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Andrea Egan elected as UNISON General secretary

Rochdale UNISON welcomes the election of Andrea Egan as General Secretary of UNISON. Andrea became General Secretary on 22nd January having received nearly 60% of all votes cast.

She began her public sector career as a residential care worker, supporting vulnerable children, before qualifying as a social worker fifteen years ago. Andrea became a union steward 30 years ago and has since served as secretary, joint secretary and assistant secretary of UNISON's Bolton Local Government branch. She was elected to UNISON's NEC in 2017 and went on to become president of the union in 2022. Throughout her career, Andrea has been a strong advocate for equality and inclusion. She supported the introduction of the union's first race discrimination panel and championed the disabled worker's passport. She also led the 'Organising to Win' programme, focused on securing improvements to pay and conditions for members. She was elected on a manifesto that includes:

Regional 'strike-ready' events in advance of national pay talks to provide skills and resources for branch activists and an agreed strategic plan.

Driving the creation of national and regional resources to support branches in dispute.

Creating a Pensions Divestment Task Force to relaunch UNISON's campaign for divestment of Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) funds from firms supplying arms to Israel and/or involved with the exploitation of the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

Opposing funding for Labour MPs and candidates who fail to stand against welfare cuts and other attacks on our members' living standards and policies.

Standing proudly and unequivocally in defence of LGBT+ rights because equality is not negotiable and discrimination in any form has no place in our workplaces. Trans men are men, trans women are women and that non-binary identities exist. People have the right to live as their true authentic selves and deserve the full support of the union to do so.

Andrea said: "Being the first ordinary member to lead our union is the greatest honour of my life. I am committed to changing the way our union operates, promoting our organising agenda and collective power.

"I can't wait to get to work with members, activists and staff to build on our strengths and start turning UNISON into an incredible force for change."

Don't Forget to book your place

Rochdale UNISON will be holding our Annual General Meeting over three meetings on Wednesday 4th March:

4th March – 6.30am @ Green Lane Heywood

4th March – 7.00am @ Green Lane Heywood

4th March - 1.00pm @ St Andrew's Methodist Church, Rochdale (Next to Aldi)

Please contact the branch on 01706 925952 or unison@rochdale.gov.uk to register your place at one of the meetings.

UNISON will continue to support and fight for WASPI women

UNISON has a proud record of campaigning with WASPI women (Women Against State Pension Inequality) for fair transitional relief for 1950s women who are facing hardship and poverty because of the government's acceleration in increasing their state pension age without adequate notice.

Many WASPI women were given just 18 months notice of a six-year increase to their state pension age.

Commenting on the government announcement reaffirming there will be no compensation scheme for WASPI women, UNISON general secretary Andrea Egan said:

"This decision slams the door on justice for a generation of women who lost out through no fault of their own.

"They've had years of delays and false hope, but the government's chosen to stand by a flawed process rather than do the right thing.

"Tens of thousands of women had the rug pulled from beneath them. They had little notice of key changes to their pensions and no chance to plan.

"Many have been forced to work longer, burn through savings or deal with poverty in retirement.

"Ministers must urgently rethink this decision. By doing nothing they're deepening the sense of betrayal and alienating women who did everything asked of them.

"UNISON will continue to support and fight for WASPI women to ensure they get what's owing to them and for what they feel is a fair deal."