



## Public Works: Update June 2011

### **We won't pay with our pensions – Wed, June 29th**

In support of our fellow trade unionists at the PCS union who are striking over job losses, pay cuts and pensions on June 30<sup>th</sup>, the STUC has organised a stunt in Glasgow to highlight the attacks on our members' pensions the day before the PCS strike.

The STUC has planned a photo shoot outside one of the city's banks under the banner of 'We won't pay with our pensions'. The STUC is hoping to attract 150 plus union members to go along to the lunchtime event to stand beside a massive cardboard cut-out of Fred Goodwin, showing that his pension is a massive £14,000 per week. Local branches are encouraged to go along to the photo stunt and to take along placards displaying the cost of the average public sector pension, which is typically around £80 per week.

The stunt will take place on the corner of Buchanan Street and Royal Exchange Square on Wednesday, 29 June, at 12.30pm. For more information visit:  
[www.thereisabetterway.org](http://www.thereisabetterway.org)

### **Pensions champions and contacts**

UNISON members face a number of attacks on our pensions and it's important we get organised at all levels. Among the key issues facing members are:

- Change to the way pension increases are calculated from the Retail Price Index to the Consumer Prices Index that will cut average pensions by at least 15%
- Retirement age increases that don't reflect the demands on many public service workers.
- Abolishing pension protection for workers who are forced to transfer to another employer outside the public sector
- A complete overhaul of the state pension that will impact on public service schemes
- Changes to fund governance and cost sharing provisions with employers

Important though these issues are, the key issue is the proposed 3.2% increase in member contributions - that's a 50% increase. This is simply a tax to pay back government debts that were raised to bail out the banks. None of the money will go into the schemes and it threatens the whole system if members opt-out.

Overall, the pension changes mean: Pay more, work longer and get less. For this campaign to have maximum impact we need to get organised at branch level and we need at least one pension's champion who will take a lead role in the branch on this issue.

#### **For further information contact:**

Dave Watson: [d.watson@unison.co.uk](mailto:d.watson@unison.co.uk)  
Trisha Hamilton: [t.hamilton@unison.co.uk](mailto:t.hamilton@unison.co.uk)

**Public Works is the Scottish arm of UNISON's  
Million Voices for Change campaign**  
[www.unison-scotland.org.uk/publicworks](http://www.unison-scotland.org.uk/publicworks)  
To join UNISON call 0845 355 0845

We also need pension contacts at workplace level who can talk to members about the attack on our pensions. Briefings and training will be provided to all pensions champions and contacts.

If you are interested in getting involved, speak to a member of your branch. Branches can register their champions/ contacts online: [www.unison.org.uk/pensions/pop\\_involved.asp](http://www.unison.org.uk/pensions/pop_involved.asp)

## Are you following us?

Stay up-to-date with the latest news and information on UNISON and the Public Works campaign by following us online. There are a number of ways to stay in touch, from Facebook to Twitter and Blogger to our very own YouTube channel. Whatever medium you prefer, make sure you sign up and encourage other activists and members to do the same. Follow us now by clicking on one of these links.



## Case studies

We are constantly on the lookout for people willing to act as case studies and share their stories with the media. Case studies are a key resource in helping us attract media attention and we need people from all sectors and on all issues. If you, or one of your members, would be willing to talk about how the cuts are affecting you then please contact Trisha Hamilton, Communications Officer, on 0141 342 2877 or email [t.hamilton@unison.co.uk](mailto:t.hamilton@unison.co.uk).

## We want your pictures

UNISON's Public Works campaign is not just about challenging cuts, it's also about promoting a positive image of Scotland's public services. We are currently looking for photographs of public services, from all sectors, to use in our publications and materials. Please spread the word among your members and ask them to send us photographs of them at work providing a public service. If you would like any more information, or if you have photographs you would like to send, then please contact Trisha Hamilton, Communications Officer on 0141 342 2877 or email [t.hamilton@unison.co.uk](mailto:t.hamilton@unison.co.uk)

## Cuts Impact Assessments

It is important that we ensure a strong flow of information through the Cuts Impact Assessments. Branches are reminded to update your Cuts Impact Assessment forms and send them to Fiona Montgomery, Policy and Information team, at [f.montgomery@unison.co.uk](mailto:f.montgomery@unison.co.uk)

## Branch 'to do' list

- Encourage members and activists to attend the STUC stunt in Glasgow in support of our fellow trade unionists at the PCS who are going on strike the following day.
- Has your branch got a pensions champion and contact? If not, sign up now at: [www.unison.org.uk/pensions/pop\\_involved.asp](http://www.unison.org.uk/pensions/pop_involved.asp)
- Follow us online and ask your activists and members to do the same.
- We need real-life case studies of members who are willing to talk about the impact of the cuts. If you, or someone you know, is willing to take part then please contact Trisha Hamilton, Communications Officer, on 0141 342 2877 or email [t.hamilton@unison.co.uk](mailto:t.hamilton@unison.co.uk)
- We are looking for photographs of members at work to promote a positive image of public services. Please send your pictures to [t.hamilton@unison.co.uk](mailto:t.hamilton@unison.co.uk)
- Remember to update your Cuts Impact Assessment forms and send them to Fiona Montgomery, Policy and Information team, at [f.montgomery@unison.co.uk](mailto:f.montgomery@unison.co.uk)