

UNISON IN THE CITY

Newsletter of Nottingham City UNISON

*The
Public
Service
Union*

Nottingham City

Fighting To Defend
Jobs & Services

COUNCIL USES SINGLE STATUS TO ATTACK OUR TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Nottingham City UNISON was unable to ballot members because of the City Council's refusal to agree changes to the collective agreement. Whilst UNISON had other concerns about the proposals, the inclusion of suitable clauses on how the Council plan to deal with the issue of pay protection would have enabled us to ballot. Other councils (including Broxtowe Council) have accepted this clause.

In a disgraceful attack on its employees, the City Council has used this situation to introduce **NEW** proposals never previously discussed in the single status negotiations, and to bully its staff into signing new contracts by threatening to deny them their compensation or pay protection.

The impossibly tight timescale of employees receiving letters on 22 or 23 April, and having to decide whether to agree to a new contract by 5 May (this includes a bank holiday), appears deliberately constructed to allow minimal access to their trade union representatives. The publishing of the wrong telephone number for Nottingham City UNISON in the Council's booklet, also seems a further attempt to limit our members access to advice.

In these proposals, the City Council signals the start of a massive attack on our terms and conditions, and on the ability of your trade union to represent you.

JOIN OUR PROTEST

**12.30PM THURSDAY 29 APRIL 2010
OUTSIDE THE COUNCIL HOUSE,
OLD MARKET SQUARE,
NOTTINGHAM**

It must be seen as part of a wider picture that has included huge job losses (600 last year and 160+ this year) and attacks on our redundancy pay scheme.

If the council wanted to change terms and conditions, they should have approached the trade unions in the normal way for negotiations. By linking these attacks (detailed overleaf) to pay protection and compensation for those staff whose pay will fall or increase, they are effectively putting a gun to the head of 60% of the workforce. In a time of recession when many people are already on the brink of financial disaster, this is a most disgraceful tactic and should be met by the full force of a united trade union movement at Nottingham City Council.

UNISON knows that some of our members feel angry that we did not ballot. This was a decision made by our union nationally, following legal advice, and not by the Branch. However, this is not the time to be divided, we need maximum unity and strength within UNISON and with our colleagues in GMB and UNITE, to resist these attacks on terms and conditions. These attacks are so serious that all three unions have indicated the possibility of industrial action. UNISON will consult members about this at the meetings starting on Monday 26 April 2010.

URGENT - STOP PRESS

Council planning massive detrimental changes to some compensation payments. Come along to one of the meetings detailed overleaf, or contact the Branch on 9156883 for further details

MEETING DATES

MONDAY 26 APRIL 2010

8.00am Vernon Rd Depot, Boardroom
12.30pm York House, Archive Room
3.30pm Bulwell St Mary's School, Hall

TUESDAY 27 APRIL 2010

8.00am Eastcroft, Medway Bldg
1.00pm Sandfield Centre, Hall

WEDNESDAY 28 APRIL 2010

9.30am Southglade Childrens Centre,
Training Room (upstairs)
12.30pm Council House, Dining Room
3.00pm Clifton Cornerstone,
Community Suite

THURSDAY 29 APRIL 2010

3.00pm Sandfield Centre, Hall

FRIDAY 30 APRIL 2010

8.00am Woolthorpe Depot,
Meeting Room
12.30pm Denewood Centre,
Adult Conf Room
3.00pm Council House, Dining Room

**YOU ARE ALLOWED TIME OFF
FROM WORK TO ATTEND THESE
MEETINGS**

Any decision on industrial action will ultimately be taken by UNISON members. If employees sign a variation of their contract, the advice we have received is that it would in no way inhibit their ability to vote later for industrial action.

More specific advice on the implications of signing or not signing your variation of contract will be available in the next few days at the UNISON meetings.

The specific attacks on our terms and conditions are detailed below.

SPECIFIC ATTACKS ON OUR TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- Halving sick pay entitlement from a maximum of 6 to 3 months full pay and from 6 to 3 months half pay. Proposing this, the City Council is in our view, signalling the withdrawal from our National Conditions of Service - the Green Book.
- Moving approximately 2000 employees from weekly to monthly pay without commitment to the measures previously agreed to minimise financial hardship.
- Making part of the City Council Red Book (Sections C & D) non-contractual. This includes disciplinary, grievance, grading appeals procedures, flexi time, maternity support and paternity leave. This is a significant attack on the ability of your trade union locally to represent and negotiate on your behalf.
- Attacks on our working patterns that could significantly affect staff including those with travel to work issues and caring responsibilities.
- Attacks on car mileage rates.
- Removal of split shift allowance.

CONSULTATION MEETING DATES ARE DETAILED ABOVE. NON UNION MEMBERS ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND, IF THEY JOIN AT THE MEETING. ALSO JOIN OUR LUNCHTIME PROTEST ON THURSDAY 29 APRIL 2010

SCHOOL EMPLOYED STAFF

The Council have decided that school employed staff and Teaching Assistants employed by the Council will no longer be affected by this phase of single status. Because of the changes outlined overleaf, the Council will have to consult school governing bodies again. We will contact members as soon as we have further information.

BRANCH CONTACTS

Branch Secretary - Gary Ward - Tel: 9156938

Service Conditions Officer - Christina Sanna - Tel: 9155879

Branch Chair- Jean Thorpe - Tel: 9156890

Branch Admin Office -

Tel: 9156883 / Fax: 9156889

unison@nottinghamcity.gov.uk / www.nottinghamcityunison.org.uk