



Inside this edition...

There for You—School uniform grants

Out in UNISON—Grampian Pride 2018

Campaigning for a mental healthy workplace

Latest updates on transformation and jobs

Help and support is available from your local steward. Find out who they are online!



UNISON Aberdeen City



@abdncityUNISON



unison@aberdeencity.gov.uk



<https://aberdeenunison.co.uk>

Do you have PRIDE in your union?

#OutInUNISON

UNISON branches from across the North East marched at Grampian Pride to celebrate LGBT+ rights. Thousands turned out on Union Street with great floats, music and costumes in a real carnival atmosphere. A Pride Village was held at the beach all afternoon to continue the party. We're proud to stand in solidarity with LGBT+ members.

Pride started as a protest. The parades and marches that we see now come from the protest marches of the first prides. LGBT+ people and their friends...

Read more inside...

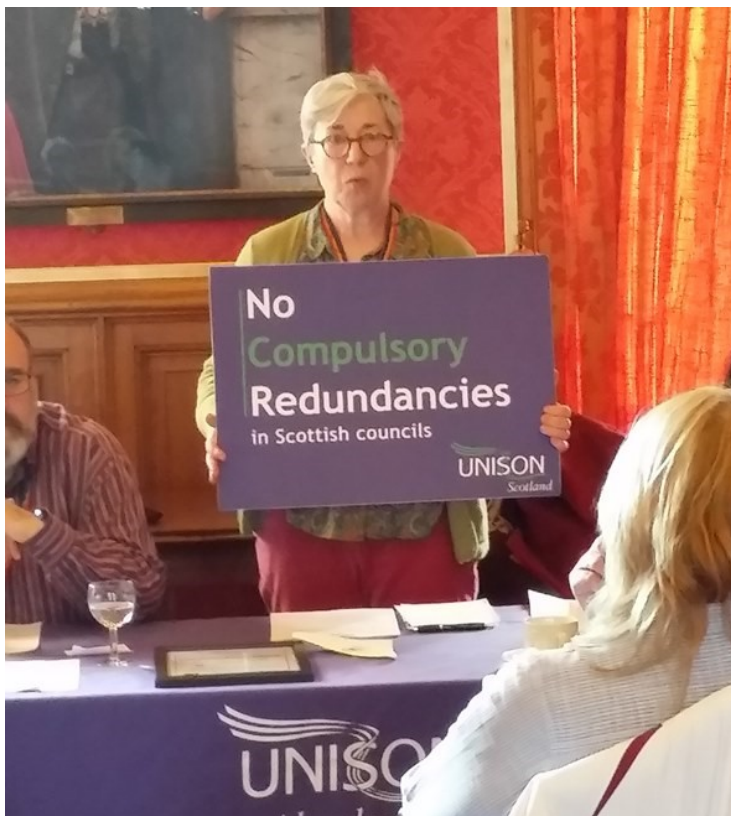
Transformation updates

UNISON secures breakthrough on no compulsory redundancies, calling for long-term steps

At the Branch AGM in March, our members called on Aberdeen City Council to commit to "no compulsory redundancies".

After the announcement that 370 jobs will be cut from the Council, many of our members have been concerned by statements that the Council "hopes" to manage staff reductions by voluntary means.

UNISON is committed to protecting our



members' jobs and keeping our public services in house.

UNISON has developed Transformation Principles to hold the implementation of the Target Operating Model to account and ensure that our members have greater job security and public services continue to be delivered in house.

In March, Joint Branch Secretary Kenny Luke said: "The administration has said from day one that there will be no compulsory redundancies under their watch. As far as we're concerned there's not a meaningful and binding policy on this, it remains a political commitment."

Since then UNISON has secured a breakthrough with a key concession from management on redeployment. Indefinite status on the redeployment list is the first practical step to implementing the commitment.

Kenny Luke said: "This is an excellent change with a real impact for our members. We now need a longer term solution to ensure that our members' jobs continue to be protected at this difficult time."

Only by standing together in a strong and unionised workforce can we achieve changes like this.

We need a mentally healthy workplace, says UNISON

There's a stigma around mental health at work. Being stressed and anxious can be framed as your own fault, or something you should just get over. Someone with depression can be accused of being grumpy or just having a bad day. But anyone can suffer from poor mental health, just like poor physical health. We sometimes think of being "mentally ill" as conditions

1 in 4 people are affected by a mental health problem in any year



#TimetoTalk

like schizophrenia or suicidal thoughts, developing a sense of fear and “other” about it. But that’s just one part of the story.

It’s thought that one in four of us will have mental ill health at some point, but our culture stops people feeling able to talk openly. The truth is that we all get ups and downs, with feeling stressed or low as common as the cold.

At the first Staff Governance Committee on 4 May, UNISON raised this issue with Councillors to let them know how we felt about the environment our members are working in right now. The job cuts this year have added unnecessary pressure and stress to already challenging jobs.

Many of our members are feeling undervalued and overworked. Cllr Yuill told the committee: “if this were physical health, we’d move heaven and earth”. But when it comes to mental health and our emotional wellbeing, there is often only superficial support.

UNISON is concerned that stress impact assessments take place only after stress has occurred, and changes to the workforce will have a significant detriment to the working environment. Without redesigning processes to free up capacity, job cuts simply mean the same amount of work for fewer people.

We are committed to working with management on this issue. UNISON has a expertise that we can share in order to design a workplace which supports our members’ mental wellbeing. Over the summer we’ll be asking for your experiences and views so that we can make the case for a different way of working. With your help we can raise the profile of this universal issue and create a mentally healthy workplace.

**Need help at work with mental health?
Contact a UNISON steward or talk to
There For You on 020 7121 5620.**

**If you’re feeling depressed, suicidal, or just
need someone to talk to, you can also
call Samaritans on 116 123
or jo@smaritans.org.**

Job cuts consultation:

Over the spring we have been working tirelessly to respond to the Council’s consultation on job cuts. Many of you will have joined UNISON recently and seen the benefits of having a rep in the room. The issues we’ve been raising for you are:

- *Job cuts, redundancies and restructure*
- *Retraining and redeployment rights*
- *Getting the right grade for the right job*

But it’s the work that we’re doing behind-the-scenes which has the biggest impact. Negotiating with management to get proper rationale for changes has been challenging but has eventually borne fruit. We felt that the information initially provided was patchy and inadequate, making it impossible for members to get the representation they deserve.

UNISON is now satisfied we have enough information to respond to the consultation and has submitted its position to management. While we haven’t been able to prevent every job cut, we have been fighting to help our members retain their grades and align with the right jobs. We are clear that our members are our priority and we will provide all the support we can to keep you working here.

Remember, redeployment is for an indefinite period paid at your normal rate. You can apply for a range of roles while HR attempts to job match you to a suitable vacancy. You can continue applying for VSER while you are on the list at your normal rate.

Many people are concerned about the impact this will have on their customers and the quality of services the Council delivers. This is an impact which the public will begin to notice as services necessarily reduce to reflect the change in workforce.

This is just the first year of a five year programme, so we are anticipating the cuts still to come. Now management and unions know more of what to expect from each other, so we will continue to be prepared for the future.

Continued from page 1

... marched because it was commonplace for people to think that LGBT+ people shouldn't be seen or heard and homophobia, biphobia and transphobia was endemic, so in protest against this, they demonstrated!

UNISON works tirelessly to combat homophobia, biphobia and transphobia and to build equality for us all. In recent years we've marched toward greater equality under the law with same-sex marriages and equalities legislation, but there is a long way to go in changing attitudes. The threats posed by continuing cuts and austerity, potential changes to human rights

laws after Brexit, and a world where Donald Trump can become US President makes it an uncertain time. UNISON continues to fight against discrimination at work and in wider society. We believe fundamentally in an equal and fair society for everyone.



School uniform grants available for members



UNISON is once more launching a scheme to help members on low incomes deal with the cost of buying school uniforms.

Families living on low income with children struggle constantly to make ends meet – and this can be particularly acute before the new school year begins when the extra costs hit hard.

The union's welfare charity There for You has a limited fund to help members deal with the costs of school uniforms. Applications are open now. Closing date is **Friday 20 July 2018**.

Members can apply for up to £40 per child for a maximum of £120. To be eligible you should:

- Either receive Housing Benefit (or the housing element of Universal Credit) or have a total net annual household income of £18,000 or less;
- Not have savings or a rolling bank balance of £800 or more;
- Not be able to receive funds from your local authority for school uniforms;

Applications are limited to one per household with priority given to those who have not previously received a grant.

Pay claim update

Looking for updates on the 2018 pay claim? Go to the **UNISON Scotland website** for the latest on the negotiations. The joint trade unions are currently in discussions with Scottish Ministers to get a better offer before we can ballot members.

ESSENTIAL COVER

Go to join.unison.org.uk to sign up today!

From
£1.30
a month