

Regional Convenor & Regional Secretary Update



Hi all

Welcome to issue 8 of the Regional Convenor/Regional Secretary newsletter. Since the last newsletter we have had further developments and updates regarding industrial action happening in the region, and some new disputes to update you on.

Higher Education

We advised that Leeds Trinity University, Leeds Beckett University and Sheffield University were out to ballot regarding taking industrial action over pay and the ballots closed on 31 July. Leeds Trinity University met the legal threshold for taking action. No dates for strike action have been agreed as yet but we will keep you updated.



Leeds University have new dates scheduled for strike action and these are 12 – 18 August 2023. This is an ongoing dispute regarding pay, and there was hope that the university were serious about making an offer to the members that would resolve the dispute. Although an offer has been made, it has not been acceptable to the membership. Please show any support and solidarity to these UNISON members.

Glendale Grounds Maintenance

In the last newsletter we advised you about this dispute. In summary it affects all members employed as gravediggers / grounds maintenance operatives / wardens to service the Rotherham crematoria contract. They are employed by Glendale Grounds Management Limited who are part of Rotherham LG branch. Rotherham Borough Council outsource to Dignity, who then subcontract to Glendale Grounds Maintenance.

All staff are UNISON members and there isn't any trade union recognition. The dispute is in connection with a Pay claim submitted – 10% on basic pay, plus increases to overtime/on call rates.

Members have voted to take strike action and the initial dates for strike action have been decided as: September 2023: 8,9,10 (Fri, Sat, Sun); 16,17 (Sat, Sun); 23,24 (Sat, Sun); 30 (Sat); 1 October (Sun).

National Coal Mining Museum

UNISON submitted a pay claim for an increase of £1.75 per hour. On 13 March 2023 the employer responded with a pay offer of 3.5% on all salary points. UNISON consulted its members, and this was offer was rejected. UNISON informed the employer of this result on the 30 March 2023.

On 27 April 2023 the employer made a pay offer of 5% but stated that this would exclude all the employees on the lowest hourly rate i.e. those workers on the Real Living Wage* (just £10.90 per hour). UNISON members employed by the National Coal Mining Museum and by National Coal Mining Museum Trading Limited voted to reject the pay offer.

The Museum is closed on a Monday and a Tuesday Strike dates have been agreed as follows:

Week 1 – Wednesday 23 August – Sunday 27 August 2023 Week 2 - Wednesday 30 August – Sunday 3 September 2023



Picture from the strike in 2022

Kirklees College

The trade dispute is over the college's rejection of UNISON's pay claim and refusal to negotiate with UNISON over pay. Kirklees College Strike action on 11, 12, 20 and 21 September 2023. UCU will be on strike on the same dates over the same issue.

Barnsley College

As we reported in the last news, the legal threshold for taking industrial action was met, but no strike dates have been agreed at the moment.

Humberside Airport

This is a new dispute involving unison members working as Firefighters, Aviation Security, Refuellers, Travel Shop workers, Cleaners, Watch Tower managers, and the dispute is concerning pay.



Negotiations around pay started in January 2023. The initial offer from the employer was rejected by the members in February 2023, further negotiations took place through March and into April, Members rejected the pay proposals in May 2023, final negotiations took place in July with ACAS present- a full and final offer was made from the employer and this was rejected again by the members on the 4 August.

UNISON members feel less valued than the higher paid staff in the airport. Those earning £50,000+ in air traffic control were given a retention bonus of £1,500 in 2022, yet this was never offered to our members.

The request for an industrial action ballot has been made to the National Industrial Action Committee, and we will keep you updated on developments.

Key Organising Priorities

The National union have identified two key organising priorities for recruitment and retention under the organising to win campaign and they are Multi Academy Trust (MAT) projects and Fair Pay for Patient Care (FP4PC).

MAT project - We're taking a lead on Outwood Grange Academies Trust and will lead on both organising in the Region and bargaining across the MAT. There are 58 schools in Y&H that are in scope, and we aim to do a minimum of 3 visits to each school to gain traction and support both base and strategic organising. We estimate a need for two Local Organiser's to be assigned to the project. Brendan Cafferty will be in touch with those Local Government branches who have schools that fall under the scope of the project.

The "Pay Fair for Patient Care" campaign is being run to deliver on the Heath Service Group earnings max campaign – its objective is putting money into the pockets of our members.



We have started this campaign with the claim for regrading Band 2 Health Care Assistants/Clinical Support Workers to Band 3 as they are working at that level. Our members have the right to be paid at the right band for the job they are doing. We can't accept that our members carry out patient observations and clinical duties for free. They have the right to equal pay for work of equal value and they have the right to have their role reviewed as outlined in the NHS JE Handbook. Our Yorkshire and Humberside organising campaign aimed at re-banding health care assistants goes from strength to strength.

We have agreements for the uplift to band 3 for HCA/CSWs in Barnsley Hospital and in Leeds Teaching Hospital Trusts. Our campaign is active in every other acute Trust in the Region. We also have on going campaigns RDASH and SWYPT. Negotiations are at different stages in every employer so members should contact their Branch Secretary for further details.

If members wish to be involved, we will arrange steward training for them.

We have had many queries from other groups of staff with regard to their banding. We are asking them to keep a diary of the higher-level duties they are doing and once we have accumulated that evidence we will pursue rebanding claims for those groups as well.

Everyone has the right to receive the right band for the job they do!

Yours sincerely

Wendy Nichols
Regional Convenor

Karen Loughlin
Regional Secretary