



Championing Public Works
Sign up for networks - p3

PUBLIC WORKS:

a million voices for change

Congratulations to UNISON's Lily at 80!
- p2



Happy festive season to all our members ...especially to those delivering services over the holiday

Scotland in UNISON

Dec 2009
No. 82

Copy sections of this bulletin or the online version to use in local branch or workplace newsletters

A day in the life... proving that

PUBLIC WORKS:

by Malcolm Burns and Chris Bartter

In an atmosphere where political parties are bidding against each other to see who can make the biggest cuts in public spending, it is essential to make the case for public services.

Everybody contributes to and uses public services. We want to show how much people benefit from them.

- It's your day.
- They're your public services.
- Tell us about it!

UNISON Scotland's "A Day in the Life" follows an ordinary woman from morning till evening and tracks how she benefits from the many public services she uses every day.

To develop this campaign we want lots of members to tell us not just about how they provide public service in their own work, but about how they make use of all public services, whether water, health, education, transport, leisure or others. We'll use the best stories in a campaign video.

Sign up online www.unison-scotland.org.uk/publicworks and let us know how you use public services in your everyday life.

You can use a diary form like the leaflet - or you can just write about what public services you use anytime of day.

It's your day. They're your public services. Tell us about it!



PHOTO: ALAN WYLIE

'Wave' demands action on climate change

Eight thousand joined The Wave on 5 December in Glasgow, Scotland's biggest ever demonstration, organised by Stop Climate Chaos Scotland, to demand action on climate change.

Prominent on the march were UNISON's giant balloons (keep your jokes to yourselves) and UNISON's Scottish Council, meeting the same day, performed their own 'Wave' for the video campaign - picasaweb.google.com/unionscotland This followed a Mexican wave by nearly 80 people at the union's staff conference in November.

The balloons were there as part of UNISON's Million Voices campaign and two

more were at the London event, where 40,000 joined others in Belfast, Dublin, Paris, Brussels and Berlin calling for action from world leaders meeting in Copenhagen.

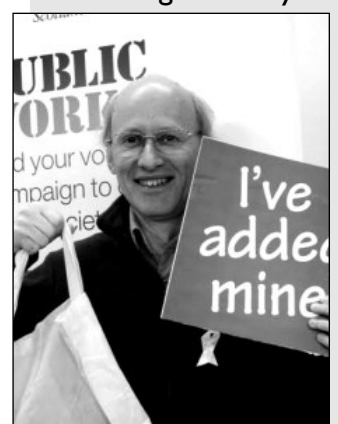
The Put People First coalition staged a very successful demonstration and alternative people's summit at St Andrews in November to coincide with G20 Finance Ministers meeting there.

UNISON helped organise the event as part of PPF, and Matthew Crighton, of Edinburgh UNISON, ran a workshop on 21st Century Socialist Solutions, looking to Venezuela and the ALBA alliance for possible alternative solutions to the economic and environmental crises.

Have you added yours?



Morag Houston
NHS Glasgow & Clyde



Gray Allan
Falkirk Council



Stephanie Herd
North Ayrshire



Rose Jackson
Edinburgh

Add yours at
www.unison.org.uk/million

UNISON pressing Scottish Government to ditch 1% 'pay cap'

by Chris Bartter
Communications Officer

UNISON has reacted angrily to the possibility of a future 1% cap from 2010 on public sector pay and pensions, floated in Chancellor Alistair Darling's pre-budget report.

General Secretary Dave Prentis said: "I am not going to sign up to this. I know how our members feel - they feel angry and betrayed. It is just not on to make nurses, social workers, dinner ladies, cleaners and

hospital porters pay the price for the folly of the bankers.

"The people who earn most should pay the most. Instead we have the disgraceful spectacle of rich bankers threatening to leave the country if they don't get their massive bonuses. Where is their loyalty? In tough times the rich should show leadership, not run off to the nearest tax haven."

In Scotland, both public service pay and pensions are devolved and any similar aspirations will need to be decided by the Scottish

Government.

Glyn Hawker, Scottish Organiser for Bargaining and Equality said "We will be pressing the Scottish Government not to adopt similar measures. It is their responsibility and they must take a responsible decision that benefits the economy and public services here.

"For every £1 a public sector work earns they spend 70p in their local community. Any squeeze on their pay will put a stranglehold on local businesses

and services, cutting off much needed income."

Some plans welcomed

UNISON has welcomed the one-off levy on large bonuses in the banking sector and measures to tackle tax avoidance and evasion. The potential increase in Scottish public finances as a result of the Barnett formula received a cautious welcome.

Glyn said "We don't know yet where the Treasury - announced additional moneys will be spent."

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Pay cap

From page 1

“But it is important that public services in Scotland and those who deliver them are fully funded to drive us out of recession, and continue to deliver quality services.”

The union also reacted strongly against Tory suggestions of even more damaging cuts in public services.

Dave Prentis said “We know that if our public services are cut just when our communities need them most, the manufacturing industry will also go into crisis. Manufacturing is dependent on public procurement to keep going.”

“Attacking public service jobs and pay is misguided. It will make the recession worse. It will undo all the work that has been done towards giving our communities world-class services.”

Presentations for Irene and Lily

by Chris Bartter
Communications Officer

Two stalwart UNISON activists received presentations at December's Scottish Council meeting. Irene Sweeney, and Lily MacNaughton.

Irene Sweeney, former UNISON Scotland Retired Member's Secretary, came back to receive a presentation from the Council to mark her retirement.



Irene Sweeney

Irene was a UNISON Branch Secretary in the Health Service before her retirement, and led UNISON to a significant role in the Scottish Pensioners Forum after becoming Scottish Retired Member's Secretary.

She gave a typically forthright speech in accepting her presentation!

Lily, who received a presentation on the occasion of her 80th birthday, has been involved with UNISON and one of our predecessor unions for all her working life - and then some!



Lily MacNaughton receiving birthday flowers from Lilan Macer

A key activist in the Police Service when it was part of local government, she did not give up the connection when she retired, also becoming active in the Retired Member's Committee, and Pensioners' Forum, and just to keep her hand in, she runs the office for the Strathclyde Police and Fire Branch!

Three-pronged plan to defend public services and workers

The Scottish Council meeting of UNISON Branches last week backed a three-pronged plan to defend public sector wages, jobs, pensions and services - under attack from 'all major political parties'.

“We reject the idea that providers and recipients of vital services should pay the price for a crisis not of our making”, said the motion moved by Brian

Smith of Glasgow City Branch.

“No one service or one union should fight alone”, said Brian as he outlined the plan to:-

- step up local and national campaigns to recruit new members

- pursue a high profile campaign that builds of the



Brian Smith

‘Stop the Cuts in Local Services’ guide

- Raise with other public service trade unions the idea of co-ordinated action in defence of jobs, wages and services.

For the Scottish Committee, John Stevenson welcomed the

confirmation of UNISON policy and the focus on recruitment but

questioned whether ‘all major political parties’ were involved in the attacks.

He warned a ‘plague on all their houses’ approach could create apathy and “we may wake up one morning to a Tory Government by default”.

He called on LabourLink members to continue to make their voice heard in the Labour Party to defend services.

Courses create Pathways into UNISON for women

Since June 2009 Gillian Bannatyne and Lynne Duncan of Scotland's Pay Equality Group have delivered five Pathways training courses in Scotland and more are planned in the New Year.

The courses have been a great success in encouraging and supporting women to get active in UNISON.

Gillian said “The Pathways course is very informal and relaxed and the women who attend all say it's a great course. As well as finding out about their union, they share experiences, make new friends and have a laugh.

“It's vital that more women become active in the union and the results so far prove that Pathways is the gateway to achieve this.”

Lynne added, “Women having the opportunity to take two days time out from their normal hectic lives was always going to be a recipe for success.

“All of those who have attended Pathways have said how quickly they all got to know each other and how comfortable they were in the group. On every course there was a wealth of talent and skills and I think everyone left feeling more confident in using their skills both in the union and in everyday life”

Pathways into UNISON is an ideal course for women members to



Members at the Aberdeenshire and Moray course. Other courses have been held in Dumfries and Galloway, West Lothian and Edinburgh

- Find out how the union works
- How to overcome the barriers to getting active in the union
- Identifying women's skills and how they can be used in UNISON

The branches that have run Pathways into UNISON are delighted with the results - raising the profile of the branch, more activists and strengthening organisation.

Some quotes from participants: **June, Support Worker** “We had a staff meeting last Friday and I spoke out about the rota being unfair to part-time staff and female support workers. The senior supervisor tried to shoot me down in flames. However, I stood my ground and asked her if I was right in saying that team meetings were in place for staff and management to bring up any problems at work.

“She said yes so I asked her if I could finish what I was saying ... AND, BOY DID I FINISH WHAT I WAS SAYING.

“The rota has now been changed to suit all members of staff-male, female, full-time and part-time.

“You gave me the confidence to do that - I can't believe how much the Pathways course has helped me and, in turn will help others at my work.”

Lorna, Clerical Worker “I went on the course feeling that I, although not stupid, didn't know very much at all. On completion I realised that I do know a lot more than I had first thought and that women in the workplace in low paid jobs have a whole lot more to offer than I had previously thought.

“I would certainly encourage any other women who get the chance to go on the course and

grab it with both hands. The bonding between the women, which was not part of the course helped in a huge way to put us all at our ease.”

Susan, School Auxiliary “Shona, Trish and I had a spot of bother on the train home from Pathways but Scotrail didn't count on an assertive union rep!!

“They chucked everyone off at Dyce with no explanation, so I confronted the crew and got back on the train and told them I wasn't getting off again. They let everyone else back on the train and arranged another train to take us all back to Inverurie, so we only had to wait five minutes in the cold - RESULT!!

Any member or branch who would like further information on Pathways should get in touch with Gillian or Lynne at UNISON Scotland.

Shared services do not save money

... at least in the first years

UNISON Scotland has warned that shared services will not necessarily save local councils money, and indeed could cost extra money in the short term.

UNISON commented on the publication of the report by Sir John Arbuthnott that recommends Clyde Valley councils work more closely together and share services to respond to likely cuts in funding. In addition Sir John and the branches affected got together to get a clearer

understanding of his recommendations.

Mike Kirby - UNISON's Scottish Convenor, said, “UNISON has always been in favour of delivering our public services efficiently, but all the evidence is that shared services don't deliver savings in the short term if at all.

“Indeed as Sir John points out in his report, they mean increased expense initially as new processes and systems, accommodation and IT have to be bought.

“We are looking at this report carefully, have produced an initial briefing - and branches are now approaching their own authorities to discuss their

likely response. Upwards of 76,000 jobs could be involved.”

UNISON also points out that sharing services can also mean centralising services, and that this can remove jobs and accountability from local people.

Mike Kirby said, “We need to ensure that increased efficiency doesn't come at the cost of cuts in accountability and damage to local economies.

“If roads need to be repaired in West Dunbartonshire, would this be better decided locally or in some corporate HQ elsewhere in the central belt?”

“Often jobs created by public services are very important for a local economy - particularly in

rural areas. There have been examples abroad where centralisation of services has damaged that.

“Already in the areas being discussed the percentage of people claiming work-related benefits is almost 22%, it is important that we don't increase the damage that recession has already brought to ordinary people, or add to the number of people having to claim benefits.”

An initial briefing on the Arbuthnott report is available at www.unison-scotland.org.uk/briefings/arbuthnott.pdf.

Local Government workers submit claim to help low paid

Unions representing 150,000 Scottish local council workers have lodged a claim for a one-year rise in 2010 of 3% or £600 (whichever is the greater) - and for all workers to be paid a living wage of at least £7.00 per hour.

UNISON Regional Officer and lead negotiator, Dougie Black, said "This claim is simply an attempt by our

members, who include the lowest paid of Scotland's council workers, to maintain their standard of living in the teeth of what is predicted to be increasing inflationary pressures.

"The RPI is forecast to steadily rise to 2.6% in the first quarter of 2010 before reaching 3.1% and we have already experienced the fact that increases in inflation - especially in basic necessities

like food and fuel - impact particularly hard on low-paid members.

"Our members in have already delivered around £200m worth of efficiency savings with a loss of around 7,000 jobs. It is only fair that councils should share these efficiency savings with staff as well as with council tax payers."

Stephanie Herd - Chair of UNISON's Local Government

Group said "Local councils have already agreed to pay their chief officials 2.5% over this period, and teaching staff 2.4%.

"It would be invidious if our political leaders now try to make the lowest paid staff pay for the economic crisis.

"Bankers and fat cats in the city get help - it is time for hard-pressed public service workers to get that help."

Championing Public Works!

by Malcolm Burns
and Chris Barter

Branches queued up at December's Scottish Council to sign-up for the Million Voices campaign and provide 'Public Works' champions.

In other zones delegates volunteered to provide their own 'Day in the Life' stories - highlighting how key public services are to all our lives and add their names to issue based work groups who will discuss and formulate UNISON's policy manifesto for 2011's Scottish Election.

Dave Watson, Scottish Organiser (Policy & Information) said "This was the first time we have attempted an activity like this and it worked well.

The Public Works campaign - part of 'A Million Voices' - is vital for UNISON's challenge to the false orthodoxy - put forward by big business - that we need to cut public services to get us out of the financial mess that they created.

The campaign - launched at National Delegate Conference this year - is scheduled to run up to the next General Election and beyond, lasting at least until the 2011 Scottish Election. Branches and delegates who missed out on signing up can do it online at



Dave Watson launches the 'sign-up' and Barbara Fulton adds her name

www.unison.org.uk/million.

Manifesto 2011 - Policy networks

It is vital for UNISON's voices to be heard by the political parties ahead of the UK election in the next few months, and in the run up to the Scottish elections in May 2011.

The Scottish Committee's manifesto process for 2011 has identified a dozen core positions and policy ideas.

The core positions include:

Integrated services:- cost-effective universal public services, instead of the waste

and inefficiency of private finance

Investment and equality:- more resources for quality public services from fair taxation

Fair treatment:- fair and equal pay, fair pensions, quality training, tackle discrimination at work

Democracy:- greater devolution, local government stronger, quangos democratised, users and staff engaged in planning & delivering services

Short summaries on these are available on the website. There are also short briefings

PUBLIC WORKS:



NHS Glasgow & Clyde's Sam Brewster congratulated by John Stevenson and Scottish Vice-Convener Lilian Macer

about temporary summer workers who came out on strike with everyone else when they had nothing to gain from it. "It combined a great human interest story with a strong message of solidarity - with a great picture", said the judges.

Winner in the Electronic Media was Aberdeenshire Branch's website www.aberdeenshireunison.com. "This site

gives great coverage of branch issues with the added benefit of linking into national, international and citizenship issues - while in most cases making a real attempt to create a local relevance or angle", said the judges.

No award was made in the campaign category and John

Stevenson underlined the judges disappointment at the lack of entries.

"We know of so many great campaigns that went on across the country. Some really innovative stuff, some traditional fights and some amazing recruitment initiatives that deserved to be shared with the rest of Scotland", said John, urging branches to enter next year.



Aberdeenshire's Kate Ramsden collects her award

NHS Choice Exercise rolled out in Health Boards in January 2010

by Nicola Morris
Area Organiser

If you have been a member of the NHS Pension Scheme from before 1 April 2008 and continue in active membership to at least 1 October 2009 you will soon be offered a one-off choice to transfer across to the 2008 Section should you wish to.

NHS staff in Scotland will be contacted in the next few months as part of the NHS Pensions Choice Exercise.

The NHS Superannuation Scheme (Scotland) has two different sections being introduced on 1 April 2008.

From January, staff who were



members of the pension scheme prior to the introduction of the new section will be asked to make the choice between the following:

(a) Staying in the 1995 section with the pension you have earned to date, and all future membership being treated under the rules and regulations that apply to that section, or

(b) Transferring to the 2008 section, which means that the rules and regulations of this section would apply to all pension you have earned so far and any that you earn in the future.

When the time comes to make a choice, members will be issued

with a pack from the scheme administrator, The Scottish Public Pensions Agency (SPPA), containing information to assist them in making an informed decision.

There are a number of resources available from the SPPA to assist members in making an informed decision at website www.sppa.gov.uk

A number of UNISON Health branches will be holding briefing sessions for members on the Choice Exercise process and details of these will be available on the UNISON Scotland website www.unison-scotland.org.uk

UNISON representatives continue to attend the Scottish

Pensions Review Group for Scotland (SPensIR) and participate in discussions on the Choice Exercise process and would advise all members to pay particular attention to their Choice Statements and take the opportunity to query any apparent errors in the information.

It is important that members eligible to take part in the Choice Exercise are well-informed about what is involved - but it is important to stress that neither UNISON staff and stewards or the SPPA can provide financial advice or make specific Choice recommendations for members. It's your pension. It's your choice!

ST ANDREW'S DAY MARCH

An Injury to One is An Injury to All!

UNISON Scotland was well represented at the STUC organized St Andrew's Day March and Rally against Racism on November 28.

Following the march from St Andrew's in the Square, the rally in the GFT was chaired by UNISON's Sofi Taylor, and featured speeches from Vaughan Gethling - President of the Wales TUC, speakers from GARA, Hope not Hate Scotland and others.

The demonstration is an annual event organised by the STUC and GARA (Glasgow Anti Racist Alliance).

Staff cuts threat will damage policing

UNISON has condemned threatened cuts in Strathclyde Police staff jobs and redundancies as inefficient and discriminatory.

Dave Watson, Scottish Organiser for Policy said: "This is a return to 1970's policing, most forward looking forces are looking to expand the role of support staff to release police officers to tackle crime. The Scottish public want police officers out on the streets not stuck behind a desk doing support work."

UNISON also suggests that this move is potentially discriminatory. Dave said "The bulk of police staff are women, whereas the bulk of officers are men. We are anxious to see the Equality Impact Assessment that the force has to produce for any major organisational change."

The union - who represent 1500 staff working for Strathclyde Police - has made it clear that they will fight any attempt to make staff compulsorily redundant.

Dave Watson said "UNISON recognises the difficult position that the force is in, but to ask for staff co-operation in delivering efficiencies at the same time as threatening them with losing their job, is not something we can accept."

Health awards recognise staff

Clare Rungay from Fort William Health Centre is presented with the Daily Record Scottish Mental Health Worker Award, by Matt Smith, UNISON Scottish Secretary.

Also pictured is community healthcare assistant Margaret Nicholas from Dumbarton Health Centre who won the UNISON sponsored Support Worker Award.

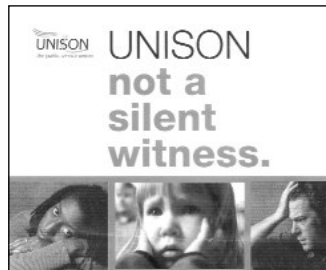
UNISON Health Chair Tom Waterson said, "We are delighted that the Daily Record is helping to recognise the work of our members and other health care staff with these successful awards. We are particularly happy that this year UNISON members were so successful."



Support President's domestic abuse project

It is traditional for the UNISON President to visit Scottish Council in December but sadly Gerry Gallagher was unable to attend. He will hopefully be able to come early next year but in the meantime we are urging you to

support his presidential project to raise money to support UNISON members who are survivors of or are experiencing domestic abuse. See unison.org.uk/silentwitness for more information



South Lanarkshire remembers Bhopal disaster

Commemorating the 25th Anniversary of the Bhopal disaster, South Lanarkshire Branch laid a wreath at their Workers' Memorial Plaque in Hamilton.

Thousands of people died in Bhopal in India after gas leaked from the Union Carbide factory in Bhopal on 3 December, 1984.

Estimates of the immediate death toll from the Bhopal accident range from 3,787 to 10,000, with long-term estimates as high as 25,000 people.

Union Carbide was later acquired by Dow Chemicals, which recently also acquired the Rohm & Haas plant in Grangemouth. Protesters gathered at the Grangemouth site to mark the tragedy and protest at the company's arrival in the town.



People's Charter is campaigning tool alongside Million Voices

The People's Charter provides a campaigning tool to re-build credibility with the voters, the public and our members, Scottish Convener Mike Kirby told the National Convention of the Charter in November.

Representing the General Secretary at the gathering of trade unions and community organisations, Mike said the Charter and UNISON's Million Voices campaign were 'complementary' and provide a "platform for the wider alliances which will be essential in securing social progress and restoring confidence in electoral process."

The meeting followed similar ones in Glasgow the previous week and the Charter in Scotland hosted a meeting of sympathetic MSPs during trade union week at the Scottish Parliament.

Mike outlined how events and issues this year have turned the electorate off politics. When a debate was needed on progressive taxation to meet social need, the headlines were captured by

politicians' expenses scandals.

"The cause and effect of the economic crisis was laid at the door of a political process compliant to big business, and to be paid for by tax payers directly and through attacks on public services for decades to come".

Add to that disaffection about legally suspect wars and cow-towing to America, Mike argued that voters now find their voices stand a better chance of being heard in 'issue' campaigns.

"As politicians lose face, there is a need to re-build credibility with the voters, the public and our members in trade unions", he said, and the People's Charter can provide a campaigning for that".

A call for the STUC to sign up to the People's Charter was defeated on a majority vote in April. However, The STUC will convene a conference of trade unions and community groups in February after the Congress went on to back the development of Charter for Public Services based on enshrining the rights and responsibilities to which all

parties, governments and the people can base the future of public services.

"But UNISON Scotland has backed the People's Charter", said Mike. "How can we oppose something which includes much of our current policy?"

"The Charter is not a charter for an alternative political party but an opportunity to construct broad alliances in pursuit of our objectives."

"We want to see changes that put people before profit and public interest before private greed", he added.

UNISON's Million Voices campaign aims to counter the misinformation and attacks on public services and workers put about by some politicians, some media and representatives of private sector business like the CBI, Institute of Directors and their 'think tanks' like the so-called 'Taxpayers Alliance.'

Mike argues that The People's Charter complements that and gives us a platform to work with whoever shares our pursuit of

common objectives. These include an end to corruption and sleaze in the public services.

Drawing on the history of arms manufacturers' influence on policy, Mike warned of similar influence from privateers in public services.

The "military industrial complex... has enabled arms manufacturers to drive public policy in their own self interest by funding political parties, think tanks, academic research and media interests. Since 1945 it has been a driving force for wars".

"It is no exaggeration", said Mike, that a similar situation exists in public services in the UK and abroad where privatisation policies have been driven by private corporations and 'their parliamentary mouthpieces.'

"UNISON's groundbreaking 2008 report on "The Rise of the Public Services Industry" is the outstanding trade union analysis of the

the UK public services industrial complex", said Mike.

"These companies will be salivating at the prospect of a Tory Government taking power in May 2010.

"That's why UNISON Million Voices Campaign must urgently include critiques of the main private sector predators in health and local government which are as hard hitting as those of the POA against the prison service privateers", added Mike.

"That's why the People's Charter can provide an umbrella to bring together those fighting for a fairer economy for a fairer Britain, fairness and justice, improved services, more and better jobs and a better future for all."

www.thepeoplescharter.com/

We want to hear your news

SiU is your paper, we want to hear your stories.
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E-mail: webmanager@unison-edinburgh.org.uk

UNISON welfare
Registered Charity No. 1023552

Welfare Walk the Glen

UNISON Welfare Centenary Sponsored Walk and 'Family Fun Day' is to be held on Sunday 23 May 2010 at Pittencrieff Park, Dunfermline.

Branches are urged to sponsor stalls, events and walkers; make cash donations; give raffle prizes and provide stewards.

And of course members are urged to take part to support UNISON's own charity for members.

Contact Diane Anderson at diane.anderson@unison.co.uk, 0131 342 2842

Negotiating guide for Social Work

The Social Work Issues Group are producing a negotiating resource for branches on two key issues affecting social care staff - Workload Management and Supervision.

The new pamphlet is one of a series of more in-depth documents building on the hugely successful manifesto for social work - Helping People Change Their Lives, published earlier this year.

It will be launched at a manifesto Conference in January. Check www.unison-scotland.org.uk/social-work for details.