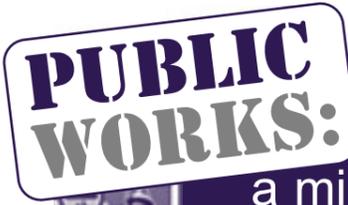




Get Your Act Together:
25 October mass lobby of Scottish Parliament to ensure government delivers on Climate Change Act. **p4**



Unions in Scottish Power agree breakthrough 10% pay deal - but no guarantee of pay rise for tens of thousands of council workers. p4



a million voices for public services

October 2012 No. 97

Scotland *in* UNISON

scottish council activists bulletin Use these stories in your branch newsletter or circulate the pdf version to members

20 October: March for a future that works

by John Stevenson
SiU Editor

UNISON branches and communities across Scotland are gearing up for a massive STUC demonstration in Glasgow on 20 October to demand 'a future that works' as opposed to disastrous cuts and austerity policies.

Sister events are also being held in London and Belfast and UNISON leaders from all services are urging stewards to pull out the stops and build for the day.

Branches across the country have been planning and making transport arrangements, often in partnership with other unions, communities and users of public services, to ensure a turnout that cannot be ignored.

The need to build that broad coalition was underlined by UNISON Scotland Convener Lilian Macer:

"Our members know that attacks on services, pay, jobs and pensions, whether from Westminster, Holyrood or individual public authorities, can and should be resisted by communities and trade

Our members will be out on October 20, as will people from the communities we serve'
Lilian Macer

unionists working and campaigning together.

"Our members will be out on October 20, as will people from the communities we serve", she said.

Mike Kirby, UNISON Scottish Secretary, explained why the event is so important:

"The Coalition Government may be in crisis but they are still refusing to change course from their dangerous and damaging programme of cuts and austerity. That damage is being directly translated into the Scottish Government's budget decisions,



Demos can be fun! Smiling faces in London last year. Let's do it again in Glasgow!

affecting every service our members provide.

"On the morning of Saturday 20 October, trade unionists and community activists from across Scotland will gather for the march through Glasgow to play our part in telling governments that enough is enough."

Ex UNISON Scotland Communications Officer Chris Barter, in an article in *UNISONinFocus* enclosed with this issue of *SiU*, spoke to lay leaders across the services UNISON Scotland organises in. Each underlined the need to back the demonstration.

Tom Waterson, Health Chair, pointed to staff cuts, pay cuts and pensions threats in the NHS making it "easy to see why we will be backing the 20 October demo."

Local Government Chair Stephanie Herd and UNISON Scotland Depute Convener Stephen Smellie tell of the huge attacks on local councils and the need to make the fight against the pay freeze part of the October 20 agenda.

Karen Dawson, Vice Chair of FE, tells of the effects of a 30% funding cut in colleges in an article that also covers cuts in HE, Police and the Community and Voluntary Sector, underlining why we all need to be there on 20 October.

JOIN THE DRIVE TO SIGN UP NEW MEMBERS THIS AUTUMN

"I want to know I'm getting a fair deal at work"

With attacks on jobs, pensions, terms and conditions - times have never been tougher.

But there's no need to face things alone. As a UNISON member, we'll fight on your behalf to make sure you get the best deal from your employer.

So you can relax, knowing you're in safe hands.

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STRONGER TOGETHER IN UNISON

Better pay • More holidays • Equal pay
Safer workplaces • Better training



Building our union's strength: Stewards and members are being urged to recruit new members in a rolling programme of events and activities around the country. See page 3

Assemble 11am Sat 20 Oct
George Square Glasgow: For more details of transport, leaflets and posters see <http://www.stuc.org.uk/20-oct>



Water is a Human Right

by Dave Watson
Scottish Organiser

UNISON Scotland supports the Water is a Human Right campaign. The campaign is urging the European Commission to:

- guarantee water and sanitation services for all inhabitants;
- keep water services out of internal market rules; and
- increase efforts to achieve global access to water and sanitation for all.

This campaign has a particular relevance to Scotland as we are campaigning to keep our public service out of the hands of the privatisers.

The campaign seeks to reach out to all citizens in Europe. Ask your friends, family and colleagues to sign and promote this campaign further.

Our demands will only be taken into consideration if we achieve over one million valid signatures. On the signing page of the website www.right2water.eu

This campaign is a means of getting a commitment to the human right to water and sanitation.

It is a tool to change the mind-set in the European Commission from a market-based approach with the focus on competition to a rights-based approach with the focus on public service.

It aims to achieve universal (global) access to water and sanitation and to safeguard the limited public water resources for future generations.

Water and sanitation are a human right! Water is a public good, not a commodity!

When Swinney said a public pay rise - did you think it meant you?

Well, if you are in local government or parts of the NHS, you would be wrong.

As Mike Kirby, UNISON Scottish Secretary, pointed out at the time: "Finance Secretary John Swinney today offered what he described as a 'modest' 1% pay increase for Scottish Government staff, some NHS staff and employees of quangos.

"Unless local government is funded to pay even this limited increase, there is no guarantee that the largest group of public sector workers, in local government, will receive an increase. That has been the case for the last couple of years.

"Even for those who will receive it, families face inflation and rising living costs meaning their income is, in effect, going down.

"At a time when Scottish councils are facing huge financial pressures, with severe cuts to services and jobs, a council tax freeze is bad news for everyone who relies on essential council services.

"This budget is supposedly aimed at stimulating the economy. But increased pay, particularly for low paid workers, helps the economy, especially at local level. Hard pressed local government workers deserve more from the Scottish Government."

Information law must cover private firms in public services

by Fiona Montgomery
Joint Communications Officer

Freedom of Information campaigners are stepping up efforts to have FOI laws extended to cover private companies delivering public services.

UNISON is backing a concerted bid by the Campaign for Freedom of Information in Scotland to use the FOI (Amendment) Bill currently going through Parliament to safeguard information rights.

Carole Ewart, Co-Convenor, told the Scottish Parliament's Finance Committee, which is scrutinising the Bill: "Private companies and other third-party bodies are increasingly being used by the public sector to deliver public services.

"There are over 130 arms-length organisations in Scotland today. If these bodies are not covered by Freedom of Information law, then we are all effectively debarred from asking them how they spend our money."

UNISON has regularly highlighted the fact that freedom of information rights should, as Kevin Dunion, the first Scottish Information Commissioner, put it, "follow the public pound."

His successor Rosemary Agnew has also made a strong case for the Scottish Government using its powers to extend the law to cover all public services, regardless of the body delivering them.

UNISON supported CFoIS events at the Scottish Parliament

and Glasgow Film Theatre marking the 10th International Right to Know Day. Our evidence to the Finance Committee urged the Scottish Government to act. If not, we said MSPs should amend the Bill to ensure the necessary changes.

Scottish Organiser Dave Watson said: "It is wrong for Ministers to proclaim their commitment to FOI and to argue that this Bill tackles weaknesses, while failing to protect the public's FOI rights."

North Ayrshire demands 'a proper wage' for apprentices

by John Stevenson
SIU Editor

North Ayrshire UNISON has demanded a living wage for 90 modern apprentices earning just £2.60 an hour.

It is calling on the council to top up the government contribution and pay apprentices a 'proper wage'.

The branch has also flagged up the danger that, at a time of cuts and job losses, it was 'inevitable' that apprentices would be used to shore up services.

Branch Chair Colin Turbett said: "Most people think that the minimum wage is set at over £6 per hour, but these staff are earning a fraction of this.

"Whilst we welcome the council's commitment to offering these training opportunities, and we know that the experiences are valued by



Colin Turbett
'Proper wage for apprentices'



Stephanie Herd
'Calling for top-up to pay living wage'

"We are sure residents in the area would agree."

Branch Secretary Stephanie Herd added: "We are calling on North Ayrshire Council to top up the government contribution and pay the Scottish Living Wage (£7.20) as a minimum for all modern apprentices.

"We hope the skills base being created amongst apprentices is not lost but there is a genuine attempt to move apprentices into permanent posts within the council's workforce.

"We recognise North Ayrshire Council has a central role in creating quality employment opportunities and given the high levels of youth unemployment in the area we hope councillors will support UNISON's position".

The National Minimum Wage for apprentices aged 16-19 will stand at just £2.65 an hour after an increase this month.

the young people concerned, we feel that North Ayrshire's shameful position as having the highest youth unemployment in Scotland is being used to the Council's advantage.

"In a situation of cuts where other council workers are losing jobs and those who leave are not being replaced, it is

inevitable that modern apprentices are being used to shore up services.

"We want to see the numbers involved increase and we believe this is the council's plan, but we also want modern apprentices to be paid a proper wage so they feel as valued as anyone else.

UNISON calls for action to avert 3,000 police staff job cuts

UNISON Scotland has called for action by the Scottish Government to avert the disastrous loss of 3,000 police staff support jobs, about which new Chief Constable Stephen House has warned.

George McIrvine, Chair of UNISON Scotland's Police Committee, said: "We have been saying that up to 3,000 vital police support staff jobs are under threat for about a year now. If Stephen House is right in what he has said today, this is just the beginning of a disaster for Scottish policing."

"Already we have seen police officers being taken off the street to cover for the thousand police support staff jobs which have been lost in the last year or so. We need the

government to take action to end this unfolding disaster by committing to a balanced police service rather than an arbitrary target for police officer numbers."

Gerry Crawley, UNISON's lead officer for police in Scotland, said: "It gives us no pleasure to find that the newly-appointed Chief Constable of the new Police Service of Scotland can do the same sums as we can.

"The problem is the Scottish Government's arbitrary target to maintain police officer numbers at 17,234. This, combined with their failure to fund a balanced police service, means that massive cuts will fall on police support staff - whose skills and qualifications are vital to effective policing across Scotland.



UNISON's Stephen Diamond and Deborah Dyer try out the Olympic torch at the L&B Police Family Day

"Using officers as expensive replacements for police staff might meet the Scottish Government's political target - but not the needs of Scotland's communities."

Meanwhile, the UNISON 'Police Staff are Frontline' campaign continues with a strong UNISON presence at the Lothian and Borders Police Family Day (above) and campaigning at the 'Dundee Together' event where MSP Jenny Marra again involved

herself in the campaign.

George McIrvine said: "Jenny's work over the months since our campaign has kicked off has been admirable.

"Her commitment to highlighting the failures of this government's blinkered view on retaining artificial Police Officer numbers at all costs compared to a balanced Police workforce will continue."

'No major privatisation' pledge - page 3

TUC told: Organisation and action needed to beat pay freeze

For a credible campaign against austerity and the pay freeze, we need to organise our activists and get our members to believe in our cause, Jane Carolan told the TUC Congress in Brighton.

"The campaign will not be won by arguments alone but by organisation and collective action", she told delegates.

Pointing to the Save the Children appeal to assist the poor, she said: "Appallingly, some of the families that feature in that appeal were working families - the working poor. That's why this is not a fight about the private sector or about the public sector.

"No worker should be earning less than they need to lead a decent standard of living".

Jane was just one of the UNISON Scotland delegates who made their mark in debates.

Gordon McKay warned that UNISON would not stand aside as the jobs of public service workers who support the sick and vulnerable are privatised and their employment rights are attacked. He ended a powerful anti-Tory speech with a 'bugger

off" message to those fronting the Con Dem attack on trade union and workers rights.

Calling for a programme of political education for young workers, Graham Smith said unions must ensure that young people hear about the heritage of what organised labour has delivered, and why it's so important to defend it.

Minister signs up to 'no police privatisation'

by Stephen Diamond
Strathclyde Police and Fire

Cabinet Secretary for Justice, Kenny MacAskill, has given UNISON officials an assurance that privatised policing would not be an option in Scotland.

Speaking at one of the regular meetings UNISON Police and Justice Staff attend with the minister, he confirmed that it was not Scottish Government policy to outsource on a large scale and gave the example of the prison service, where privatisation plans were halted

Mr MacAskill also agreed to sign up to the UNISON Scottish Police Staff campaign - No to Police Privatisation.

This campaign will involve politicians of all parties pledging to agree that privatisation of police services in Scotland will not be considered.

Police officers backfilling police staff posts were also a concern raised. This is likely to become worse over the next few years as budget cuts take hold and the Scottish Government continue to maintain Police Officer numbers at 17234.

Mr MacAskill said he had no control over operational matters, however it was his desire that the Police Service of Scotland would have a balanced workforce.

On a similar note, George McIrvine, Chair of UNISON's Police Staffs Committee commented on the appointment of Vic Emery as Chair of the Scottish Police Authority.

"We wish Mr Emery well in his new role but he will have to grapple with the reality that hundreds of police officers are already being taken off the streets to backfill police staff jobs - jobs they aren't trained to do and at a greater cost than the staff they replace - and this will rise significantly if current plans go ahead."

Stronger together: So let's recruit now!

by Fiona Montgomery
Joint Communications Officer

The autumn recruitment campaign is well under way across Scotland after being launched at Scottish Council next to a 'UNISON' taxi.

Convener Lilian Macer kicked off the campaign, which aims to bring in new members by using simple people-focused messages showing the positive benefits of joining.

A small amount of targeted 'Stronger Together in UNISON' advertising on buses, billboards, in train stations and on phone boxes is supplementing the recruitment drive organised by branches.

Lilian praised hard work by branch activists and organising staff in setting up a rolling programme of events and activities around the country.

She said: "Our members know the benefits and strengths of being in UNISON. They are proud that we campaign hard for quality public services and keeping these accessible to everyone.

"Times are really tough for so many people in Scotland just now with attacks on jobs, pay, pensions and terms and conditions.

"It is more important than ever to have the backup of a strong union and UNISON

Research shows that there is a union premium, with average earnings and terms and conditions higher in unionised workplaces' Lilian Macer



"I want to know I'm protected at work"

If you feel you've not been treated fairly, or are facing difficulties with your employer, then we're here to help.

We will work to ensure your rights are protected and that you have a safe environment to work in.

As Scotland's largest union, we'll always be there for you.

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STRONGER TOGETHER IN UNISON

Better pay • More holidays • Equal pay
Safer workplaces • Better training

UNISON Scotland

delivers for its members.

"Our message is that there is no need to face these situations alone. We fight on members' behalf to ensure they get the best deal from employers. And research shows that there is a union premium, with average earnings and terms and conditions higher in unionised workplaces.

"The campaign highlights to potential new members that better pay, more holidays, equal pay and safer workplaces are some of the many reasons to join, as well as the fact we are all stronger together in



"I want to know I have a voice at work"

As Scotland's largest union, we have more workplace representatives than any other union. So as a UNISON member, you're never alone.

UNISON campaigns to keep services public and strengthens the voice of public service workers.

Join us and make sure your voice is heard.

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STRONGER TOGETHER IN UNISON

Better pay • More holidays • Equal pay
Safer workplaces • Better training

UNISON Scotland

defending the services that we believe are so important."

In selected areas, the recruitment work is able to use the 'backdrop' of some of the outdoor advertising, including, in Glasgow and Edinburgh, a week-long series of actions planned around use of an advertising trailer with a giant billboard.

In other areas, including Lanarkshire, Lothian, Ayrshire and Fife, 'Stronger Together' adverts are being used on a mixture of billboards, buses, bus shelters, taxis, in rail stations and on telephone boxes.



Dundee celebrates diversity and sees off racists

by George McIrvine
Tayside Police Branch

Hundreds gathered in City Square on 1 September for the 'Dundee Together' multi-cultural festival before a "pro-diversity" march to Albert Square, where wreaths were laid to pay respect to the Dundonians who fought fascism in Spain in the 1930s.

This was a day of celebration and protest against the so-called Scottish Defence League who arrived in Dundee to spread their message of hate and intolerance on our streets. The people of Dundee

came together to show that's not what they want.

The small number of fascists were huddled into a confined space for their short demonstration and herded back onto their two coaches.

The entertainment continued all day with live music, stalls, raffles and kids' face and street painting with Dundonians celebrating Dundee's diversity along with trade unions, voluntary, community and church groups.

UNISON Dundee City, Tayside Police Staff and Dundee University Branches shared a stall that

highlighted current campaigns.

Blogging on the event, UNISON Scotland Communications Chair John Stevenson, said: "Some have asked why we should have to turn out to combat the hate of the far right again and again. Why not just ignore them?"

"Dundee and Walthamstow (who mounted a similar demo that day) have shown why not. These were not just demonstrations against fascists. They were celebrations of something. Celebrations of communities that won't be bullied, of solidarity and of values of equality."



Kian McIrvine (11) and Georgia McIrvine (3) join the celebration

Six demands for a fairer society: Sign the People's Charter e-petition

by Malcolm Burns
Joint Communications Officer

In the build up to the STUC's A Future that Works March in Glasgow on 20 October the Scottish People's Charter is stepping up its campaign – with the support of UNISON Scotland.

On 17 September a petition was launched through the Scottish Parliament urging the Scottish Government "to bring forward measures in all areas it has competency to fulfil the aspirations of the People's Charter".

The Charter sets out six key steps for a move away from austerity to a more just, equitable society:

1. A fair economy for a fairer Britain.
2. More and better jobs.
3. Decent homes for all.
4. Protect and improve our public services – no cuts.
5. Fairness and Justice.
6. Build a secure and sustainable future for all.

And every week until the 20 October demo each of these Charter demands will be highlighted by a key supporter. "Protect and improve our public services – no cuts" is the focus for UNISON.

UNISON is supporting the People's Charter in Scotland as part of our work to build the case for the alternative to austerity. It sits alongside campaigns like our own Public Works campaign and the STUC's There is A Better Way.

As we mobilise for the big demo on 20 October and as part of our Stronger Together recruitment initiative this autumn we will be out and about meeting members and potential members.

The Charter petition is an easy way to engage people around our message that austerity isn't working or necessary.

Signing the petition is easy - but it can be the start of a journey

in thinking more about what is happening and getting active.

The petition is online at: www.scottish.parliament.uk/GetInvolved/Petitions/peoplescharter

Please promote the Charter on your web and social networking sites. You can link direct to the petition and the People's Charter website at www.peoplescharterscotland.org

Guevara meets UNISON activists



PHOTO: MALCOLM BURNS

Delegates to the UNISON Scotland International Committee seminar last month met up with Dr Aleida Guevara, daughter of the legendary Che Guevara.

Aleida is a doctor of medicine and speaks in defence of Cuba, for peace, socialism and Latin American solidarity and is the author of the book 'Chávez, Venezuela and the New Latin America'.

Chaired by Sam Macartney, the seminar heard fascinating sessions from past STUC President **Pat Kelly**, author of *Scotland's Radical Exports - The Scots Abroad - How they Shaped Politics & Trade Unions*; **Luis Marron** of the Cuban Friendship Institute (on Cuba's Miami 5); **Frieda Park**, Scottish Venezuela Solidarity Campaign; **Terri McLaughlin**, UNISON Steward detained in Israel whilst

Photo: Luis Marron (left) and Aleida Guevara holding Pat Kelly's book, with UNISON's Sam Macartney and Stephen Smellie.

participating in the 2012 Welcome to Palestine initiative; **Prof Mary Davis**, recently returned from a solidarity delegation to North Kurdistan; **Katy Clark MP** - On her recent visit to Greece - Is austerity working? and **Allison Cosgrove** - UNISON Delegation to Burma.

Scottish Power in breakthrough 10% pay deal

Unions representing thousands of workers in the Energy Networks and Connections businesses of Scottish Power have agreed a breakthrough 10% pay rise over three years.

The deal agreed by members of UNISON, GMB, Unite and Prospect runs from 1 January 2012.

It guarantees workers an above inflation increase in year one.

Gerry Crawley, Regional Organiser of the biggest energy union, UNISON, and one of the lead trade union negotiators in Scottish Power said: "This pay deal is a major breakthrough in the private sector and in particular in utilities, as it represents an above inflation increase in year one.

"Our hard working members have recently had to endure an imposed pay freeze. They worked throughout that period without any rise and continued to deliver a professional service.

"Now they are getting a guaranteed pay rise for the next three years and that will be welcome news for them and their families in this time of economic austerity and rising prices."

The deal has taken almost a year to negotiate with Scottish Power due to the complexities contained within the offer.

Mike Kirby, UNISON Scottish Secretary added: "This is excellent news for UNISON members in Scottish Power and for the members of the other three unions as well.

"An above inflation increase for union members in Scottish Power in year one demonstrates yet again the benefits of being in a trade union – it was

experienced trade union negotiators who secured this 10% three year deal.

"The Westminster coalition government would rather see no pay rises - but UNISON and the other TUC affiliated trade unions north and south of the border will continue to negotiate and fight for decent pay for all of their members."

Report shows need for investment in Scotland's early years professional team

UNISON has called for Scotland's early years professional team to be supported, after an international report found investment per pupil in early years education is lower than the OECD average.

Commenting on the finding in a newly-published OECD report 'Education at a Glance', Carol Ball, a child development officer and chair of UNISON's Education Issues Group said:

"We all know the earliest years of a child's life are crucial. Scotland's early years professional team of nursery nurses and child

development officers have the qualifications, skills and experience to deliver the service our children deserve.

"They should not be viewed as a cheap alternative - as the EIS so often claim they are - but should be fully supported to provide our children with the best start in life.

"The level of investment in Scotland's whole early years professional team should match up to international standards - so that the excellent service our nursery nurses and child development officers provide can be offered more widely."

Hope Not Hate Group for Greater Glasgow

A Greater Glasgow Hope Not Hate group was launched last month at the STUC backed by UNISON and a range of other groups and individuals.

HnH's Matthew Collins told the meeting, chaired by Richard Leonard of GMB Scotland, "Never have we been beaten by hate based policies of the far right; its time to build resistance in the community to counter racism and fascism"

See a full report from Hamid Rasheed on the UNISON Scotland website.

We want to hear your news

SiU is your paper, we want to hear your stories. Contact:- John Stevenson (Editor) 0131 558 7488, webmanager@unison-edinburgh.org.uk or Malcolm Burns m.burns@unison.co.uk and Fiona Montgomery f.montgomery@unison.co.uk