

CCT finally goes

UNISON welcomed many of the provisions of the Local Government in Scotland Act which passed through its final stages in Parliament in January. Dave Watson said



“The abolition of CCT, the repeal of council borrowing constraints which will allow local authorities to borrow prudently to invest in capital build programmes and the

new power of well being, are all welcome developments. We will continue to be involved to ensure that the guidance on these things enshrines UNISON’s ideas.” The Act establishes the above three principles for local government. UNISON Scotland has been involved in the formal consultation processes,

// ...best value should mean quality, good employment practice, equality and transparency. //

and in informal discussions with Minister Andy Kerr MSP on all of them.

Andy Kerr has also moved quickly to incorporate the English statutory provisions into Scots Law. The statute provides protection for any staff who transfer to private companies under best value.

Scottish Organiser Joe Di Paola represents the trade unions on the Best Value task group scrutinising the detail. The Guidance for all three areas is still being drafted. UNISON is clear that best value should mean quality, good employment practice, equality and transparency. We believe Community Planning should be based on the democracy and accountability of local government and that trade unions should be stakeholders in the process.

UNISON welcomes the Power of Well Being for local authorities to act in the interests of their communities, and we’re pleased that removal of borrowing restrictions will allow councils to exercise this power.

NHS low pay deal welcomed

In January UNISON concluded an agreement with the Scottish Executive that could see the salaries of over 30,000 NHS ancillary, nursing, admin, and clerical, and professional and technical staff rise by between 12%-16%.

Jim Devine, Scottish Organiser for Healthcare explained: "For far too long, low pay has been endemic in



the NHS and we hope this is the beginning of the end for the low pay scandal.

“In fairness the Scottish Executive, and in particular Health Minister Malcolm Chisholm, have recognised this fact. We’re pleased they have worked in partnership with us to end low pay”.

Local input priority for LabourLink review

As you will know the Affiliated Political Fund – UNISON's Labour Link – has been reviewing its operations and activities for some years.

In Scotland Labour Link activists have participated in several meetings and discussions on improving UNISON Scotland's LabourLink to make it as effective as possible. The discussions on communication, structures and organisation have proved useful. They have helped to identify current problems within LabourLink, and have pointed at possible solutions for the way forward.

Following these discussions, the January LabourLink AGM agreed a process of restructuring and revitalising the local

organisation, communications and activities of the LabourLink in Scotland. It is proposed to group Branches and CLPs to work together to focus on issues, provide support, and improve organisation.

It is hoped that the changes will allow for greater UNISON input into local constituency parties, better dialogue with elected representatives, and will improve the LabourLink element of UNISON's Branch Development Plans.

The Labour Link is also working on a LabourLink Tool Kit to provide support and guidance to branches and Labour Link Officers.

Postal votes available

In this mailing you should also find a postcard with an application form to apply for a postal vote.

This is being circulated on behalf of the Scottish Trade Union Labour Party Liaison Committee (STULP) to give supporters the opportunity to apply for a postal vote.

In the past, postal votes have only been available for serious reasons - to those seriously ill, unavoidably working away from home or other provable reason. Now however, the legislation is far more relaxed,

and encourages people to register for postal votes if they think they may not be able (or even want) to get out to vote. Statistics show that 85% of postal voters vote so why not ensure your supporters are large number of these?

Please make these cards widely available to supporters who want to postal vote. We have stocks in West Campbell Street. Please contact the P&I Team on 0870 7777 006.

John Lambie



The sudden death of John Lambie has come as a great shock to all of his colleagues and friends. It is deeply sad to know that he only retired from his work with UNISON last June.

John was one of the leading trade unionists of his generation, in UNISON, NUPE, and way back in his days in the AEU. There was a determination about John whether he was on a case or pursuing a claim and he was very well connected within the NHS throughout Scotland.

John believed in a better society for all and was committed to our public services, pursuing his ideals through the Labour Party, which he Chaired in 1999 and served on its Scottish Executive until his death.

As Scottish Secretary to the APF John used his impressive influence within the Labour Party to promote UNISON policies to good effect. He will be greatly missed but will be long remembered by those who had the joy of knowing and sharing time with him.

LabourLink News Circulation

We've had a few queries from members as to why they're receiving Labour Link Scotland News. Labour Link Scotland News is produced by UNISON's Labour Link, an integral part of UNISON to promote UNISON policies within the Labour Party. The Labour Link Scotland newsletter is distributed widely to UNISON Scotland members, to inform them of its work, and to promote openness and transparency in Labour Link activities.

Forum discusses new directions for LabourLink

The Annual Labour Link Forum in November 2002 provided the ideal opportunity for delegates to discuss the future direction of the Labour Link in Scotland, to grill UK Government and Scottish Executive Ministers on key policy decisions, and to debate with UNISON colleagues from south of the border on the review of the Labour Link.

Eric Milligan, the Lord Provost of Edinburgh, gave his usual quirky but thought provoking welcome to delegates, whilst Labour Link Scotland Chair Karie Murphy extended a warm welcome to all participants. Written reports from the Scottish and National Labour Link Committees, the Scottish Labour Party Executive and Policy Forum, the Scottish Trade Union and Labour Party Liaison Committee, and Parliamentary reports from Westminster, Holyrood and Brussels were submitted giving delegates the opportunity to question our representatives to these bodies.

Anne McGuire MP, Minister of State for Scotland, outlined



Anne McGuire MP - "Positive impact in Scotland"

some of the achievements of the Labour Government at Westminster which are having a positive impact in Scotland: the winter fuel payments, and minimum income guarantee for pensioners, improved maternity and paternity rights, the establishment of the Scottish Parliament, and investment in public services. Anne touched on the international situation, and responded to a range of questions from members.

National Labour Link Chair Steve Warwick gave a useful presentation on the APF Labour Link Review, following which delegates broke into workshops to debate their ideas for renewing the Labour Link in Scotland.

Before lunch UNISON's General Secretary Dave Prentis spoke on UNISON's priorities and our relations with the Labour Government, focussing on the international situation, racism, and public services.

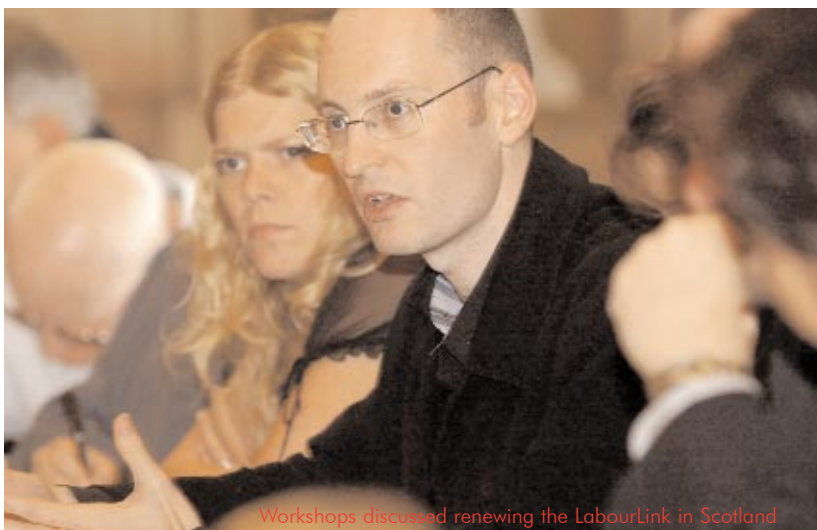
The afternoon session saw Andy Kerr MSP, Minister for Finance and Public Services



Dave Prentis - "What are UNISON's priorities?"

address delegates on the Executive's Spending Review and Local Government policy.

The presentation by the Scottish Labour Party's Stephen Lawther on the Road to the Manifesto was followed by workshops where delegates scrutinised the draft manifesto, commenting on its contents. A parliamentary panel of Rachel Squire MP, Eric Joyce MP, Karen Gillon MSP and Scott Barrie MSP fielded a range of challenging questions from the floor, before delegates had the opportunity to move and vote on motions to the Forum.



Workshops discussed renewing the LabourLink in Scotland

Challenge to candidates

UNISON has issued its manifesto for the election. Entitled 'Revitalise our public services', it challenges political parties to deliver in the crucial area of Scotland's public services.

The £80,000 campaign will involve newspaper adverts, direct mailing to PPCs and other organisations, and a magazine to all 150,000 UNISON members calling on them to challenge their candidates to adopt the union's principles.

Matt Smith, Scottish Secretary said

"The manifesto sets out eight principles that need to be adopted to successfully revitalise our public services. It is the most comprehensive and innovative look at public service renewal Scotland has seen. It is based on a public service ethos; on the principles of selflessness, integrity, objectivity, openness, accountability, competence and equality."

UNISON rejects the artificial 'produce/consumer' divide,

UNISON's APF is our special political fund that is affiliated to the Labour Party. Its organisation in Scotland is headed by **Dave Watson**. He can be contacted at UNISON House, 14 West Campbell Street, Glasgow G2 6RX. Tel 0870 7777 006. d.watson@unison.co.uk

All local branches also have APF officers. Contact either for further information or to join UNISON and/or the Affiliated Political Fund

argues for planned development that involves new methods of monitoring and collaboration between services. It rejects funding public services



Matt Smith "Candidates need to be aware that UNISON members have a vote and are likely to use it."

from the private sector and calls for resources to be made available to attract staff and allow service delivery.

The manifesto gives both

Step towards eliminating two-tier workforce

UNISON Scotland has welcomed the PPP staffing protocol agreed between the STUC and the Scottish Executive as a positive step to eliminating two tier workforces in PFI/PPP schemes.

Scottish Secretary Matt Smith said: "Although the protocol is not retrospective, it is a significant step forward in preventing future two-tier workforces in PFI and PPP schemes. It is especially welcome that it applies across the public sector and that it covers new workers being employed under these contracts. The protocol will allow trade unions to get our

credit and criticism to the Scottish Government's track record. It welcomes the substantial additional resources now going into Scottish public services, but maintains our opposition to PPP as an expensive, wasteful way of funding public service renewal which fragments the public service team.

Matt said

"Candidates need to be aware that UNISON members have a vote and are likely to use it. They must address the concerns of those who provide and use our public services if they are to deserve those votes and, more importantly, if we are to successfully deliver revitalised public services."

arguments in much earlier in the PFI discussions, raising them before authorities take irrevocable decisions. However, UNISON remains opposed to PFI/PPP schemes and will continue to campaign against PFI and two tier workforces."

UNISON has made it clear that we will be closely monitoring progress on the protocol, and would be looking for clear adoption of it immediately by all public service providers.