



Scotland in UNISON

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UNISON SCOTLAND HOSTS LARGEST EVER EQUAL PAY TRAINING EVENT

Activists facing the equal pay challenge

by Nicola Morris
Organising Assistant

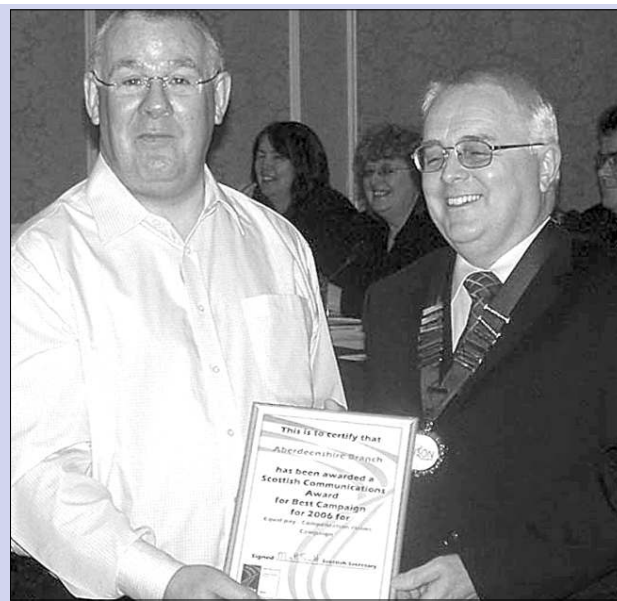
This month saw UNISON Scotland's largest ever equal pay event, when over 120 delegates from branches across Scotland, covering most Service Groups, attended the Winning for All training event.

Over the two days activists and staff participated in activities including workshops covering a broad range of issues relating to the challenges that members are facing over equal pay.

Sessions were held on issues such as; negotiating an appeals procedure; targeting occupational groups; dismissal and imposition; job evaluation; equality impact assessments and campaigning around equal pay.

The event provided time to share experiences, seek guidance and discuss the best ways to meet the challenges we are all facing. There were also plenary presentations covering legal updates, employment tribunal procedures, and recruiting and organising around equal pay.

Following the event, Scottish Organiser, Glyn Hawker, who coordinates UNISON Scotland's equal pay strategy across all service groups, said: "Achieving equal pay across all sectors and bargaining groups has been a key priority for UNISON in 2006. It provides



Equal Pay Award

Aberdeenshire Branch's Equal Pay Campaign topped UNISON Scotland's Communications Awards 2006 as "a good example of the nuts and bolts organisation, planning, objectives and communication that is essential to effective union activity."

Photo: A chuffed Branch Secretary Bob Revie picks up the Award from National President Malcolm Cantello.

SEE PAGE 4 FOR FULL AWARDS RESULTS

activists and staff alike with one of the biggest challenges they have faced for many years.

"As well as providing specific training and support, the *Winning for All* event provided an excellent forum for staff and activists from all our service groups to share their experiences and learn from each other.

"The issues raised and debated over the course of the event will inform UNISON Scotland's equal pay strategy as we move forward in 2007 and will give a clear direction

for future training events. "2007 is a new year, and will bring many new challenges on equal pay. The success of the event is in identifying these challenges and considering how to address them.

"There is more to be done but we have a clearer picture and a greater level of confidence in our ability to deliver what is needed next year. Many, many thanks are due to those who worked so hard to plan, prepare and deliver such a successful event".

MORE EQUAL PAY AND SINGLE STATUS ON PAGE 3

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- Glasgow Strike threat wins commitment from Council

Key politicians mark UNISON Parliament event

Andy Kerr MSP, Minister for Health and Community Care, and Shona Robison MSP, Opposition spokesperson on Health, came together in a rare display of unity to speak at a UNISON organised event during the STUC's Trade Union week at the Scottish Parliament.

The two politicians went back to their days working for the public services to draw lessons on the current running of Scotland's public services. Both worked in local government before being elected to Parliament - indeed both worked for Glasgow City Council!

They faced lively and sharp questioning from UNISON activists from Health and Local Government on topics as diverse as public service trusts, shared services and, of course, PFI/PPP.

They, in turn, contrasted the public services they inherited in taking their seats in the Parliament, with the position now.

Lilian Macer, UNISON Scotland's Vice Convener, who chaired the meeting, said, "It says much for UNISON's standing with politicians of all parties that two senior opponents are prepared to sit down at the same meeting and seriously discuss the issues that face us. We look forward to continuing this dialogue and advancing our Revitalise agenda as we approach the Election.

UNISON also ran a stall in the Parliament, alongside the STUC, who also ran a series of meetings, receptions and other events in the first ever Trade Union Week.

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Strike threat delivers better deal for electricity retail staff

by Chris Bartter
Communications Officer

Staff at nearly 40 Scottish and Southern Electricity shops across the North and West of Scotland have accepted a new pay offer by the Company in a consultative ballot.

Staff had previously voted for strike action, in a 77% vote in favour of strike action, with an 86% vote for action short of a strike, because their claim for a

pay rise was met with threats of cuts in conditions and a proposed pay freeze. Following intensive negotiations last week the staff overwhelmingly accepted a revised offer thereby ending the threat of Industrial Action in the lead up to the busiest time of year for the business.

UNISON Regional Organiser, John Fair said: "Administrative staff will receive an increase of 3% for both 2006 and 2007 while shop staff have accepted a

new pay scale and overtime in Public Holiday and over time payments from April 2007 in return for a 3% increase this year and compensatory payments for the next two years.

"Both sides of the negotiating team worked hard to find a resolution to the dispute and our members have backed the new proposals following our consultation which ended today. Our members have accepted a degree of security in exchange for major

changes to terms and conditions and believe their foresight at this time will provide long term stability for the company."

The consultative ballot saw 61% of members voting with 89% accepting the offer and only 11% voting against.

SSE shops are based across North and West Scotland - from Dundee in the East to Campbeltown and Stornoway in the West and up to Kirkwall in the North.

Fife raises £1000 for South African HIV group

by Roddy Cameron
Communications & Campaigns

UNISON Fife branch presented £500 to Alec Deary of the Fife Men project on World Aids Day (Friday 1 December) for the South African HIV group Wola Nani.

Alec Deary, Fife Men co-ordinator and UNISON Fife branch voluntary sector convenor, said "Together with funds raised by the project this donation means that for the third year running £1000 will go to South Africa."

Supporting Fife Men's World Aids Day event, UNISON Fife focused on the role of members in tackling the stigma and discrimination still associated with HIV. Shop stewards were supplied with up-to date information and posters about ending prejudice in the workplace.

Branch Secretary Linda Erskine said, "Wola Nani told us that 900 people a day die of HIV related infections in South Africa and on World Aids Day alone 50 new referrals had been made to the agency!"

For a several years now Fife branch has linked with the Fife Men Project to support Wola Nani - Xhosa for 'we embrace and develop one another' - established in 1994 as a non-profit organisation to help bring relief to the communities hardest hit by the HIV crisis.

Formed against a background of cuts in welfare spending and huge increases in HIV/AIDS cases, Wola Nani initiated programmes to help HIV+ people in the local community cope with the emotional and financial strains brought about by HIV and AIDS. Especially HIV+ women and their children who bear the brunt of the national pandemic.

More information about the branch support for Wola Nani is on the branch website www.unison-fife.org.uk

Scottish Black Members 2006 policy success

By Ismail Donmez Secretary SBMC

The Scottish Black Members Committee (SBMC) successfully achieved all its policy objectives it set for 2006. This was revealed in a performance report presented at the recent Scottish Council meeting. The performance report notably won praise of the Scottish Convenor.

Hamid Rasheed the Chair of the SBMC said: "The SBMC has increased its membership by 23%. And via RMS (UNISON Database) some 640 black members have been identified in UNISON Scotland. This heralds the opportunity to shape black self-organising groups at the branch level.

"We have challenges ahead; we need help of Scottish Region and Scottish Branches in creating self organising groups at branch level. Any such move will create a culture of learning and organising within the self-organising group, at a grass root level.

"Not only the existence of self organising groups at branch level will improve the representation of black people, but also the structure will enable black people to mainstream equality - using equality as bargaining agenda to influence the policy and to negotiate better terms and conditions for our members", he added.

Young members get wild on their weekend

by Carrie Bell
Young Members' Committee

On a very wet and wild and windy November weekend, a group of UNISON's young members met in Glasgow for our twice-yearly training weekend.

During the weekend we discussed the history of the trade union movement, the structure of UNISON and young members' role within the branch committee to name but a few topics explored.

We reviewed our 2006 work plan and our campaign '8 ways to Activ8'. This campaign aims to encourage branches to get two young members active and, most importantly, make sure that they have a young members' officer to motivate their



young members and encourage the branch to take on young members' views.

Activities were enjoyable and fun, allowing participants to express their views. Of course in true young members' style there was no work without play and

the Saturday night social event was as competitive and exciting as ever. Many then moved on to other places in Glasgow later.

Around half of those attending for the weekend were NEW activists - proving our campaign is working! The weekend was well received by everyone and we hope that at our next training and AGM weekend in the first half of 2007 we will have even more new young members.

You don't have to be active within your branch to participate - all you need is a willingness to find out more about UNISON and about becoming active.

All branches will receive information on the training weekend so just ask yours to keep you informed. Contact j.stewart@unison.co.uk

Rally says 'Love Scotland, Hate Racism'

by Hamid Rasheed
Communications & Campaigns

UNISON members, fellow trade unionists and people representing all faiths and cultures came from all over Scotland to take part in St Andrew's Day Anti-Racist march in Glasgow - to send a clear message across that racism will not be tolerated in Scotland.

The rally was organised by the Scottish Trade Union Congress, at a time when tensions were running high among communities in Scotland with three men found guilty of committing the racist murder of Kris Donald in Glasgow. And the hair of a 15 year old Sikh boy was cut off by a gang of four youths in Edinburgh.

The event started out as a counter demonstration to right wing racists from the BNP who tried to make St Andrews Day their own day of action. For many years now, the STUC, with support from UNISON Scotland, has organised the march and for the second year the Glasgow Anti Racist Alliance (GARA) co-sponsored the event



Eileen Dinning UNISON's Scottish Equalities officer said: "Our members fully understand how important it is to be part of this march, particularly at a time when a recent Scottish Executive report says 42% of Scots claim to have been affected by racism, either as a victim, witness or perpetrator - showing a 7% increase compared to 2001.

"Scotland is a place for people of all cultures and faiths; Scotland is home for people from different backgrounds.

The St Andrew's Day Anti-Racist march brings our communities together to say, "We love Scotland and Hate Racism".

Hamid Rasheed, Chairperson of Scottish Black Members of UNISON said: "Minority Ethnic Communities and Asylum Seekers are being increasingly targeted after 9/11 and 7/7 attacks, and a flurry of ongoing ill presentation of information on immigration by tabloids, provides more reasons to join this year's St Andrew's

Day March.

The theme for the event was: 'Love Scotland: Hate Racism'. As part of our Many Cultures Working in UNISON campaign, we had a stall with our anti-racist materials.

The success of the march in sending that message across was evident when one Christmas shopper commented: "I think it is excellent that people are aware of racism and prepared to make a stand against it. It is fabulous ... well done ... Glasgow."

Never too old to start learning - and it's FREE!

by Lucanne MacKay
Lifelong Learning Fieldworker

"I'm too old to start learning"
"I can't do the course"
"I can't afford to learn"
"I don't have the time to do the course"

These are everyday perceptions of learning but did you know....

- You are NEVER too old to start learning - we are learning all the time and there is no age limit
- UNISON Learning@Work programme consists of courses all about confidence building .
- Scottish Executive funding has enabled all NHS staff and staff in Social Care in Scotland to access different courses - these courses are FREE, and we all love FREE!!!
- Courses are attended in work time

So what is the catch? There isn't one! UNISON has negotiated funding for our members and non members so they can

access FREE learning and in work time.

What courses?

Learning@Work programme includes:

- Return to Learn
- Improve your Study Skills
- Intro to IT (NHS staff)

UNISON branches locally negotiate with their employer to get the best deal for their members, branches then raise awareness of the opportunities and line managers are made aware of the benefits of releasing staff to attend courses.

Learners who complete any of the above courses often continue on the learning journey. Of course, it's your choice if you want to continue on this learning route.

Many people decide they like this style of learning and choose to be involved with UNISON as all our courses are designed to be confidence building and fully supportive. They get the



learning bug, want to encourage learning amongst colleagues and become learning reps!

Recently, learning has revolved around Agenda for Change - KSF plays a major part in NHS, and in Social Care there is the requirement of qualification for registration. The above courses are a great stepping stone in helping staff gain the confidence to progress in both these areas.

UNISON also works in partnership with the Open University, who offer many courses which could benefit UNISON members. The OU's fee waiver system and the use of Individual Learning Accounts could reduce, or possibly fully cover, the costs of some of their courses.

If you would like more info about learning please get in touch with Lifelong Learning Fieldworkers,
Mandy Clark, m.clark@unison.co.uk
0131 226 0061,
Lucanne Mackay,
l.mackay@unison.co.uk 0141 342 2889.

Glasgow strike threat wins commitment from council

Following a successful ballot for three days strike on 5,6,7 December, last ditch talks between UNISON and the council lead to a decision by the branch to call off the strike.

Speaking after the meeting Glasgow City, UNISON Branch Chair Mike Kirby and Council Leader Steven Purcell issued the following

statement.

"Glasgow City Council and UNISON have reached an agreement about the implementation of the Workforce Pay and Benefits review. We will now work together on staff development and service reform in order to ensure that we deliver a high quality service to the citizens of Glasgow and protect take home pay in the

long term.

"The Council is committed to assisting individual employees who are in a loss of earnings position and has given a clear commitment to ensure all appropriate action is taken to provide such employees with the opportunity to move to a higher level post, thus allowing maintenance of their earnings in the long term.

"Development plans and service redesign are the two main means of achieving the objective stated above. It is the clear intention to have agreed plans in place for all relevant staff which are capable of delivery by March 2009.

"The Council is prepared to agree an extension beyond March 2009 where it has not been possible to complete the

development plan and/or where service redesign has not been practically implemented.

"The overall progress of the Employee Development Commitment from now until at least March 2009 will be the subject of regular monitoring involving the Trade Unions through the Steering Group already established."

Jane goes Green

NEC member Jane Carolan went that extra step to put UNISON's policies forward when she addressed a fringe meeting organised by the magazine Scottish Left Review at the Scottish Green Party Conference.



Jane Carolan

Putting forward UNISON's Revitalise policies in favour of a publicly-run water industry and opposed to so-called mutualisation, and charitable trusts, Jane shared a platform with Phil McGarry, Scottish Secretary of the RMT, at a packed meeting.

Jane said, "Although I have been described as 'Green as a gas-guzzling four-by-four, full of nuclear scientists' it was worthwhile being able to explain UNISON's position to an increasingly important political group. Those present seemed keen to engage with UNISON's Public Service Manifesto, proving the value to the union of spreading the message"

UNISON has for some years run a stall at the Green (and all other Scottish Party) Conference. This is the first time a UNISON speaker has addressed delegates directly.

Two unions in court challenge to Falkirk on Equal Pay

by Chris Bartter
Communications Officer

UNISON and the GMB have stepped up the campaign for full pay equality in Scotland by issuing judicial review proceedings against Falkirk Council.

The case had its first hearing on 12 December. The unprecedented challenge strikes at the heart of local authority management by challenging the legality of the decision to sack staff and impose a discriminatory pay system.

In addition to the legal challenge, a rally is planned for 16 December, and Industrial action is scheduled for the day of implementation of the imposed conditions (18 Dec). Unfortunately our deadlines mean details of these cannot be reported here.

After six years of talks on pay equality, Falkirk Council walked away from pay negotiations in the late summer.

Rather than work to secure an agreement on pay equality, the council issued dismissal letters to staff and offered alternative employment in jobs due to start on 18 December.

However, the unions are opposed to the new terms because they preserve pay inequality between women and men.

Bizarrely, the council's plans actually introduce completely new forms of pay discrimination through payments that will be available only to male dominated groups.

Peter Hunter, UNISON's Legal Officer said: "It is staggering that after negotiating for six years, and

paying out millions in compensation, Falkirk Council still believe they can pay women less than men for work of equal value. It is also scandalous that a public body in Scotland, funded by tax payers, has the nerve to impose discrimination on its staff by sacking, or threatening to sack, all the 4,000 workers affected by these changes.

"This pay system will ensure that there will be successful litigation against the council for years to come. Litigation and compensation that will be financed by the tax payers of Falkirk."

Employees have the option of equal pay claims and unfair dismissal claims, but the unions have elected to pursue an unprecedented legal action of judicial review.

Under the Local Government (Scotland) Act 2003, all councils have a statutory duty to encourage pay equality and to comply with the Equal Pay Act.

The unions argue that the decision to sack staff and impose this unlawful pay system is therefore illegal. This question will be addressed by the Court of Session in the first half of 2007.

"The judicial review route is very important for employees", said Peter Hunter.

"In our experience, ordinary equal pay claims can take up to 10 years to resolve by which time many workers are retired or even dead.

"Local authority workers have lived with pay inequality long enough and this court action will enable us to stop discrimination in its tracks where a council is acting in breach of duty.

UNISON Energy merger



George McNaught from Scottish Electricity Branch and Lindsay Charalambous from Gas Branch Scotland tied the knot on Saturday 4 November.

It was a traditional Greek wedding and the photo shows George and Lindsay taking part in the traditional Greek money dance.

George and Lindsay first got together at the union's Energy seminar, and this year's event was scheduled for the weekend of their wedding. This had to be swiftly re-arranged as the Scottish delegation were all attending the wedding. Both branches would like to congratulate the happy couple.

"Given the mess and cost of pay discrimination, there is a very strong public interest in the success of this claim. For workers and tax payers it is vital that justice is done, that it is seen to be done, and that it is done promptly."

The UNISON/GMB claim also

includes a request for an interim order suspending the dismissals. Similar to an interim interdict, this order would prevent all dismissals. However, the judicial review will proceed in the new year regardless of whether the dismissals are prevented.

New on the web

- Equal Pay Campaign Pack
 - Adoption and Children (Scotland) Bill - MSP Briefing
 - 2007 UNISON courses
 - National LGBT Conference, report of Trans Awareness workshop
 - Scottish Labour Conference Briefing Equal Pay & Single Status
 - Professional Supervision in Social Work - UNISON Scotland position
 - Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Bill Response
 - Farepak collapse - what UNISON is doing
 - Black members AGM newsletter special
- www.unison-scotland.org.uk

Step towards ending two-tier workforce in NHS Scotland

Porters, cleaners and other ancillary staff working for private contractors inside the NHS are to benefit from the same pay and conditions as their counterparts directly employed by health boards as a result of a deal negotiated between UNISON and the Scottish Executive.

The agreement provides for a three stage implementation process that should deliver

Agenda for Change pay and conditions (or similar) from October 2006. Benefits will be phased in and backdated to October 2005 where applicable. So-called 'hard' FM staff (Estates etc) will be looked at locally.

Tom Waterson, Chair of UNISON's Health Group said: "We are pleased that this agreement will see improvements in the pay for thousands of catering, cleaning, porters and other staff employed in private companies

across Scotland. It improves on a similar framework deal in England by providing earlier implementation and a higher rate and it should also provide better training opportunities and skills development for these groups.

"We still have some way to go to fully eliminate the two-tier system. Privatisation of these services is not good for integrated healthcare and profit should not be a motive in providing essential patient services."

Across Scotland the number of staff affected expressed as a whole time equivalent is approximately 1700. The back pay for a full time member of staff could be as much as £360.

The deal is in three phases:
* Phase 1 from 1 October 2005 £5.69 an hour basic pay with an additional Scottish allowance of £0.188 giving a total of £5.878 an hour. In addition, staff will benefit from an additional two days holiday.

* Phase 2 from 1 April 2006 £5.878 an hour with an additional Scottish allowance of £0.147 giving a total of £6.025 an hour.

* Phase 3 from 1 October 2006 terms and conditions no less favourable than the Agenda for Change equivalent of £6.025 an hour. The framework provides a minimum standard and does not supercede arrangements already in place reached through local negotiation and agreement.

Major football championships get UNISON input

by Kevin O'Neil
Information Development Officer

The highest profile Asian football tournament in the UK took place in Glasgow recently and UNISON Scotland played a major role.

The UK Asian Football Championships (UKAC) were established to showcase the talent of Asian players and breakdown the barriers for Asians in sports in general, while challenging racism, inequality, stereotypes and misconceptions at all levels of the game.

Asian football teams from across the UK competed for the eight places in the finals with one place reserved for a Scottish team - Semsu (Scotland) - as the host nation. The final rounds were played at Glasgow Green's Football Centre and the final itself was played at Ibrox. London GSA beat Sporting Bengal in the final.

UNISON Scotland sponsored an anti-racism workshop during the championships. Aliyyah Balson, who works with us on anti-racist initiatives, delivered a successful

training session along with Kevin O'Neil, UNISON Scotland's Information Development Officer.

Our sponsorship included a donation for the event and kit for all players and coaching staff with promotional materials bearing the 'Many Cultures Working in UNISON' logo.

Pav Akhtar, UNISON's National Black Members' Officer, who attended the event, said; "I am proud that UNISON Scotland has taken this opportunity to endorse the UKAC and make a positive

impact on an innovative concept that tackles several of our Union's core objectives.

"Not only did the tournament create a space to promote the success of Asian footballers while challenging their under-representation in mainstream leagues, it also allowed participants, many of whom are public sector workers, the chance to get involved in thought-provoking debates and workshops to understand why black workers must organise in the workplace."

Best of Scottish communications showcased in awards

The best of Scottish branches' communications work was recognised in this year's Scottish Communications Awards.

"Every entry reflected hard work, imagination and a real commitment to the lifeblood of UNISON organisation - communicating with members", said John Stevenson, chair of UNISON Scotland's Communications and Campaigns Committee.

"We were also delighted the awards were presented by National President Malcolm Cantello at the Scottish Council meeting so that the work activists do day in day out across the country could be recognised",

Best Publication

Best Publication went to **Highland Healthcare** for their *UpFront* magazine. Judges said: "Members are lucky indeed to have such an informative and well produced magazine in their branch. A pleasure to read - I'd wait for every edition."

In Second Place was **Glasgow City's Voice**, a magazine which gave "a strong feeling that the union works for members".

Third was **UNISON Yarns** from **Shetland Local Government Branch**. Judges said: "This is an excellent publication which shows that size is not everything! If a branch of 850 can produce something as good as this, then there is



Above: Sheena Grant accepts the best website award for Aberdeen Universities. Right: Highland Healthcare's award winning Upfront magazine.

surely no excuse for every branch not to have a great magazine."

Electronic Media

The Best Use of Electronic Media Award went to the website of **Aberdeen Universities Branch**. "This has it all... Interactive survey, suggestions box, RSS feeds, a clean logical layout and an informal style", said the judges. see the site at: www.aub-unison.org.uk.

In Second Place was **Fife Local Government's website** at www.unison-fife.org.uk. The judges said: "Content is comprehensive and deals with the issues members are asking about".

Third was **Glasgow City's** website and emailed magazine.

Judges comments included: "This website is a fantastic resource at a time of dispute in Glasgow with loads of information and campaigning stuff on the pay review." www.glasgowcityunison.org.uk.

Best Campaign

The Best Campaign Award went to the **Equal Pay Campaign** run by **Aberdeenshire Local Government** (see front page photo). This impressed because planning the campaign went in tandem with setting out the negotiating priorities. It also relied on full involvement of activists and training and supporting stewards. As well as tackling a complex issue, it managed to deliver a 10% membership increase.

It was, "Well thought out and properly planned showing this sort of campaigning can have results - even on difficult issues." Briefings from the negotiators were refreshingly in plain English."

In Second Place was **Glasgow City's** Local Government Pension Campaign. "This local campaign to get members involved in the day of action was a rousing success with an

increase in membership equal to the total size of many Scottish branches."

In Third Place was **Aberdeen Universities'** six month campaign to increase membership with a £10 voucher for members introducing new members and for the new member themselves. It was: "Strong on design - bright and inviting".

The prize for the winners is a certificate with a logo they can use over the next year and a cheque for £250 for the branch.

The judges were Chris Bartter, Scottish Communications Officer, John Stevenson, SIU editor and webmanager and Jane Carolan, NEC.

New Gender Equality Duty

by Kate Ramsden

Communications & Campaigns

The Gender Equality Duty is the biggest change in sex equality legislation in 30 years and means public authorities must actively promote equality between men and women as part of the new Equality Act coming into force in April 2007.

So what will our employers have to do?

Public sector employers and service providers (including voluntary organisations) will need to radically rethink what they do and how services are delivered.

The core is "the general duty" to get rid of discrimination and harassment and to make sure that men and women have equal opportunity.

The second aspect outlines "specific duties" setting out the steps public authorities must take to deliver on this responsibility. They must:

- publish an action plan setting out how they will do this. This will need to be monitored and reviewed every 3 years.
- develop an equal pay policy and review it regularly to make sure it is working.
- conduct gender impact assessments of all law and policy developments to make sure that they affect men and women equally.
- consult employees, service users and other key people in doing all this.

This will all have to be done by the time the law comes in on 7 April 2007. For further information: www.unison.org.uk/women www.eoc.org.uk

UNISON's public service message gets to the heart of Labour

by Dave Watson
LabourLink Officer

The final act of the autumn Scottish political conference season was Scottish Labour in Oban. UNISON was there pressing our message on public services, pensions, water and equal pay.

UNISON was also active on the fringe. At a joint meeting with Oxfam 'Public not Private - How to End Global Poverty', Sofi Taylor set out UNISON's position on a platform with Oxfam and Douglas Alexander MP.

Other fringe events included our popular 'Revitalise the Scottish Labour Party' meeting, giving delegates an opportunity to consider internal party reform

with UNISON's Dave Watson and Michael Meacher MP. Dave also set out UNISON Scotland's energy strategy at a fringe meeting with Allan Wilson MP.

The main business was to adopt policies to form the basis of the manifesto for the coming Scottish elections. The trade unions had championed their joint proposals throughout the policy process that culminated in the votes at conference. UNISON delegates, including Alan Cowan and Sally Lee, made a number of contributions to the debate.

Key trade union issues in the programme were highlighted in the document *Delivering on the Workplace Agenda* launched with First Minister, Jack McConnell MSP. This paper sets out 75 poli-

cy commitments of particular relevance to trade union members.

While media attention focussed on the exclusion of support services from future PPP contracts and a presumption that in-house services will be the norm as current health contracts expire, there are many more significant commitments for UNISON members. Primarily the development of Scotland's distinctive public service model as argued for in UNISON's 'Revitalise our Public Services' manifesto.

Attempts to import the problems facing colleagues in England were soundly defeated. Instead we have a commitment to comprehensive education, an integrated NHS, a public water

service and new roles for local government. Specifically for staff the policy document tackles new initiatives for education staff, assaults on public service workers, long term funding for community wardens and developing the role of police staffs.

Careers staffs are to be employed by regional groupings of local authorities, funding is to be provided to implement the 21st Century Social Work plan, and life long learning representatives will get further support.

In addition to the measures protecting NHS support staff there is support for wider nursing roles and measures to tackle drop out rates of student nurses, reducing dependency on agency staff and ensuring that overseas nurses

are not exploited.

Delivering on the Workplace Agenda is at www.unionstogether.org.uk/documents/Deliveringtheworkplaceagenda.pdf

We want to hear your news

Won any deals or cases for members? Any 'people' stories we could use? SIU is your paper, we want to hear your stories. Your SIU contacts are: John Stevenson (Editor) 0131 220 5655, Chris Bartter 0870 7777 006, **FAX PRESS RELEASES to 0141-331-1203** E-mail: webmanager@unisonedinburgh.org.uk