



## 2. CAMPAIGN GUIDE

Many branch activists are experienced in running campaigns on both local and national issues. However, it is always useful to review our approach, so below are a few basic tips. And for those of you who are new to publicity and campaigning, hopefully this will be of help.

This guide is in no way a final word – as with any campaigning there should be room for everyone to contribute ideas.

### We need Aims and Targets

- Aims are the focus for any campaign, around which everything else is built.
- Aims also make it possible to review the campaign. Are we achieving what we set out to achieve? Make sure that everyone knows the issues around this campaign and the line of march.
- Encourage member activity in support of this campaign. The campaign can also have the added benefit of building organisation within the branch and raising the profile of UNISON.
- Targets are the people we need to convince.

### Planning is essential

- Creating a flexible plan with a timetable and with responsibilities identified means you have a strategy. Everyone is aware of the intended progress of the campaign and can prepare for events. It also makes it possible to identify when specific materials are required and to identify shortfalls in resources.
- Make sure you know about relevant dates and opportunities to get the campaign on track. For example, are there certain meetings (of your council) your branch might want to attend or lobby? Is there a local event that could provide a useful 'hook' for your campaign?

### Who does the planning?

Obviously it is up to the branch activists and committee to agree to a campaign plan. But it may be easier to form a sub-committee or working party to focus primarily on drawing up the plan. They could then take it to the rest of the branch for discussion and agreement. Drawing up a document – which lists key dates, proposed activities, resources and responsibilities – would be impossible to do from scratch in a full committee or branch meeting. A small group allows flexibility to meet as and when necessary. The group can continue to meet as events progress, adapting the plan or co-opting others as and when necessary. The group can continue to meet as events progress, adapting the plan or co-opting others as and when necessary. They can also review each phase as it happens and report back to the rest of the branch.

Of course this may not be appropriate for your particular branch. Or you may wish to work branches within your area. Choose whatever suits everyone best. Some branches agree to free up specific individuals in these situations, sharing out their work so they have more time to concentrate on the campaign.

### Communications – or how to get your message across

It is important to think about who your target audience is and what you want to communicate. Communications may be viewed as 'internal' ie within UNISON (either the branch, Scotland, or at UK level) or 'external' ie outside UNISON (eg the employers, local or national media, trades councils, other trade unions, etc), or a combination of both.

**/PTO**



You may want to think about using some of the following methods:

- Press releases, to tell the media about specific events in your campaign or a compelling story in your branch. Don't forget that journalists are interested in anything that will make a story, so think carefully about what interests their readers.
- Briefing meetings for activists and members. Do you want to invite a guest speaker along? What issues do you want to tell people about?
- Could you create any photo opportunities to attract the attention of the press and public but also to provide your branch with stock photographs to be used in your publicity?
- Newsletters

Other ideas:

Circulars, email, notice boards, word of mouth, workplace meetings, pre-printed envelopes, social events, posters, leaflets, advertising.

### **What do you want to communicate?**

Think about:

- The aims of your campaign
- Back up information which can fill gaps
- Key dates in the campaign timetable
- Who is responsible for what
- How the campaign aids recruitment and retention
- Messages of support from outside the branch
- Appeals for financial support

### **Importance of recruitment**

No UNISON campaign can neglect the importance of recruitment and retention of members.

Running a well-planned and high profile campaign in itself demonstrates that UNISON is worth joining. UNISON campaigns should show members that their concerns are being addressed and hence retention. Recruitment opportunities need to be identified in your planning and also picked up as they arise.

See our recruitment page for more information

[www.unison.org.uk/communicating/recruitment.asp](http://www.unison.org.uk/communicating/recruitment.asp)

### **Evaluation**

The importance of reviewing cannot be overstressed. There's no point reinventing the wheel, so ensure that you learn from yours and other's experiences. At every stage your plan needs to be looked at and the activities reviewed. We can all learn from successes and mistakes. Think about how might review activities.

For example, did you run a recruitment stall but nobody turned up? Where did you site it? And don't forget that successes need to be shared with others. Don't assume that you were the last to think of an idea. Get your rep to report it to the Local to report it to the Local Government Committee and the Communications and Campaigns Committee. And don't forget to tell *Scotland in UNISON* the magazine for activists, and the UNISONScotland website – [webmanager@unison-edinburgh.org.uk](mailto:webmanager@unison-edinburgh.org.uk)