

Makes a Difference

Members Newsletter from ROCHDALE UNISON

August 2009

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Pay and Grading Review

Many UNISON members may not be aware that there are four Pay and Grading Reviews taking place. These reviews are all at different stages of the process. Every employee on National Joint Council (NJC) terms and conditions of service is affected. These employees work for Rochdale MBC, Rochdale Boroughwide Housing Ltd (RBH), Link4Life and Schools.

In order to simplify this update each employer's progress is detailed separately.



The Appeals Process began in early June and will continue for as long as is necessary. There is currently a 38% cancellation rate of panels. Cancellation on the whole is due to holidays and sickness. 2 panels sit each day and each panel hears up to 6 Appeals. To date around 30% of Appeals have been concluded. If you have an Appeal pending our office will contact all UNISON members to ascertain if you want a Steward to support you. We can only do this when we are given the date of your hearing. We have no details as yet as to when Rochdale MBC will implement their Pay and Grading Review, although it cannot be October as previously stated because the timescales for the legal processes will not allow that to happen. At the appropriate time employees will be asked to accept a voluntary variation to their contracts of employment and will be given a 30 day period in which to do so. Following this 30 day period, those employees unwilling to accept the amendments will receive 90 days notice of termination and re-engagement. UNISON will issue further information to our members at the appropriate times.



RBH will implement its Pay and Grading review on 1st October 2009. The Appeals process has been concluded, although some re-evaluations remain outstanding. UNISON has written to every member in RBH explaining the stance the joint trade unions of the NJC are taking and the current legal position pertaining to those members who are losing pay. Employment Tribunal rulings often set different precedents. If any new case law emerges that would affect our members rights we will contact you as a matter of urgency.



Link4Life are currently negotiating their Pay and Grading proposals. No decisions have yet been made and no formal proposals have been put forward. Rochdale MBC and RBH have very different and diverse Pay and Grading Reviews. Their pay scales and terms and conditions of service are not the same. UNISON expect that Link4Life will propose a review that although similar to Rochdale MBC's and RBH's, will be aligned to the needs of Link4Life's business. As soon as we have enough detail with which to consult our members we will arrange an appropriate method to do so.



Schools

For UNISON members employed in Schools a new National Initiative is currently being negotiated. UNISON have visited many schools in the Borough to explain what is happening. This initiative means that the Pay and Grading Review for Schools is for the time being "on hold". We are issuing information as and when we receive it. We will keep members fully updated of any developments.

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Local Government Pay Offer 2009/10 Consultative Ballot Paper

The Local Government Employers have offered:

- **Pay**
From 1 April 2009 an increase of 1.25% on SCPs 4 to 10 inclusive.
From 1 April 2009 an increase of 1.00% on SCPs 11 to 49 inclusive.
- **Annual Leave** (*This does not apply to workers in Rochdale as the minimum annual leave entitlement is more than this*)
From 1 April 2009, an increase from 20 to 21 days in minimum annual leave for employees with less than five years' service.

The National Agreement Part 2 Para 7.2 would therefore be amended to read as follows, with effect from 1 April 2009:

7.2 Annual Leave

The minimum paid annual leave entitlement is twenty one days with a further four days after five years of continuous service. The entitlement as expressed applies to five day working patterns. For alternative working patterns an equivalent leave entitlement should be calculated.

- **Joint Statement on Best Practice in Handling Redundancies**
By 1 December 2009, the NJC will produce joint guidance on best practice in handling redundancies.

The employers state that this improved offer represents their final position and they are not prepared to negotiate further. If the offer is rejected, councils will not implement it unilaterally so there would be no increase for 2009/10.

Please read the following and place a cross in either the accept or the reject box.

The UNISON NJC Committee's decision is to recommend acceptance of the final offer as the best achievable by negotiation.

I wish to accept the offer

I wish to reject the offer

Please return your completed ballot paper to Rochdale UNISON, Floor 4,
Telegraph House, Baillie Street, Rochdale, OL16 1JA
no later than 4th September 2009