



ROCHDALE

PIONEER

Members Newsletter from ROCHDALE UNISON

September 2014

ATTENTION! MEMBERS MEETINGS

JOINT UNISON & UNITE

**CONSULTATION OVER PROPOSED CUTS TO SERVICES/ CHANGES
TO TERMS & CONDITIONS FOR COUNCIL EMPLOYEES**

INCLUDING FACILITIES MANAGEMENT STAFF

EXCLUDING DIRECTLY EMPLOYED SCHOOLS STAFF

Monday 22nd September 2014

12:15- 1pm

Great Hall, Rochdale Town Hall

&

Friday 3rd October 2014

12:15- 1pm

Reception Room, Rochdale Town Hall

A Slap In The Face

Management's proposals for further cuts to our terms and conditions have caused shock and anger throughout the council.

Sick idea

The proposal to cut sick pay for the first three days of sickness is particularly unacceptable and unfair. This proposal was rejected by all of the unions back in 2012. The council instead imposed a new sickness and absence policy on the workforce (a policy that UNISON will not agree to). This new policy has been in place for just over a year and yet management are changing the goalposts again. It is inhumane to punish people for being sick. If you have to have an operation, if you have a disability that means you are more likely to be sick or if you have the flu the last thing you should have to worry about is going into debt. We don't want people dragging themselves into work when they are ill because they can't afford to be sick. Unions have fought long and hard to get sick pay for working people. We are not going to give this up without a fight.

Pay cut

Once again we are being asked to take unpaid leave. This time they are asking for 5 days per year. That is equivalent to taking a weeks pay off us every year (or a 2% pay cut). Our wages have already been cut by 20% in real terms since 2010. We cannot afford to take this cut.

People doing shift work, weekend and night work will be hit even worse. These are already some of the lowest paid workers in the council.

The council also plans to freeze incremental progression again for another two years.

Worst place to be a Social Worker

On top of all this if you have to use your car for work they want to take your essential car user allowance away. Its almost as if Rochdale Council want to be known as the worst place to be a Social Worker, Occupational Therapist or Environmental Health Officer. There is no free car park at Riverside. The mileage rate has not kept up with inflation and the car user allowance was cut in half in 2012. Now they want to get rid of it entirely on top of the other cuts. No wonder the council can't keep permanent staff and is wasting thousands on agency fees.

We encourage every member to make their voices heard through the consultation period. UNISON will be opposing these attacks on your terms in our meetings with management. If you are not a member you should join and ask your colleagues to join. We need to stand together. We didn't cause the banking crisis and we shouldn't be made to pay for it.

Together We Are Stronger

Rochdale UNISON represents over 4000 members. If you are reading this and you are not a member but would like to join then please contact the Branch Office on 01706 925951/52, email unison@rochdale.gov.uk or join UNISON at www.joinunison.org

Please visit our new website at: www.unison-rochdale.org



Emergency food for local people in need!

Rochdale UNISON Branch office holds a collection box for Rochdale Foodbank, we collect items such as tins, boxed food, jars and sachets (not fresh food). The food is then donated to the Foodbank for local people in need. If you would like to contribute feel free to arrange to drop off items at the Branch office or go directly to Rochdale Foodbank, 8 South Parade (the old Pacific Bar) opening hours Monday- Friday between 11am - 12.50pm.

Toiletries Collection

Rochdale UNISON Branch office holds a toiletries collection box for Rochdale Women's Refuge, we collect unused items such as shower gel, bubble bath, soap, deodorant and other toiletries.

If you would like to add to our collection, please arrange to drop the items off at the Branch office by calling 01706 929591/2 or email: unison@rochdale.gov.uk

TUC Protest - Britain Needs A Pay Rise

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.

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.

That's why Rochdale UNISON members will be joining the TUC march in London on Saturday 18th October. We have booked a coach jointly with other unions in Rochdale, Oldham and Bury. If you would like to come with us please contact the branch 01706 925952/51 or email unison@rochdale.gov.uk

UNISON National Women's Conference

Would you be interested in attending UNISON's national women's conference?

The conference is a place to discuss and set policy on issues affecting women members.

We can provide free transport, accommodation and childcare for women who want to attend.

The conference will be held at the Southport Convention Centre from 12.30pm Thursday 12 February to 1.00pm Saturday 14 February 2015.

If you would like to go or just want more information about the conference please contact Christine Davies at the Branch Office on 01706 925952/51 or email unison@rochdale.gov.uk



Why are we striking on 14th October?

Local Government workers empty the bins, clean the schools, educate and care for children, look after the elderly, and vulnerable, conduct marriages and civil partnerships, care for parks, and check the safety of the food on your table.

We do it all despite savage cuts to vital services. Almost half a million of our jobs have gone. Those of us left are doing far more for far less.

We have worked hard to get employers to negotiate a deal, but the employers won't even talk to us about a better offer, or join us for independent arbitration.

Most UNISON members are low-paid, part-time women workers, struggling to pay their household bills. Losing pay for strike action is not something they do lightly.

Our members are not asking for the 14% pay increase company bosses and bankers are getting. Or the 11% MPs will see. They are just asking for a rise of at least £1 an hour.

That would mean almost half a million council and school support workers currently earning below the Living Wage of £7.65 an hour could come off in-work benefits.

We need everybody to get behind the strike on Tuesday 14th October to get a fair deal on pay.

If you suffer financial hardship as a result of taking strike action you may be able to get help from UNISON's hardship fund. Please contact the branch to discuss how this works if you need help - 01706 925951/52

Academies Ballot open

The academies ballot is now open and members have been sent voting papers.

The ballot will close on 24 September. The ballot will involve members in as many academies as possible, within a tight timeframe, whose pay is tied to the National Joint Council for Local Government Services

National Minimum Wage Increase 1st October 2014

The bottom rate of NJC pay (SCP 5) will increase to £6.50 per hour from 1st October when this becomes new rate for the National Minimum Wage.

