



ROCHDALE

PIONEER

Members Newsletter from ROCHDALE UNISON

May 2011

Ruthless Calculating and on the Ropes

This month's local Elections were a complete disaster for the Lib Dem part of the Government. They lost 748 Councillors on 5th May. In Rochdale Lib Dems were punished by the electorate for the public service cuts they have inflicted on our town. Not a single Lib Dem Councillor was elected and they now have less Councillors than the Tories.

(The Independent Alliance, led by Gregory Cousins-the architect behind the original Lib Dem cuts budget, were also humiliated.)

The Tory-Lib coalition formed just over a year ago is already looking vulnerable. But they are not going to stop making cuts without a fight.

No easy ride for Labour

Labour now have a majority in Rochdale and face some tough choices over the coming months. Labour councillors need to be very aware that the reason the

Rochdale electorate turned on the Lib Dems is because they were responsible for cutting services and jobs

Rochdale UNISON remain fully committed to defending local services, jobs and our members' terms and conditions regardless of who is in control of the Council.

No pay cuts

Before the Election Labour agreed to a budget that included a proposal for a ballot on pay and conditions in the Council.

If the ballot goes ahead UNISON will be actively campaigning against a 2.5% cut in the pay of Council workers and changes to our terms and conditions.

This was a Tory-Lib Dem policy that will not save a single job and should be thrown out.



Alright for Some

Not a day goes by at the moment without some Politician delivering a lecture on "tough choices". If your wages have been frozen and your partner has lost their job because of the Bankers' reckless gambling then your choices can be very tough. But the same rules simply don't apply if you are mega rich.

The Sunday Times Rich List recently revealed that Britain's 1000 richest people increased their collective wealth last year by £60 billion so that between them they are now worth £396 billion.

Surely these fat cats could afford to pay slightly higher taxes so that vital public services and jobs can be protected. Clearly the tough choice to tackle some of these tax dodgers and Banksters is not one this Government is prepared to take. They would rather see us suffer.

Self organised groups

Rochdale LGBT Group

Rochdale UNISON is forming its own Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Group.

Want to meet new friends, discuss issues in the workplace, make a difference?

Our first meeting will be on
June 30th - 6.15pm – 7.30pm

Committee Room 3 Town Hall

If you would like to join us or ask a question please contact Nik Babyk

nik.babyk@rochdale.gov.uk

in confidence.

Black Members Committee

The next Black Members
Committee will be on
13th July 12 noon

Committee Room 3 Town Hall

Billions wasted on Trident could stop cuts, warns UNISON chief

Commenting on the Defence Secretary Liam Fox's announcement that the cost of a new fleet of Trident nuclear missile submarines could more than double by the time they are built, Dave Prentis, UNISON's General Secretary, said:

“The Defence Secretary's decision to plough money into Trident will leave a sour taste in the mouth of the millions hit hardest by the Government cuts.

“This huge sum could be used to save the economy and stop the loss of thousands of jobs and hospital wards, children's centres and other vital services. The £25bn does not even include the price of warheads, running costs and the bill for leasing Trident missiles from the US.

“Just a week ago Nick Clegg claimed the Lib Dem's had put a stop to all this. This is clearly another sign that the Government's claims cannot be believed.

“We know that there is an alternative to the Government's cuts agenda - cracking down on the tax avoiders and tax havens, raising a Robin Hood Tax on the banks and making taxation fairer, would also save billions, at the same time as safeguarding our recovery.”

If you are reading this and you are not a member but would like to join please contact Rochdale UNISON 01706 925952

We currently represent over 4,900 members in Rochdale Council, IMPACT, RBH, Link4Life, Hopwood Hall College and other employers. We have supported hundreds of our members through formal procedures, the Pay and Grading process and the Efficiencies Programme. We will go on supporting our members affected by redundancies and any other issues.

Together we are stronger

Local Government Pension Scheme

Ten Key Facts

1. The LGPS is a funded scheme like private sector defined benefit schemes and unlike the other public sector pension schemes. Together the 101 LGPS funds hold more than £120billion in investments and assets, enough to pay benefits for over 20 years
2. The LGPS has a positive cash flow, with income from investments and contributions exceeding expenditure on benefits by £4-5billion every year
3. Members contribute an average of 6.4% to the scheme with higher earners paying proportionately more
4. The employer contribution rate for current service is 13.6%. In the private sector the comparable employer contribution average is 15.6%. Many employers are paying a high overall contribution to the scheme because of past underfunding and contribution holidays
5. The LGPS is collectively the biggest pension fund in the country and fourth largest in the world making it a major shareholder in business and the UK economy
6. Four million people are members of the LGPS in England & Wales either as active, contributing members, pensioners or deferred members
7. In April 2008 (2009 in Scotland and Northern Ireland) reformed schemes were launched covering all existing and new LGPS members that changed the benefit structure and increased average member contributions to the scheme from 5.8% to 6.4%
8. In the last year income from employee contributions to the scheme has increased by 15%
9. More than 7,000 employers participate in the LGPS, many of which are private sector companies providing local public services
10. Not gold-plated, the average pension in payment from the LGPS is around £4,000 a year, for women the average is £2,600

UNIONS TOGETHER FIGHTING TO

PROTECT OUR PENSIONS