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re**vitalise** our public services

Scotland *in* UNISON

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Police and Careers staff actions pay off

by Chris Bartter
Communications Officer

The first strike action in the history of Scotland's police staff negotiations has squeezed a new offer out of Scottish employers.

And in a separate dispute, the threat of action by UNISON members in **Careers Scotland** was called off after it brought agreement on a commitment from Scottish Enterprise to a new pay system (see page 3).

The police strike began at a minute past midnight on 25 August, with the walkout of control room staff, information assistants, reception and fingerprint staff.

Picket lines were set up at Police HQs across Scotland and got wide media coverage.

The very successful

I am very pleased that a settlement appears to be in sight



Raymond Brown, Police UNISON negotiator

day of action followed a ballot of Scotland's 4,000 UNISON police staffs after pay negotiations with CoSLA broke down.

But after the action, the employers came up with an increased offer on 8 September, recognising the increasing involvement of police staffs in modernisation.

As we went to press, UNISON was recommending support for the new offer and further strike action has suspended until members deliver their verdict.

More details: Page 2



Full time officer Peter Veldon meets police staff UNISON pickets during their strike last month

Job Evaluation problems hit the headlines

Recent headlines about the troubles in Moray and Aberdeen City, after councils issued letters telling some staff that - as a result of job evaluation - they could lose thousands in pay, has thrown the whole exercise into sharp focus.

Alongside this was the appearance in Scotland of a firm of lawyers who have made their name (and money) seeking out equal pay claims in parts of England.

It has become a key issue; one way or another it has started affecting local government staff in Scotland. Hopefully this article can clear the mist around Single Status.

What is Single Status and why are there all these problems? HAMID RASHEED and CHRIS BARTTER try to clear the mist.

There are similar processes going on in other services. In NHS - *Agenda for Change*, and a *Frame work Agreement* in Higher Education.

The Job evaluation exercises carried out by Moray and Aberdeen City were a response to the provisions of the Single Status agreement of 1999.

This is a Scottish agreement between the Scottish Employers and the Trade Unions.

It was designed to harmonise pay and conditions, promote equality and eliminate discriminatory practices in employment. It tries to ensure compliance with equal pay legislation, and requires action from employers to ensure fair and non-discriminatory grading and pay structures.

Unfortunately many Scottish Councils have ignored this issue for too long, and even if they have taken it on, in some cases they have breached the principles of partnership included in the agreement.

The restructuring is also bedevilled by the failure of the Scottish Executive to include any extra money for this process in recent funding settlements -

putting pressure on councils to try to deliver new structures at low or no cost.

There are local authorities that made an investment to fund these exercises, and there are local authorities that didn't - or certainly not enough. Therefore, implementation of Single Status may or may not be smooth.

Carol Judge, Scottish Organiser for Local Government said, "However, doing nothing is not an option. Even in the smallest councils, there are equal pay issues that need to be resolved - and the cost of successful equal pay claims pursued by UNISON and others could lead to far more costs and disruption".

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Scottish Emergency Workers legislation delivers

Since the Scottish Emergency Workers Act became law in May this year 26 assault charges have been brought to court. The first of these is thought to be a woman prosecuted in Selkirk for obstructing a nurse and shouting abuse at Borders General Hospital staff. She was jailed for six months.

Dave Watson, Scottish Organiser for Policy, said, "These prosecutions show how right UNISON was to press for the Emergency Workers Bill to become law.

"When other organisations were decrying it as worthless - we argued it was a step forward. We were right - not only are prosecutions going up, but the number of assaults - on ambulance workers for example - have gone down."

UNISON argues that the legislation should be extended to cover all public service workers. The early success of the partial cover so far provided strengthens the argument that all members working with the public should have this protection.



Newsheet or website course - YOU decide!

Two communications courses will be run by UNISONScotland in the autumn. One of them will be decided by YOU!!

The Communications & Campaigns Committee is planning a new course on **Campaigning** - dealing with the nuts and bolts, demystifying the techniques and helping branches to involve members directly. **Glasgow's Corus Hotel Fri Sept 30 - Sun Oct 2.**

The next course is on the weekend of **November 11 - 13** and will be run at Reid Kerr College in Paisley. It will either deal with **Newsletter editing or Website Design**. If you have a need for one or other of these courses - let Chris Bartter, UNISON's Communications Officer know - contact him on chris.bartter@unison.org.uk

REPRESENTING MEMBERS Action reduced after procedures appeal

When management failed to follow procedures when disciplining a member, UNISON Clackmannanshire activist John Fairley stepped in. Following appeal, the action against the member was reduced to an oral warning.

John raised a grievance about the timescale and about how witnesses had been interviewed but management tried to hold the disciplinary and the grievance at the same time.

"On the advice of our regional officer I made my objection and left the hearing before it began", said John, but the hearing went ahead.

"I appealed this on the grounds of failure to follow council procedures for grievance & disciplinary and continued use of bad practice", he added. As a result, the member's final written warning was reduced to a six month oral warning.

SiU wants to know about your successes or issues you have encountered when representing members. See back page for contact details.

UNISON begins to exert its influence

In the run up to the **2007 Scottish Parliament election**, UNISON will be actively seeking to advocate our policies to political parties to try to ensure the strongest possible showing of UNISON policies in party manifestos.

Through LabourLink activity, we have been very much involved in the contributions to the massive information gathering and discussion fora that form the Labour Party's manifesto production. However, for the first time this year we have

been asked to contribute to the Liberal Democrat policy consultation that precedes their manifesto.

"We have sent the Liberal Democrats a policy document that stresses UNISON's commitment to accountability, equality and promotion of public services", said Matt Smith, UNISON's Scottish Secretary.

"This invitation is a welcome development that shows the value of the work we have been doing in the Scottish Parliament and with Scotland's political parties."

UNISON will also be

attending the SNP and Scottish Green Party Conferences this autumn to promote its policies. We have already been to the Spring conferences of the SSP, Labour Party and Conservatives.

The current UNISON *Revitalise our public services* manifesto, - www.unison-scotland.org.uk/revitalise - is also being discussed with a view to updating and refreshing UNISON's basic five principles for public services - democratic accountability, capacity & innovation, recruitment &

retention, performance and public service networks.

Dave Watson, UNISON's Scottish Organiser for policy and information has also reiterated UNISON's request for members to come forward to input into policy formulation.

"If you have a particular knowledge of a sector of the public services, and feel that improvements could be made to that service - why not let us know who you are and what the area of interest is?" he said.

Please contact Dave on d.watson@unison.co.uk.

POLICE STAFF Action wins offer

From page 1

Anne Russell, UNISON Regional Organiser (Police) said. "A new offer of 3.4% for this year and 2.5% for 2006 has been made by Scottish employers and UNISON negotiators are recommending this to their members.

"Members' solid strike action last month has pushed CoSLA into a new offer which more accurately reflects the value of the work that they do. They must be congratulated on their successful action."

Raymond Brown, Chair of the TU negotiators, said "I am very pleased that a settlement appears to be in sight.

"We have always said that Police staff are vital to the modernisation process and have been key to most recent developments.

"This gives some recognition in their pay of this key role, therefore we feel comfortable in recommending this offer to our members.

"Resulting from these positive negotiations, the trade unions have agreed to suspend all industrial



Moment of fame for police staff picket

action pending the outcome of consultation with members."

Police staffs in Scotland play an increasing role in delivering services for the police - allowing them to concentrate on front-line policing.

They are at the heart of most of the modernisation and new technological advances being introduced into today's policing yet they can earn as little as £11,500 a year.

Moray UNISON tackles toxic fumes

Moray Unison came to the rescue of staff at Springfield House council building in June, when demolition contractors working at a neighbouring building site began burning large sections of woodsheds.

Staff within the building were overcome by the toxic fumes coming from the numerous fires that had been started up.

Some staff were asthmatic and were having problems breathing. The extremely windy weather conditions made the smoke worse.

Staff initially phoned the Council's H&S department and they telephoned SEPA to go and investigate. A junior member of staff from SEPA visited the site but nothing appeared to be done. Meanwhile a

H&S rep from the Council came and inspected the building at Springfield House and claimed that they had tried to get the fires put out.

"The fires were still burning on and I telephoned Dougie McPhee of UNISON to ask whether the UNISON H&S rep could assist". said UNISON member Kim Wilcox.

"He gave me John Muir's telephone number and I contacted him immediately.

"Within half an hour, a more senior member of SEPA visited the site and instructed the fires to be put out. To date, there have been no further fires and no further disruption to staff.

"I feel however that without UNISON's intervention, we may not have got the same results", added Kim.

Single Status update Scottish Executive must fund equal pay

by John Stevenson
SiU editor

Local Government delegates from across Scotland called on the Scottish Executive to fund councils to meet their equal pay responsibilities at a special UNISON meeting in Edinburgh.

In the morning, branch representatives took part in Single Status workshops before the afternoon meeting of the Local Government Service Group. Speakers called for more links between branches facing problems and more support from the union's organisation.

Aberdeen City: The council is to withdraw letters sent to staff and issue letters of apology after threatened strike action over job evaluation results. It has also agreed to enter into "full and meaningful negotiations" with unions to try to reach a new deal over pay.

UNISON members were angry after receiving letters which left some facing pay cuts of thousands of pounds a year. UNISON's Karen Donnelly said: "This is a great result but it is now that the hard work begins in what I am sure will be some very detailed and very difficult discussions.

"Our members now have to let us get on with negotiations, but can rest assured that we will consult with them before any decisions are made."

Moray UNISON continues to call for an independent audit of how the council organised job evaluation after members raised concerns as to how the process was handled.

Moray's website (www.morayunison.co.uk/) said that the union had made it clear to the council that "the overwhelming message coming from our members is that no-one should lose pay, so that is our negotiating position".

While there has been a great deal of ill feeling over large pay rises to some big earners, the biggest number of winners are those on low pay, especially in jobs historically done by women.

Aberdeenshire has secured a statement from the council that no-one will lose money because of Single Status.

Edinburgh and Glasgow are in discussions with their councils. Both councils want to implement the Greater London Job Evaluation Scheme rather than the recommended Scottish one.

"In Edinburgh we are currently examining the scheme to see if it has any benefits to members - but the bottom line is that it must be equality-proof", said John Mulgrew, Edinburgh UNISON chief negotiator.

South Lanarkshire agreed and implemented a non SJC scheme without apparent problem some time ago.

Unions will deliver equal pay - not lawyers

by Chris Bartter
Communications Officer

UNISON, has condemned attempts by 'no win, no fee' law firms to cash in on the work done by trade unions and the EOC to pursue equal pay in Scotland's public sector.

The union also warned that, unless fair, equality-proofed pay scales were agreed in local councils across Scotland, cherry-picking the most obvious cases might leave many workers without equal pay.

They also argue that the Scottish Executive should be providing the necessary funding.

Joe Di Paola, UNISON Scotland's Scottish Organiser for Bargaining said, "UNISON is fighting for equal pay for low paid women members in

local government and across the public sector.

"We have been arguing for fair pay across local government, but some employers have simply not wanted to know. So we have also been building up information on likely test tribunal cases which we are now ready to use on employers who won't talk to us. Indeed, we are now at a very advanced stage in taking cases.

"We think that this work means that we are in a far better position than any lawyers to pursue successful claims on behalf of members.

"Of course where UNISON takes cases, such as in North Cumbria NHS Trust, our successful members get all the money due to them.

"It makes me angry that an English law firm now wants to jump on the Scottish bandwagon, and cherry-pick

obvious cases to get their commission.

"Law firms, with their one-off cases, don't care about the impact on the rest of the staff. UNISON does care and has been pushing employers for negotiated deals that both address the just claims of low paid members - especially those in caring, catering and cleaning - whilst trying to ensure that the jobs of all the members are safe.

"The Scottish Executive needs to recognise its responsibilities in funding equal pay in Scotland."

UNISON is currently preparing a set of Frequently Asked Questions and a draft leaflet for branches to use if faced with threats from any firm of lawyers offering to take individual cases. Please ensure that you refer any approaches to your regional officer, as the union as well as employers can be at risk of liability claims.

Job evaluation

From Page 1

Carol Judge added, "Two principles must be uppermost in branch negotiators' minds in the discussions around job evaluation.

"Firstly, many of our colleagues have been discriminated against in their pay for a number of years. We should ensure that both the discrimination is done away with and they get adequate compensation.

"We are currently identifying equal pay cases to pursue at tribunal. We should be using this route, both as an end in itself - if local councils will not address the issue - and to pressure them to do so.

"Secondly, we need to protect members whose jobs lose out of job evaluation - full involvement in the negotiations, the fullest possible protection arrangements and job redesign are all areas we can explore.

"A commitment to 'no pay loss', like that of Aberdeenshire Council, whilst no panacea, is a welcome recognition that cutting pay and conditions is unfair.

"UNISON will continue to defend members' pay and conditions and fight for jobs and services.

"The issue of single status is not simple or straightforward. We need a strategy that includes the different routes of litigation, negotiation and campaigning. We need to know when and where these should be used, and we should not rule out industrial action where needed."

UNISON at Scottish and branch level should continue to prepare cases for tribunal - identifying staff groups who are most likely to be successful.

We should continue to pressurise employers to establish the fairest job evaluation system possible - addressing historic discrimination and protecting members' pay and conditions, - by industrial action if necessary - and we should approach the employers to jointly lobby the Scottish Executive to fund Single Status.

All this so we can ensure grading and pay structures are fair, non-discriminatory, transparent, and accommodate the diversity of jobs in local government.



Carol Judge

Strike threat by Careers staff delivers commitment to reform Performance Pay

by Chris Bartter
Communications Officer

UNISON members in Careers Scotland have agreed to accept a commitment from Scottish Enterprise to a new pay system and called off their planned strike action.

Staff had voted by nearly two to one for strike action, after taking action short of a strike for some weeks. They were due to strike on 8 September.

Meetings at workplaces across Scotland voted on a deal thrashed out in long meetings between UNISON and Scottish Enterprise.

The two sides have agreed to introduce an interim pay deal for next year, and to negotiate a new Performance Related Pay scheme to be introduced from 2007.

Both the 'hybrid' pay deal to be agreed for 2006 and the new system will comprise across the board and performance related elements. These principles were a crucial part of the union's demands.

Joe Di Paola, UNISON's Scottish Organiser (Bargaining), said,

"By sticking together and taking the

"They also have Scottish Enterprise committed to agreeing this with the unions rather than imposing it as they did previously. This has to be seen as a great victory for the members"

Joe Di Paola



action they have, Careers Scotland members have secured the commitment of Scottish Enterprise to the introduction of a fair and modern pay system, in line with the principles adopted by other public sector employers.

"They also have Scottish Enterprise committed to agreeing this with the unions rather than imposing it as they did previously. This has to be seen as a great victory for the members."

James Corry, Branch Secretary for UNISON's Scottish Enterprise Branch said, "Hopefully this can be the start of rebuilding the trust that has been lost

between Scottish Enterprise and its staff in Careers Scotland.

"Staff have been prepared to trust the commitments from Scottish Enterprise. Now it is a matter of Scottish Enterprise delivering on those commitments."

Careers Scotland became part of Scottish Enterprise in April 2002.

SE operated its performance related pay scheme with existing staff for the last ten years but UNISON believes it is divisive and has not been modernised in keeping with recommendations in governmental reports.

Fiona wins UK TUC Youth Award

Congratulations go to Fiona Smith, Chair of the Scottish Young Members Committee, and of the National Young Members Forum, for her success in winning the TUC award for youth at the TUC Young Members Conference this year.

Fiona is well known in Scotland, being a powerhouse in working with her branch - Aberdeen City - organising young members, recruitment campaigns and training.

She is as active at a Scottish level - holding an STUC General Council seat for young workers and as vice chair of the Scottish Youth Parliament.

She is as active outwith UNISON too, working with Aberdeen TUC to



stop the National Front, she sits on the Children's Panel in Aberdeen and she has brought together a

group of delegates to the International Youth Conference to develop an international website to support young TU members and young workers worldwide.

Matt Smith, UNISON Scottish Secretary said,

"UNISON Scotland welcomes this recognition by the TUC of the work that Fiona puts in on behalf of UNISON members. Whether it is on the STUC General Council, or promoting trade union awareness in schools her commitment and workload are second to none.

"An excellent example for all members - not just young members."

Our Jim stands for Parliament

As anyone who has spotted a newspaper in the recent past will know, UNISON's Scottish Organiser, Jim Devine has been selected to fight the Livingston seat for Labour.

Jim was the election agent to the previous MP, Robin Cook for 30 years, and was selected to fight the seat following Robin's sad death. The election takes place on Thursday 29 September and campaigning is well under way.

UNISON's LabourLink is busy organising support for Jim. Please contact the Campaign Hotline on 01506 441 374 or contact Kevin O'Neil in the West Campbell Street office 0141-342 2811 k.oneil@unison.co.uk



MAKEPOVERTYHISTORY Edinburgh July 2 2005**Biggest demonstration Scotland has ever seen**by John Stevenson
SiU editor

Organisers and police said there were 225,000 there. Old demonstration hands put it at nearer 300,000.

There were certainly lots of us with the trade union contingent marching off five hours after the first of the continuous line set off to circle the city centre.

UNISON General Secretary Dave Prentis was even called away to make his speech before the march set off.

UNISON banners were there from Aberdeen to Hounslow via Edinburgh, Nottinghamshire and Bristol. UNISON members from across the country were dotted around the march.

This was the political demonstration, as Billy Bragg said. While Live 8 concerts were a welcome addition to the campaign, it is sad that they took the media eye away from the hundreds of thousands who came to Edinburgh to make their voices heard - and who will go on doing so long after the marches and concerts are finished.

Eddie Izzard, who flew in from Los Angeles, couldn't have put it better. "I felt this was the place to be. It's where the activists are, the people who are in it for the long haul".

The patience of old and young who had to stand for hours in the Meadows waiting to set off was a testament to how deeply they felt about the issue - and how determined they were to be part of making history, making poverty history.

Some from further afield had to leave before they even got on the march because of travel arrangements. But even they took part and if they had been counted, the 225,000 estimate would have been even higher.

They were part of the sea of white that covered the Meadows. Almost everyone responded to the organisers' request to wear white to create a band around the city.

They were there for the unforgettable minute's silence at 3pm which brought an unprecedented hush to an almost traffic-free city.



The kids get into the spirit



Time for a wee rest before we set off

Unforgettable too was the cacophony of applause, cheers and whistles from all around the city centre which followed it.

They were there from trade unions, campaigning organisa-

tions, churches and a host of other groups.

They were months old and in their 80's. The friendship, patience and willingness to help each other was yet another indication of the common purpose - to demand that world leaders take this historic opportunity to stop building our wealth on Africa's poverty.

Almost 300,000 people and only one arrest. No-one on this huge demonstration of the will of people to make their leaders listen, wanted anything to detract from the message.

Although, a tiny few were

Dimbleby summed it up to the crowd, "I'm here because like you I know it is an obscenity that 50,000 die every day unnecessarily as a consequence of poverty."

Despite the delays, the

Criterion Jazz Band leads off the national banner

organisation from police and stewards was excellent - over 200,000 people and no crush.

The stewards, many of them from UNISON who provided the jackets, had a long hot day and did a wonderful job. Largely too, the police also joined in the carnival atmosphere, even the two black clad figures on top of the Royal Scottish Academy!

After the G8, the marches are over but quarter of a million people were clear that the fight continues.

● **MAKEPOVERTYHISTORY** has published a full analysis of the G8 decisions and what they mean.

See www.makepovertyhistory.org/response.shtml

more interested in their own agenda. A group of anarchists in black wanted their own show but they were soon controlled by a careful police operation.

Broadcaster Jonatahan

**Conference Banner**

As UNISON's National Conference met at Glasgow SECC, our huge MPH banner was draped from the Fynnion Crane (for a couple of days till it blew down - anyway it got the message across)

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:

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New on the UNISONScotland website

- Scottish Parliament legislative programme 2005 www.unison-scotland.org.uk/briefings/legprog2005.html
- Role of the Social Worker Protection of Title response www.unison-scotland.org.uk/response/swrole2.html
- New Welfare Newsletter www.unison-scotland.org.uk/welfare/index.html
- Check for all new updates at www.unison-scotland.org.uk/updates.html, where you can even get a Newsfeed for your own website.

European Parliament relaunches website

The European Parliament has launched a new website designed to provide quicker and easier public access to information on the political decisions taken by the elected representatives of Europe's citizens.

This will entirely replace the old website, which was essentially a collection of databases. The new website consists of five different information sections: News, Parliament, Your MEPs, Activities and EP Live, and has been produced in 20 languages.

www.europarl.eu.int