

# UNISON IN THE CITY

Newsletter of Nottingham City UNISON

*The  
Public  
Service  
Union*

Nottingham City  
  
Fighting To Defend  
Jobs & Services

## SINGLE STATUS PROPOSALS

UNISON has now told the City Council that we cannot ballot our members on the proposed "Single Status" agreement. The City Council has said it understands our concerns and is now considering what is the best way forward. We are aware that there have been many rumours about what action the council might take but the council has assured UNISON that it does not want to take any action that will be viewed as provocative by UNISON or our members.

Our head office and external lawyers reviewed the proposals and identified some important issues for us to resolve with the council. These issues affect over 700 of our members and, if unresolved, would result in unlawful pay discrimination.

### What were the issues?

One of our biggest concerns was on pay protection. We were not objecting to the principle of protection – it was the manner in which it was applied that potentially created unlawful pay discrimination for over 700 of our members.

We tried to negotiate on this issue with the council in the same way that other branches have at other councils. However, we have been unable to reach an agreement with the council.

Protection was not the only issue we had. We also had concerns about:

- grade boundaries which do not seem to be drawn in a way that is consistent with achieving equal pay for work of equal value.
- the way that back pay is applied.
- inconsistencies for the job evaluation particularly in schools; some jobs appear to have been over scored, others underscored.

UNISON met with senior management on several occasions last year and again in January to advise them of our position.

The council agreed to some changes but we could not agree on the things that really mattered. In particular, because of the concerns we had about equal pay, we tried to agree changes to the wording of the agreement with the council.

We understand there will be many members who are set to gain under the proposals. Some are due to receive back pay and a failure to ballot will frustrate them immensely. But the courts have been clear that unions cannot sign an agreement that may result in unlawful pay discrimination and the council appear to have acknowledged that this is a problem for us.

Members may quite reasonably ask why two other unions have agreed to ballot their members when UNISON has not.

## BRANCH OFFICERS

### Branch Secretary

Gary Ward - Tel: 9156938

### Assistant Branch Secretary

Clive Norris - Tel: 9154467

### Service Conditions Officer

Christina Sanna - Tel: 9155879

### Chair

Jean Thorpe - Tel: 9156890

### Central Panel Officer

Mark Towle - Tel: 9150326

### Treasurer

Steve Hales - Tel: 9151149

### Branch Office

Tel: 9156883

### E-Mail

[unison@nottinghamcity.gov.uk](mailto:unison@nottinghamcity.gov.uk)

### Website

[www.nottinghamcityunison.org.uk](http://www.nottinghamcityunison.org.uk)

We cannot comment on what they have done, it may be that the other unions are much smaller than UNISON and have a different profile of members so they may not face the same issues as us. Our legal advice is very clear and we have to follow it. We have to be guided by the interests of our members.

We are sure our members will understand we cannot sign any agreement where we know there are issues of unlawful pay discrimination that could affect such a significant number of our members.

That is why we are not in a position to ballot members.

### What next?

We have now told the council our position – the ball is in their court. As stated earlier, we know there have been many rumours about what might happen if no agreement could be reached. UNISON has been assured by the council that they do not want to take any action that will inflame the situation.

The council has told UNISON that they will have to go away and reflect upon the situation before they decide what to do next. We hope the council come to a decision on how to progress things in the next 10 days or so.

We will give members further advice and information as the situation changes.

We have arranged a series of meetings to talk to members about the situation. The dates, times and venues of the meetings are below

COUNCIL HOUSE	DENEWOOD	SANDFIELD	SCHOOLS
Tues 9 Feb 12.00pm Council Chamber	Thurs 11 Feb 12.30pm Adult Conference Room	Fri 12 Feb 9.30am Hall	<b>ELLIS GUILDFORD</b> Mon 22 Feb 4.00pm
Wed 10 Feb 9.30am Tea Room	Tues 16 Feb 9.30am Adult Conference Room	Tues 16 Feb 12.30pm Hall	<b>SEELY SCHOOL</b> Tues 23 Feb 4.00pm
Wed 17 Feb 2.00pm Dining Room			<b>DOVECOTE SCHOOL</b> Wed 24 Feb 4.00pm
			<b>OAKFIELD SCHOOL</b> Thurs 25 Feb 4.00pm
CLIFTON LEISURE CENTRE	EASTCROFT DEPOT	VERNON ROAD DEPOT	WOOLSTHORPE DEPOT
Wed 10 Feb 12.30pm  Room to be allocated ask at Reception	Thurs 11 Feb 8.00am Training Room, Medway Building	Mon 15 Feb 3.00pm The Board Room	Wed 17 Feb 8.00am Coffee area