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

re**vitalise** our **public services**

Parents join nursery nurses to fight CoSLA intransigence

by Chris Bartter
Communications Officer

As we went to Apress, support was building for a major demonstration and rally called by nursery nurses in Dundee on Thursday 11 December, although this issue of SiU will not come out until after the rally.

The indications are, however, that the demonstration will again be well supported, and this time will feature support from parents who have been deeply concerned about the disruption to their children's education caused by this dispute, and who are behind the union's campaign for a realistic Scottish-wide pay structure for nursery nurses.

The demonstration and rally in Dundee, will be lead off by parents and Anne Byrne, a local parent will speak to the rally in the City Square. She told Scotland in UNISON.

"Our kids are losing out whilst Scotland's councils play for time. We know what a valuable job nursery nurses do and we think they are undervalued. It is way past time for CoSLA to start talking to UNISON at Scottish level."

The rally will also deliver a petition to Dundee's local CoSLA (Convention of Scottish Local Authorities)



Carol Ball, chair of Nursery Nurses Working Group, shares a joke with TV journalists before she again makes sure the public know that the campaign will go on until CoSLA is prepared to talk.

representative. A petition jointly worked on by nursery nurses and parents in the city, it too will call on COSLA to get back round the table and deal with this Scotland-wide issue at a Scottish level.

Carol Ball, Chair of UNISON's Nursery Nurses Working Party said,

"COSLA have been trying since day one to shift the responsibility for fair pay on to individual local councils. Far from the demand for a Scotland-wide deal being 'imposed from the top' as CoSLA are trying to imply, in council after council, nursery nurses have made it clear that they want to improve the Scottish-wide grading that

already exist, and have rejected local deals.

"CoSLA's intransigence and, some silly games by some councils are only serving to prolong this dispute, increasing the disruption for parents and for children's education."

This 'imposed from the top' line has also been tried by Edinburgh councillor Frank Russell in a letter to the press.

"It shows just how desperate the employers are that, rather than argue the merits of the case, they are trying also sorts of diversions", said John Stevenson, Edinburgh UNISON branch secretary.

"All our nursery nurse

meetings are attended by just about everyone who is taking action. I have never seen a group of members so in charge of their claim and their action", he added.

Joe Di Paola, UNISON local government organiser

PARENT SPEAKS:

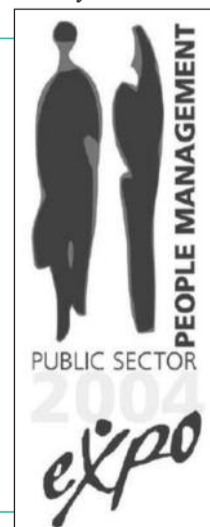
“Our kids are losing out whilst Scotland's councils play for time. We know what a valuable job nursery nurses do and we think they are undervalued. It is way past time for CoSLA to start talking to UNISON at Scottish level.”

was set to underline just how united nursery nurses are when he leads a UNISON deputation to the City of Edinburgh Council on the morning of the demonstration.

Glasgow City's letters to nursery nurses, laying out an offer they had already rejected were also roundly condemned by the union.

Public Sector People Management Expo SECC Glasgow 18-19 Feb 2004

The event for 2004 for everyone associated with Scottish public sector 'people' issues. For more details and how to register, see www.unison-scotland.org.uk/briefings/briefings.html



Childrens Reporter staff win new deal

Scottish Childrens Reporter Administration staff have won a two year pay and conditions deal worth between 2.5% and 4.5%, with new leave and 'family friendly' policy improvements.

Additional bonuses of £500 and £1,000 will be available too as part of a Performance Related Pay structure.

Negotiations have been hard in the new climate for the Administration after it came out of the remit of local authorities. But UNISON's Iain Montgomery was upbeat about the result.

"In addition to the pay element, there are leave improvements and an important new set of 'family friendly' policies.

"This shows that UNISON representation can bring results through negotiations even in the climate of PRP", he said.

A comprehensive Pay and Grading Review will follow in 2004 in partnership with the union.

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UNISON partner faces Arts Council cash threat

Well known Scottish political theatre company, 7:84, is threatened with withdrawal of Scottish Arts Council Core Funding after March 2005.

7:84, who are celebrating their 30th anniversary this year and have linked up with UNISON to provide advertising and discounted tickets for their tours as part of our 10th Anniversary, currently receive just over half their funding via this SAC grant. They are being told that they will only receive it for one further year, although they will be able to put in a further application next year.

UNISON's Scottish Council on Saturday 6 December, overwhelmingly backed a motion supporting 7:84 and the other arts companies that are threatened with funding cuts.

Lorenzo Mele, newly appointed Artistic Director of 7:84 said, "If ever Scotland needed a political touring theatre it is now. We have a new political scene - yet indications are that people are increasingly alienated with the political process.

"7:84 continues to take successful, entertaining, and thought-provoking drama to parts of Scotland that no-one else reaches, and also works with disenfranchised communities across Scotland to dramatise their

issues. We will be campaigning to have this reversed at next years funding debate."

Chris Barter is 7:84's Chair, as well as UNISON Scotland's Communications Officer. He says "This decision would be disastrous for 7:84, and for Scottish drama. At a time when the Government is establishing a new commissioning National Theatre, and Playwrights Studio, to try and chop Scotland's premier touring company, and its only political theatre company is bad news for theatre in Scotland."

The campaign to have the decision reversed starts now. UNISON Branches and individual members are urged to log onto the 7:84 website and pledge support for the company; to put pressure on their MSP to sign the motion supporting 7:84 put forward by Cathie Peattie MSP (Chair of the cross-party group on culture and the media) and to organise to see Reasons to be Cheerful - the adaptation of comedian, Mark Steel's book, which will be 7:84's next touring production in the spring.

Due to the anniversary partnership (see above) members will be able to buy tickets at a discount!

More information and arguments against the proposed cut can be found on the 7:84 website - www.784theatre.com.

7:84 continues to take successful, entertaining, and thought-provoking drama to parts of Scotland that no-one else reaches

Lorenzo Mele



Poster from 7:84's 'Caledonia Dreaming' sponsored by UNISON in the run up to the Scottish Parliament referendum

UNISON again calls for action plan following assault on nurse

UNISON has called on the Scottish Executive to implement its six point action plan following the serious assault on a nurse in Perth Royal Infirmary.

Jim Devine, UNISON's Scottish Organiser (Health) said,

"In the past year two nurses were stabbed in an Ayr Hospital, one nurse was head-butted in an Argyll and Clyde



Jim Devine

Hospital, another was sexually assaulted in a Glasgow Hospital and one other was threatened with a gun in Fife Hospital. Now a very serious incident has occurred in Perth.

"UNISON understands that a knife was used and only the location of the incident prevented a much more tragic outcome. UNISON is again calling on the Scottish Executive to implement its six point action plan:

- The Scottish Health Minister and NHS trade unions jointly issue a Staff Charter, reminding the public that it is not part of an NHS worker's job to be physically or verbally abused at work.

- The standardisation throughout Scotland of the definition, recording and follow up of violent and potentially violent incidents, including verbal abuse, for all NHS staff.

- An agreed training course on the management of violent or potentially violent incidents for all NHS staff.

- The introduction of a 'yellow and red card' warning system to members of the public who constantly abuse NHS staff. These warnings could lead to the banning of individuals from NHS premises if they persistently physically or verbally abuse staff.

- Relatives who physically abuse NHS staff must be automatically charged and prosecuted by the Procurator Fiscal.

- Every NHS worker in Scotland has a duty of care to her/himself and to her/his colleagues, to use the reporting system for every incident, and accept and expect that zero tolerance is not just the preferred but the only option.

"We are also calling on the Scottish Executive to carry out an immediate risk assessment of every hospital in Scotland as a matter of urgency.

"This nurse is not just a member of UNISON but is also an activist in our organisation and we are determined to ensure that physical and verbal abuse is not part of any health service worker's job", continued Jim.

Tories on a 'Passport to Nowhere' says UNISON

UNISON has warned the Tories they were on a 'passport to nowhere' with their plans to introduce patient and pupil passports.

Jim Devine, Scottish Organiser of Health, said:

"The Tories are on a passport to nowhere with their latest scheme for patient passports. I am sure that the Scottish electorate will see through their privatisation bid and refuse them a visa at the next election.

"David McLetchie's latest plan would rob the NHS of much needed funding and hand it over to the likes of BUPA and other private healthcare profiteers if they had the capacity here in Scotland. It is dishonest of the

Those who have the money will be able to play the system. The rest of us will suffer as resources leach out of the public service

Joe DiPaola



Tories to suggest that by introducing what is a voucher scheme that that would improve services to the people of Scotland.

"The reality is that as a result of nineteen years of lack of investment under the Tories we do not have the doctors, nurses, lab technicians, physiotherapists and occupational therapists that would be needed to expand the private sector.

"If David McLetchie doubts this fact, then he must answer the question - why was one of the

biggest private hospitals in Britain, Health Care International, a failure?"

UNISON also slammed the Tories' proposals for 'pupil passports'. Joe Di Paola, Scottish Organiser for Local Government said,

"The Tories attempt to fragment education in Scotland will do nothing to improve schools. It is simply an attempt to boost elitist private schools. It will in fact, reduce choices for all but a few pupils.

"Those who have the money

will be able to play the system. The rest of us will suffer as resources leach out of the public service.

"Good public education requires to be resourced accountable, responsive to peoples' needs and be provided by properly paid and trained staff.

"All of these principles are put at risk by David McLetchie's proposals. Proposals that appear to be a recycling of tired old English Tory policies."

UNISON has been campaigning to Revitalise Scottish Public services, and have produced a number of reports outlining the principles needed to do this. See www.unison.scotland.org.uk/revitalise/

Recruitment must be the New Year priority

by Chris Bartter
Communications Officer

Matt Smith, UNISON's Scottish Secretary, delivered a hard-hitting New Year recruitment message to the union's Scottish Council on Saturday 6 December.

"Our performance in recruiting fellow public service workers is just not good enough" he said.

"Despite the fact that employment in Scotland's public services is growing at last, UNISON's membership isn't. There are obviously pockets of success, but overall the membership figures are static - which means there are failures as well."

Still the main reason for not joining a trade union is because people aren't asked *Matt Smith*



Matt points to the resources available to Branches to assist them play and target their recruitment.

"We can offer help from the Scottish organisation in terms of organising and administrative staff time, and financial resources. But this must be accompanied with a willingness in the branch to set up their own structures and processes to ensure recruitment and retention

are top of the agenda."

We are particularly concerned about areas where membership density is dropping. This may lead to employers querying whether UNISON is actually representative.

"UNISON is historically used to being the majority union" says Matt, "to being the union that has all or nearly all the membership in a particular group."

"As membership densities change - in individual sections dropping below 50% - employers are beginning to challenge our right to speak for such groups. This starts the vicious circle.

"We become less effective as

a union, and less attractive to prospective members."

UNISON has clearly recognised this issue and recruitment is our number one priority. Resources such as materials, staffing and technology are available to assist branches.

But branches and stewards must take the issue seriously and ensure they map their authority, identify where the non-members are and develop plans to reach them.

"Still the main reason for not joining a trade union is because people aren't asked", says Matt.

"In 2004 branches and stewards need to ensure that they know who needs to be asked and that they ask them."

Cash windfalls for NHS part time staff

by Lui Giacomello
Communications & Campaigns Ctee

Cash windfalls of between £400 and £1200 will soon be winging their way into the pay packets of over 40,000 part-time NHS workers, thanks to UNISON.

The largest public sector union in Scotland won an outstanding victory when it negotiated a deal that gives part-time staff backdated pay for all the public holidays they were not rostered for.

Prior to this agreement, part time staff who didn't work public holidays received no pay or lieu time.

However their full time col-

leagues did receive the benefit whether or not they were scheduled to work on a public holiday.

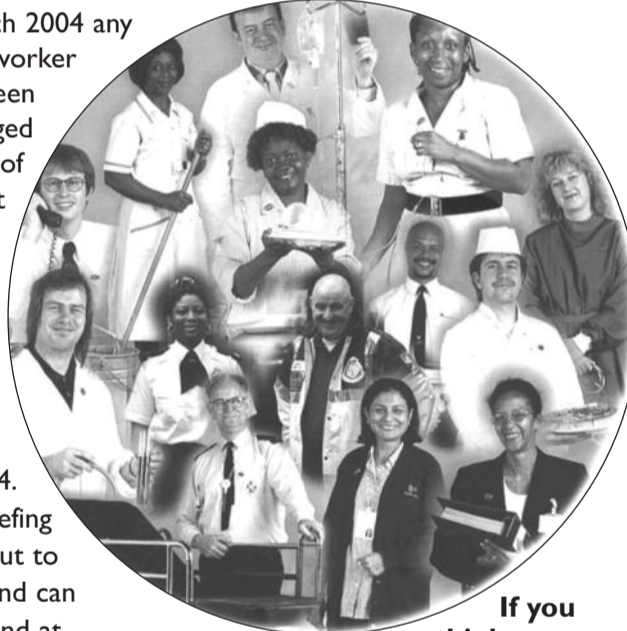
Following two successful Employment Tribunal applications, UNISON has recently held talks with the Scottish Executive to rectify this discriminatory practice, and ensure that the terms of the regulations are upheld.

Now in a deal struck with the employers, all part time workers who missed out on the public holiday benefit will now get back money for all the days they missed since July 2000.

For the period 1 July 2000

to 31 March 2004 any part time worker who has been disadvantaged as a result of the current public holiday practice will be due compensation before 31 March 2004.

A full briefing has gone out to branches and can also be found at www.unison-scotland.org.uk/nhs/news.html



If you think you have a claim, contact UNISON now.

Hope for legal protection from violent attacks

by John Stevenson
Siu Editor

The Scottish Executive is to mount a three month consultation to look at extending the legal protection from violent attacks to all public service workers.

This follows new laws covering firefighters and paramedics to address assaults on staff.

Punishments for those who make hoax calls, many of which end in assaults and damage to vehicles, will also be increased.

But UNISON has been campaigning for the protection to cover all public service staff, not just those responding to 'emergencies'. NHS staff, social workers and others need the same pro-

tection, says UNISON.

The union has welcomed minister for finance and public services Andy Kerr's willingness to look at including other staff.

UNISON Scottish Secretary Matt Smith said, "There is a growing trend of assaults throughout the public services and we want to continue our discussions with the Executive to ensure that all staff who face this problem are given adequate protection.

"The seriousness of assaults on say, paramedics, do not stop at the door to casualty ... who is to say when an emergency situation actually ends? Nurses and other frontline staff such as social workers should be offered more protection as well. They are all

public servants."

UNISON member Andy Watson has been a paramedic for 15 years, including three in a helicopter response team. Threats after an incident three years ago prompted him to move to rural Scotland.

"My colleague and I arrived at about 1am at a house we had been called to. We checked over a young man who was semi-responsive, and smelt strongly of alcohol, and eventually managed to get him into the ambulance.

"He suddenly turned on us, shouting abuse and struggling. Although we tried to calm him down, he said that he had a knife in his back pocket, and reached for it. I jumped out of the ambu-

lance and he came after me - thankfully he didn't have a knife but he landed a couple of blows.

"People from the houses round about started to come out and were also threatening us. The police arrived just in time and arrested him, but we had to treat him first.

"The emergency services are sent to help people, but there has been a definite increase in the number of assaults we have suffered.

"We have signs in ambulances now warning that any abuse will not be tolerated, but every time we get a call-out it can turn into a volatile situation.

"A lot of my colleagues would like to go to work wearing stab vests, just in case".

Local Government pay claim set for January

UNISONScotland has started talks with the other unions on a new pay claim to be lodged in January 2004.

Local government members backed plans for rise of at least 5% over a three year deal but this has yet to be settled with the two other main unions.

The current pay deal, which brought a flat rate to benefit lower paid staff last year and a 4% rise this year, finishes on 1 April 2004.

Branch urges caution on Social Work Inquiry

City of Edinburgh Branch is cautioning that the O'Brien Inquiry into the death of baby Caleb Ness should not be used as a benchmark for changing child protection thinking in Scotland.

In an interim briefing on the branch's website, officers warn that, while there is much to learn from the report in some areas, in others there are deep concerns about its accuracy, the logic of some its conclusions and its judgments on some of the evidence.

The briefing also covers recent 'politically opportunistic' plans to abolish the Social Work Department and reorganise services into Education and Housing, as well as staffing and professional issues arising from the inquiry.

Branch secretary John Stevenson says; "The crisis facing children and families social work is money, not organisation. Most staff are currently working exceptional hours with teams carrying unallocated cases. That is what needs to be addressed and not ducked by solely looking at further reorganisation.

"Only when the allocation of resources is addressed can the detailed work on change being done by children & families workers and management be effectively implemented."

See the full briefing at www.unison-edinburgh.org.uk/socialwork/obrien.html

Partnership with Leisure Trust

UNISON and the Edinburgh Leisure Trust which runs sports and recreation facilities in the city have signed a partnership deal which has brought better gradings, an improved minimum wage and joint initiatives to recruit and train stewards.

"Like UNISON, the Trust sees the value in workers being represented by their union through a well trained body of stewards. We hope this partnership will bring long-term benefits to our members and to the Trust", said George Lee, branch service conditions convenor who negotiated the deal.

Lifelong Learning in UNISON Scotland

It is almost a year now since the UNISON project 'Establishing a Culture of Learning' began.

The aim of the project has been to train UNISON Lifelong Learning Advisers in as many branches as possible and to begin the process of establishing Workplace Learning Agreements with employers to ensure equality of access to training opportunities for all our members.

16 courses have been run and we now have LLAs in 35 branches from Orkney to Ayrshire. If your branch hasn't been involved in the project so far, don't despair, you haven't quite missed the boat!

In the final 3 months of the project, January to March 2004, we have planned a number of courses. Dates for your Diary so far are:-

January 28/29/30

WEA Office George Square Glasgow

February 9/10/11

UNISON Office West Campbell Street Glasgow

February 18/19/20

UNISON Office Belford Road, Edinburgh

February 18/19/20

Macduff Learning Centre Banff and Buchan College

February 23/24/25

Elgin Dr Gray's Hospital

February 25/26/27

UNISON Office West Campbell St Glasgow

February 25/26/27

Angus Council area venue to be confirmed

February week beginning 23

Orkney final date and venue to be confirmed

March 9/10/11

Aberdeen, The Foyer Marywell St, Aberdeen

To book a place on any of these courses please contact Karen Barclay on Aberdeen 01224 620624 or by email

K.Barclay@unison.co.uk

Any branches who wish to organise a course specifically for their own members can do so by contacting Karen with details of a suitable venue as soon as possible please as the free(!) courses have to be completed by April 2004 at the latest!

Why Lifelong learning and what's in it for branches?

by Karen Barclay
Lifelong Learning

Be part of the LLA network. Remember LLAs are entitled to paid time off to undertake the two-day training and reasonable time off to carry out their duties.

So if your branch is having difficulty with facility time make sure you are utilising all your legal entitlements.

Use your LLAs to find out what is going on in your local workplaces, find out where the inequalities lie.

Large numbers of your members are about to be required to gain certain qualifications to allow them

to gain registration and carry out their duties i.e. care workers and classroom assistants- some of these members are going to require support and access to courses such as Return to Learn to give them the confidence to go for the SVQ they require.

What about Agenda for Change and if it comes to pass? The Knowledge and Skills Framework should provide opportunities for training for staff who have never had any training, but it also has the possibility of causing huge inequalities in pay progression for staff denied access to training.

LLAs in the local work-

places can become an integral support network to branch committees helping support members and giving you the information you need to negotiate successfully with the employer.

If you are holding a Branch Development day in the near future and would like some support with integrating Lifelong Learning into your Organising and Recruitment agenda please contact me, I'll be happy to provide that support.

For more information contact Karen Barclay on Aberdeen 01224 620624 or by email K.Barclay@unison.co.uk

New on the web

As well as our redesigned (and hopefully more helpful) home page, here are some of the latest website updates.

New photos and logos for Communications Officers
www.unison-scotland.org.uk/comms/resource.html

MSP Briefing Protecting Bathing Water Quality
www.unison-scotland.org.uk/briefings/bathingwater.html

Bargain Brief November 2003 No 18
www.unison-scotland.org.uk/briefings/bargain18.html

The Queens Speech - UK legislative programme - Briefing 73
www.unison-scotland.org.uk/briefings/queensspeech03.html

Response to Scottish Parliament investigation into Relocation Policy and the relocation of the CSA
www.unison-scotland.org.uk/response/csaresponse.html

Response to the Scottish Executive's Consultation on the draft Code of Practice - Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002
www.unison-scotland.org.uk/response/foiresponse2.html

Latest Voice@Work newsletter for Community and Voluntary Sector
www.unison-scotland.org.uk/volsec/main.html

Overseas nurses meet in Glasgow

Glasgow's overseas nurses attended a meeting organised by UNISON on 4 December.

A record number of overseas nurses have been arriving in the UK since 2001 and there are currently over 3,721 nurses working in the UK who trained outside the EU and who are now working in Britain.

The new recruits mainly come from the Philippines, South Africa, India, Zimbabwe, Australia and New Zealand and with a Government commitment to increase the number of nurses to 85,000, many more are likely to be recruited in the next year.

UNISON's Scottish Overseas Nurses Network was started in December last year to allow nurses working in the Glasgow area to get together to discuss issues which directly affect them such as work permits and recruitment.

It also allows them the opportunity to meet up and network with one another. Since its inception, the Network has supported nurses who have been sacked or been treated unfairly and secured some of them jobs in the NHS.

UNISONScotland is also hoping to participate in the Public Services International Campaign: *Women and International Migration in the Health Sector* which is currently examining world-wide trends of nurses and other health service workers moving away from their own countries to fill gaps in



www.unison-scotland.org.uk/nhs/overseas

staffing in the host countries.

Bridget Hunter, UNISONScotland's Lead Nursing Officer said: "UNISON is proud of the Overseas Nurses Network which provides a much needed service to those who for various reasons are unable to take action on their own behalf. The treatment of some overseas Nurses are subjected to is appalling and must be tackled so that nurses who come here from overseas can be assured that they will be treated properly."

Speakers included Joe Nicols, a professional advisor on the Standards and Registration Directorate Nursing and Midwifery Council, Chris Oswald, Commission for Race Equality, Peter Hunter, legal officer, UNISON Scotland and Ima Jackson, the project co-ordinator for Glasgow Overseas Professionals into Practice.

UNISON needs your knowledge

UNISONScotland needs your knowledge and expertise.

We have thousands of members with special knowledge about a range of issues affecting public services and we need to capitalise on that to make sure UNISON's voice is heard in the Scottish Parliament.

The union has set up Policy Pools to mirror the Parliament's functions so we can respond to the hundreds of consultations issued by the Scottish Executive.

We want to hear from any member with special knowledge on any of the issues so that it can be put to good use in the Policy Pools

For example, the Scottish Executive is currently consulting on a range of issues like:

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, Proposals for Legislation

www.scotland.gov.uk/consultations/justice/sfrs-00.asp - views to Kenny Maclaren P&I team - deadline 17 December 2003

Enterprise Committee Launches Inquiry into Renewable Energy In Scotland

www.scottish.parliament.uk/news/news-03/cent03-002.htm Deadline 26 January.

Please note the deadlines for consultations listed are those set by the Scottish Executive, therefore if you want your comments included in any UNISON response we have to have them at least a week before.

If you have any special knowledge of any of these issues, or if you just want to leave your name to be contacted when an issue you are interested in comes up, contact:

The Policy and Information Team
d.watson@unison.co.uk or tel: 0870 7777 006.

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: comms@unison-edinburgh.org.uk