

Chair's Message



Dear Colleagues,

Scottish Black Members did us proud on March 26th in London. Now we have to keep up the pressure on fighting Public Service cuts.

Black people will suffer disproportionately from public service cuts, as the public sector is a key employer, and because services and community projects, which support many Black people, will be particularly vulnerable to cuts.

Many Black Members are already facing reduced working hours or losing their jobs. This increases the likelihood of anxiety and long-term health impacts. Also the resulting debt and other financial issues may put quality of life and homes at risk and may contribute to added strain and pressures on families and children's school performance.

Best Regards
Ismail Donmez



www.unison-scotland.org.uk/publicworks/UNISON%20Manifesto%202011.pdf

UNISON DEBTLINE SERVICE

Payplan provide free, ethical and immediate debt solutions to those in financial difficulty. We work with UNISON welfare to make this free service available to all members.
<http://unison.payplan.com>

VOTE FOR PUBLIC SERVICES

Our public services are facing an unprecedented assault from the cuts that have been announced by the Conservative/Liberal Democrat (ConDem) coalition UK government.

UNISON members are being threatened with redundancy and countless services are being cut across the UK. However, there are things the Scottish government can do to stop this.

The Scottish Parliament elections will take place on Thursday May 5th and this Scottish election gives you an opportunity to send the government a very clear message. Use your vote for public services and support candidates who stand up for public services and challenge these destructive cuts.

Ask these questions to candidates standing for election in your area:

- Should public services be provided by directly employed staff with a public service ethos, or by private companies who must prioritise profits?
- Most parties are in favour of a council tax freezes. Wouldn't spending money on public services be better than tax freezes?
- Is the shortage of money for public services caused by having too many classroom assistants and carers, or because we had to bail out the banks? If it's because we bailed out the banks, then why are classroom assistants and carers facing losing their jobs?
- What is fair or right about a 50% increase in public service pension contributions that will go straight to the treasury and not into our pensions? What will you do about that?
- Inflation is currently at 5%, so a two-year pay freeze will mean a real drop in income of 10% – and that's before you look at the increase in public service pension contributions. How can that be fair when the economy isn't in recession?
- There are 200,000 Scottish households on housing waiting lists, yet only 6,000 social houses were built last year. How many new houses will your party build?

www.unison-scotland.org.uk/publicworks/questionsforcandidates.pdf

PENSIONS CUT

PAY MORE - RETIRE LATER

“My main recommendation therefore is that Government should replace the existing final salary pension schemes with a new career average scheme and, when everything is ready, move existing members to the new scheme for future accruals.” - Lord Hutton, Final Report

UNISON General Secretary, Dave Prentis is warning that the Government will use the Hutton report as a Trojan horse to raid the pensions of millions of public sector workers.

The union is sending out a message to its 1.4 million members warning that industrial action is now one step closer. Dave Prentis, said:

“Whatever the Hutton report may say about fairness, the Government will use it as a Trojan horse to raid the pensions of hard working public sector workers - pensions that our members have paid into year in year out and which are fair and affordable. In fact, even before the report today, the Government announced they were increasing employee contributions by 50%.”

“Asking workers to work longer for less is simply not an option. We want to talk to the Government about their response as a matter of urgency. But I am sending out a clear message to our 1.4 million members warning them that industrial action is now one big step closer.”

“There is a lot of misinformation about public sector pension schemes. The facts are -

- The local government and NHS pension schemes were renegotiated in 2006 to make them sustainable and affordable.
- Both schemes are cash rich – more is going in than coming out.
- Last year, the NHS scheme received £2billion more in contributions than it paid out and this money went straight to the Treasury.”

The Pensions Commission Final report is at:
www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/d/hutton_final_100311.pdf

Editors' Corner

Sabrina Memon &
Lui Giacomello

The attack on Public Services continues. Cuts in your services, your jobs and your pensions.

Have your say in shaping the society you live in.

Vote on May 5th!

EQUALITY ACT 2010

UNISON has produced guidance on the Equality Act 2010. While the Act mainly brings together existing equalities legislation, it does also introduce a few changes.

There are some changes to definitions of disability discrimination, new provisions relating to pre-employment health screening, and discrimination by association, among other things.

The public sector equality duty is also to be expanded to incorporate all forms of discrimination from April 2011, rather than just race, gender and disability.

www.unison.org.uk/acrobat/EqualityAct2010.pdf

UNISON BLACK MEMBERS MARCH ON 26TH



More than 250,000 people attended the march and rally on March 26th in central London against public spending cuts. A carnival atmosphere, with brass bands, dragonfly stilt walkers, 4000 trumpets and tattoos, all decked out in green and purple, snaked its way through the streets of London.

UNISON, the UK's largest union, formed the biggest group of people marching against the cuts, as tens of thousands of nurses, midwives, social workers, teaching assistants, blood transfusion staff and healthcare assistants made their way from all corners of the UK, by train, plane, tube, boat and coach.

<http://unisonactive.blogspot.com/2011/03/dave-prentis-speech-at-26-march-hyde.html>