conditions of service into line. The Council have decided that they will impose their proposals without agreement. As far as we are concerned the national agreement requires our cooperation and agreement and we do not agree.

### I'm currently paid a Retainer Fee. How will that be affected?

Retainer fees have traditionally been paid to school based employees during periods of school closure to retain their services and ensure i) that come the first day of term, they turn up for duty as normal and ii) that they can be called to assist with school functions during the closures. **The Council are now saying that these staff will no longer receive this payment.** We've calculated that this equates to the loss of approximately one month's pay each year on average.

### Will this affect Overtime Payments?

The Council proposes to impose a standard rate of pay for all hours worked as overtime, on a Saturday and/or Sunday and for working on a bank holiday. **This rate would be time and a half. With double time disappearing completely.** Again this amounts to a pay cut for anyone working on Sundays, as these employees currently receive up to double time. **Will this mean that employees will be more reluctant to work at weekends?** Most definitely.

### What about my Enhancements for working outside of normal time?

The Council's proposal is that enhanced rates of pay are harmonised and simplified. No specific proposals have been made but will be discussed with us in due course. **The trade union position is that simplifying payments should not be an excuse for cutting pay.**

### Working Week

The proposal is that the standard working week for all employees is 37 hours. The hours of work for part time employees will be adjusted pro rata to the standard working week. **If implemented, some employees will see their working week increase and some will see their hourly rate decrease.** We say it would be far better to harmonise the working week at 36.25 hours instead!

### Annual Leave

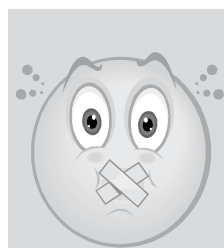
It is intended that the basic annual leave entitlement for employees is harmonised at 23 days. This means that all employees will be entitled to 23 days (basic entitlement) plus 5 days (after five years service) plus 2 extra statutory days, plus 8 days bank holiday. **An increase in annual leave is well overdue, but comes nowhere near some of the increases seen in the private sector.**

### Other payments: Shift, Sleep-in and Standby

The Council proposes that a working group be set up to have ongoing discussions regarding these payments. It is recognised that many of the issues are complex. Therefore, the Council would look to resolve shift, sleep-in and standby payments by 1 April 2010. **The Trade Unions will ensure that they are represented on the working group although if the current rules apply we may be reporting more pretend consultation.**

**What's is UNISON Position? We believe this is yet another horrific attack on our members conditions of service on a scale never before seen in Bury. Its only purpose is to take more money from employees wage packets.**

**UNISON will resist any change which we believe are to the detriment of our members. but we are sure the council will not miss any opportunity to further their scorched earth policy.**



## THANK YOU

A big thanks to all of you who turned up to the recent council meetings on cold, wet autumnal evenings.

**Angry UNISON members were packed into the Council chamber hoping to participate. Unfortunately, the ruling Conservative group voted against allowing members to speak.**

# CLASS STRUGGLE!

## SCHOOL SUPPORT STAFF AND JOB EVALUATION

### *School Support staff are also affected by Job Evaluation.*

For instance your hours may be affected as well as any special allowance that you currently receive. And if you wish to appeal against your score, this may be internal to the school governors, rather than to a truly independent body.

In other words if you work in a school you will be just as much affected by the proposed pay and grading scheme as those staff working directly for the Council.

UNISON recently held meetings at the Elizabethan Suite, Prestwich Methodist Church hall and



Radcliffe Civic Suite to brief school support staff members on how they will be affected and more meetings will be held as the position becomes clearer.

If your school hasn't got a UNISON workplace rep have a chat amongst yourselves to see whether anyone would like to volunteer as this is a very crucial time

for schools and we want to ensure that you are kept informed of all developments. Its much easier for us to disseminate information via a workplace contact or rep.

If you work in a school and want to become more involved, please complete the tear off on the top of application form enclosed.

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT PAY



Trade unions representing more than a million council workers in England, Northern Ireland and Wales have taken another step towards resolving the long running local government pay dispute.

Final settlement of the deal will depend on the results of arbitration, which both sides are waiting for facilitated by ACAS.

The unions are hoping to hold further talks as this newsletter goes to press.

UNISON head of local government Heather Wakefield said that the union believes that it has a strong case for a fairer deal for local

government staff, and is hopeful for an early decision from ACAS.

Meanwhile, local government workers have received a 2.45% interim pay rise - agreed by employers to help those struggling to cope with rising costs.



### **2009 Pay claim**

Talks on the 2009 pay claim are due to commence shortly.

TAKE A LOOK AT THE NEW  
UNISON NORTH WEST WEBSITE:  
[www.unisonnw.org.uk](http://www.unisonnw.org.uk)

# Six Town Housing Job Evaluation Management to use Hay Scheme



## Management at Six Town

**Housing have decided to review their pay structures by adopting the Hay Job Evaluation Scheme, despite the UCATT and Unite unions having stated that their national position was not to sign up to job evaluation and UNISON having reservations about using the Hay scheme.**



Previously at meetings, between management and the Trade Unions, UNISON stated that our preferred scheme would be the nationally agreed NJC scheme which branch officers and stewards have experience in using. Despite being consulted on our preference it was ultimately decided by management to use the Hay scheme.

The Single Status agreement committed both parties to a review, and as such we are

**Six Town Housing is an Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO) set up in April 2005 to manage Bury MBC's housing stock.**

obliged to stay at the table and ensure that the procedures and outcomes are both transparent and fair. We also hope to be able to assist Six Town UNISON members to avoid the absolute chaos that has descended in Bury council because of Job Evaluation.

## Recruitment & Selection policy

At the Six town Joint trade union / employer Consultative Committee UNISON were asked to consider a new Recruitment & Selection policy specifically designed by Six Town as opposed to the inherited one from Bury MBC.

One of UNISON's suggested amendments was that a Trade Union rep be allowed to sit in on the appointment panels as an observer, this was rejected by management as the "EMT had felt that it may undermine the managers and other panel members" suggesting that we did not trust them, and because they felt the inclusion of HR and Equality staff on the panel should ensure the process is fair and transparent.

Ironically they failed to understand that our suggestion would have enhanced the ability of the company to deflect any suggestion that a recruitment process had been biased or unfair, it was not an attack on the integrity of individuals. In our experience a percentage of unsuccessful candidates believe that something was amiss and dissuading them of that can be almost impossible without truly independent involvement.



The HR manager suggested that in contentious situations a Trade Union observer would be welcomed. This seems a reasonable stance except the arbiter of what is contentious would still be management.

UNISON have therefore stated that we will not endorse the document unless our amendment is included.

# IMPORTANT ADVICE FOR ALL MEMBERS

Following the withdrawal of the dismissal and re-engagement notices, we have received the following advice from the UNISON legal team,

- 1. Losers who have not signed/responded**  
Your position is clear. They are still employed on their old terms and conditions and have not been dismissed. Nothing will change until after the consultation period ends.
- 2. Winners who have not signed/responded**  
Your position is clear. They have not accepted an offer which has now been withdrawn. Therefore, they are still employed on their old terms and conditions and have not been dismissed. Nothing will change until after the consultation period ends.
- 3. Losers who have signed/responded**  
You have probably agreed a mutual variation in terms and conditions. The council has now said that it is going to vary terms again, i.e. back to old terms. If you do nothing then, you will be deemed to have agreed to this second variation. Therefore, you will remain on your old terms and conditions and have not been dismissed.

- 4. Winners who have signed/responded**  
You have probably agreed a mutual variation in terms and conditions. The council has now said that it is going to vary terms again, i.e. back to old terms. If you do nothing then, you will be deemed to have agreed to this second variation. Therefore, you will remain on your old terms and conditions and have not been dismissed.

**Our advice to those members is that you object as per the attached template. i.e. complete the attached form and send it back to your employer without delay.**

If you object, then there will be no mutual variation back to old terms and you would potentially have claims for unlawful deduction from wages, starting in April 09, if the council continue to pay you under your old terms.

If you are unsure what to do, please ring the Branch officer on 0161 253 5195.



## To Departmental HR Team

I refer to your recent letter asking me to agree that the notice of termination and the agreement to re-engagement, which I have signed, be set aside.

I do not agree to this proposal and will be seeking further advice about my position.

Signed .....

Print Name .....

Date .....



UNISON  
17 Knowsley Street  
Bury  
Lancashire  
BL9 0ST

Tel: 0161 253 5195

Dear Colleague

## ADVANCE NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2009

The UNISON Bury Branch AGM is to be held on **Wednesday 11th March 2009** at the Bury Sports Club, Radcliffe Road Bury commencing at 6.00pm. Refreshments will be available from 5:15pm.

Nominations are sought for the following Branch Officer posts.

Chair	Equal Opportunities Officer
Deputy Chair	Women's Officer
Branch Secretary	Lesbian & Gay Officer
Assistant Branch Secretary	Black Members Officer
Treasurer	Youth Services Officer
Health & Safety Officer	Publicity Officer
Education Officer	International Relations Officer
Welfare Officer	Branch Auditor (post 1)
Membership Officer	Branch Auditor (post 1)
Sports & Social Officer	

Nominations should be addressed to the Branch Secretary and received before **12 noon on Monday 23 February 2009**.

Yours sincerely

*Stephen Morton*

Branch Secretary

## NOMINATION FORM FOR BRANCH OFFICER POST 2009/2010

Please accept my nomination for:

POST:

Signed: ..... Date: .....

Print Name (block capitals) .....

**Nominated by:**

a) ..... b) .....

*Please return  
nominations  
to the address  
above*

# ADDRESSING YOUR NEEDS UPDATE YOUR RECORDS

In these troubled times it's very important that we reach as many of our members as possible by having your correct contact details. We can only achieve this with your support and co-operation. Therefore we rely on you to inform us of any changes to your home or work address. In addition,



email addresses and or mobile telephone numbers are essential in helping us contact you at short notice.

If your details have recently changed or you wish us to add some further details to your membership record, please let us know by completing and returning the form below.

## UNISON - MEMBERSHIP UPDATE FORM

Name: ..... Membership number (if known).....

Home Address: .....

.....

..... Post code: .....

Home email address: .....

Workplace: .....

Workplace address: .....

.....

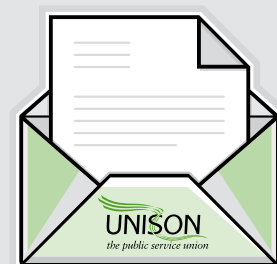
..... Post code: .....

Job Title: ..... Works Phone no. ....

Mobile phone no: ..... Home phone no. ....

Works email .....

Thank you for completing this form. Please return it to:  
UNISON Bury Branch  
17 Knowsley Street,  
Bury,  
Lancashire,  
BL9 0ST



I am interested in becoming a UNISON workplace contact.

Name: ..... Workplace: .....

Contact Phone No: ..... Email address .....



**If you are not currently a UNISON member and wish to join, please complete below**



**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
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Surname	Date of Birth
---------	---------------

Home address	
Postcode	Home

National Insurance No. (from your payslip)
<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
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### 2. YOUR EMPLOYMENT DETAILS

Employers Name
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Job Title/Occupation
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Department Section
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Workplace Address	
Postcode	

Payroll No.
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**When completed please send to:**

UNISON Bury LG Branch  
17 Knowsley Street  
Bury, Lancashire  
BL9 0ST

### 3. WHAT YOU WILL PAY (FROM 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	£25,001-£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
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Date
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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 email 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