



ROCHDALE PIONEER

Members Newsletter from ROCHDALE UNISON

August 2014

Altogether for Fair Pay On 14th October

UNISON, Unite and GMB members in Schools and Local Government will be on strike again on Tuesday 14th October. The last action on 10th July was well supported around the country. A big thank you to all of our members who took part. We will all need to support each other through what is likely to be another difficult year in Rochdale. We can only do that if we all stand together.

The strike will coincide with a week of action on pay in the NHS. UNISON members in the NHS are balloting over pay (the ballot closes on 18th September). If they vote yes they will be joining us.

What do we want?

We are striking for a pay increase of at least £1 per hour for all Schools and Local Government workers and the introduction of the living wage (£7.65 per hour) for those on the lowest pay.

Can we get it?

Yes. Even though the Government is pleading poverty we know that when we take action we can get a better deal.

Our members in Higher Education (mostly low paid workers) were offered 1% like us. But they secured a pay rise of 2% and the Living Wage for the lowest paid after taking strike action. In the BBC the unions planned to take strike action against a 1% pay offer at the end of July. Management came back with an offer of £650 straight away, £150 in January and a further 2.5% in August next year.

UNISON's Head of Local Government Heather Wakefield speaking about the strike recently said:

"Employers and Government must be left in no doubt that we are serious in this dispute. As sister unions, we stand together to make sure that our members are treated with decency and respect. Our members cannot afford to carry on propping up local services through their pay packets. Many are low paid women who are being forced to resort to food banks and payday loan sharks just to survive. We need to put the heart back into Local Government by paying a living wage."

We know how difficult it can be for members to take strike action. For members who suffer financial hardship as a result of taking industrial action we have a hardship fund. If you need you can speak to the branch office about hardship payments please call 01706 925952.

Please note the strike date is now **14th October** and not 30th September.

Austerity Wrecks Lives- March and Rally

Definition of 'Austerity'

A state of reduced spending and increased frugality in the financial sector. Austerity measures generally refer to the measures taken by Governments to reduce expenditures in an attempt to shrink their growing budget deficits.

UNISON members in the North West will be marching through Manchester against the Government's cuts in public services and welfare spending on Saturday 6th September 2014. Everyone can see the effect these cuts are having on our lives.

The freeze on spending increases in the NHS combined with the privatisation of essential services is causing chaos in our Health Service. Our most important public services are being chopped up to sell to the likes of Arriva and Care UK. Chances are you already know someone who has been affected by this madness.

The millionaire politicians who are making the decisions know that they can pay for the best private health care for themselves and their families. They don't have to worry if the NHS is ruined.

Meanwhile disabled people are being persecuted through the bedroom tax, workplace capability assessments and the cuts in services. 789,000 families have been affected by benefit sanctions in the last 12 months.

Rochdale UNISON members will be marching together. Why not come with us? **Meet at 10am at Rochdale Train Station or if you want to go straight there meet us at Castlefield Arena, Liverpool Road, Manchester M3 4JR at 11am. Look out for the UNISON banner.**

Changed your details?

Please let us have your new details- even if you think you may have already told us it is worth checking to ensure your record is up to date and that you receive all essential information from UNISON.

Please complete and return the slip below or contact the Branch Office directly to make the changes:

Name: New Employer/Workplace.....

Old Address:

New Address:

Job Title:.....

Return to: Rochdale UNISON 46 Richard Street Rochdale OL11 1DU

Tel: 01706 925951/52 Fax: 01706 350342 e-mail: unison@rochdale.gov.uk

A ceasefire in Gaza is essential now

Harrowing images of death, destruction and human suffering in the Palestine/Israel conflict cannot fail to move even the most hard-hearted cynic.

Pitiful scenes of parents, distraught with grief over the slaughter of their children, cry out for the international community, politicians and Palestinian and Israeli leaders to call a halt.

We in UNISON are horrified at the rising death toll in Gaza, now over 1,200 – the vast majority of them innocent civilians, including hundreds of children. Destruction of civilian and UN infrastructure in recent days, including schools, hospitals and the territory's only power plant, will have grave ramifications for the Palestinian population now and long after this latest military operation ceases.

The excessive Israeli attacks are unjustifiable and totally disproportionate.

UNISON re-iterates its call for an immediate cease-fire and an end to the blockade imprisoning 1.9 million people. And we want the international community to provide urgently needed humanitarian aid to Gaza, including food, water, medical aid and generators.

Our Government must immediately end the arms trade with Israel. But a lasting peace relies on an end to the illegal occupation and blockade of the Palestinian territories and for the creation of a viable, independent Palestinian state alongside Israel.

UNISON encourages members and branches who wish to provide assistance to make a donation to Medical Aid for Palestinians, a charity with a long history of working in Gaza and with whom UNISON has worked in the past.

To donate online visit:

<http://www.map-uk.org/>

For more information about Gaza visit

<http://www.palestinecampaign.org/>

or

<http://www.stopwar.org.uk/>





JOIN US AT THE MARCH AND RALLY SATURDAY 18 OCTOBER

The TUC is calling a national demonstration in Central London here is why:

1. Poverty Pay

One in five people earn less than the living wage. For the first time more people in work are below the poverty line than those out of work.

The spread of zero-hours contracts, agency working and bogus self-employment is trapping many below the poverty line.

2. The Cost of Living Crisis

We are told that the economy is now recovering and that Britain's costs of living crisis is over. But whose recovery is this? Ordinary people are £40 a week worse off in real-terms than they were five years ago.

And if bankers hadn't crashed the economy and wages growth had stayed on track then workers on average would have £100 more in their pay packets every week.

3. Rising Inequality

Of course it's not tough for everybody. In 1998 top chief executives earned 45 times the average wage – enough for anyone.

But now they earn 185 times as much. That means they have earned what most people earn over 12 months in just a day and a half.

One key driver of the economic crash was growing pay inequality. Long before our banks went bust people's wages had stopped growing.

For local coach details contact Rochdale UNISON on 01706 925952. Places will go fast so you need to book now (£5 deposit required– refundable on the day) coach will pick up and return to Rochdale Areas.

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