

Cornerstone **UNISON UPDATE**



December 2018

Cornerstone attacks your Human Rights!

*“The right to organize with others to fight for better working conditions is a **universal human right**: Everyone has the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests. • United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights Article 23.4*

Trade unions are crucial for ensuring that workers achieve a living wage and decent working conditions. They offer the most effective and legitimate way to establish a fair deal for workers, by allowing them to stand together to defend their rights. This collaborative voice allows workers to express their views, which they may be too intimidated to do alone.”

Cornerstone has decided to derecognise UNISON as your trade union for staff with immediate effect. This was not unexpected as your employer is struggling to implement the Local Cornerstone strategic plan on time, on budget and lawfully. Additionally Cornerstone was taken by complete surprise when 92% of UNISON members rejected their very poor pay offer.

Cornerstone staff are exceptional, going the extra mile every day to ensure the people you support live a valued life. You, our members are actively working extra hard to implement the Local Cornerstone Strategic Plan. We hear great stories from members up and down the country about the extraordinary success of your hard work and commitment. Remember, without you, there would be no Cornerstone which makes what's happening to you so much worse.

Why would Cornerstone decide to do this and why now? What have they got to hide?

Our only demand for all staff is that Cornerstone act professionally and follow its own policies and procedures and additionally give staff a decent and fair pay rise – what will happen to your pay rise now you ask?

Remember with UNISON representing you we have achieved a number of really important wins on your behalf. Here are just a few highlights.

- Holiday Pay
- LCAST Voluntary
- Wage increase for Coaches
- Sleepover top up
- £10 for LCAST pilot
- Increase to Sleepover payments
- Scottish Living Wage
- Wage increase for Branch Leaders
- New policies and procedures

What is trade union recognition?

In order for UNISON to negotiate with Cornerstone on your pay and conditions, we need to be 'recognised' by Cornerstone. This recognition can be achieved either through a voluntary agreement or forced by UNISON taking legal action to secure statutory recognition where we can demonstrate support of more than 50% of the whole workforce.

Why is it important to you?

Recognition is important to you as it gives **you** the staff the legal right to use **your** collective strength to negotiate better pay and terms and conditions.

What does de-recognition mean for me?

First of all, it's more important than ever to remain a member of UNISON in order to protect your rights at work whilst this issue is resolved.

What de-recognition means for you is quite simply that your pay, terms and conditions etc are now at a far greater risk of abuse from your employer.

Vulnerable staff groups include Service Managers, Team Leaders, Support Assistants and Central Service staff amongst others: who will protect these vulnerable groups of staff going forward?

Cornerstone wants to move ahead with an unelected and unaccountable Staff Engagement Forum to consult on changes to your terms and conditions and pay. Will this unelected body negotiate a fair and decent pay rise on your behalf? Not very likely is it?

What is Cornerstone hiding? We suspect you are about to find out very soon as they move to implement change without collective agreement.

What will UNISON do for you?

The voluntary recognition agreement clearly states that any decision to end the voluntary recognition agreement requires **6 months notice**. UNISON has written to Cornerstone asking them if they will honour this agreement.

We have also taken legal advice that establishes any proposed changes to your pay, terms and conditions that avoid the collective bargaining process may be unlawful whilst this dispute continues. Should members require legal support UNISON rules state you have to have been in membership for four weeks, so it is crucial that non members join asap as we are anticipating having to raise protective legal claims in the very near future on behalf of our members.

Recognition can be legally enforced if 50% of Cornerstone staff (members and non members) support UNISON to be your representatives for an effective voice. UNISON is therefore moving to enforce recognition and we will be commencing legal proceedings through the government body that can force Cornerstone to recognise UNISON, called the Central Arbitration Committee (**CAC**).

What can you do for your union?

Stay strong – talk to each other and your stewards. You have **UNISON'S 1.4 million members** supporting you. Follow the UNISON Cornerstone Facebook page asap so that you can get instant updates as we progress through this dispute together.

Remember - It is more important than ever that you remain a member of UNISON and encourage others to join today!

There are other practical things that you can do as a member:-

- Let Cornerstone know that you don't accept their decision.
- Contact your local MP & MSP to complain
- Speak to your colleagues about how UNISON is important in the workplace
- Attend any UNISON meetings that we call
- Actively encourage every colleague to join UNISON
- Follow UNISON through our social media channels

Your voice as an employee of Cornerstone has been silenced through this decision. This is extraordinary behaviour for a care provider who claims falsely to be a good and fair employer and must be overturned.

You deserve the dignity, like everybody else, of having a say in what goes on at Cornerstone.

Why is UNISON in dispute with Cornerstone and no other Charity employer in Scotland?

We have heard this question asked a few times with the suggestion being that UNISON is somehow treating Cornerstone differently from other employers we deal with. UNISON has members in over 600 charities yet we are not in dispute with any other charity in Scotland in the way we are with Cornerstone. It is perhaps a question for the Cornerstone leadership team to ask themselves – why is the relationship with UNISON so difficult for the leadership to maintain when UNISON gets on perfectly well with every other charity employer?

UNISON can evidence that this decision is about Cornerstone's refusal to be held to account and to follow their own policies and procedures. It is notable that the Cornerstone leadership have avoided independent ACAS Conciliation and tried to pin the failings of their organisational and strategic plan on UNISON. It is time that the leadership team employ their own self reflective practice and more importantly the Cornerstone values and consider the emerging failings of their own strategy that seems to change depending on who the leadership team have visited last?

UNISON understands that achieving such radical business transformation requires adaptation and the changing of plans and strategic aims however it is important that all staff have an effective voice to hold their leadership to account to deliver success. UNISON has a track record of working with employers across the UK to deliver pioneering change and remains ready to continue that journey to success on behalf of Cornerstone staff and the people they support.

If the leadership team continue to drive the organisation off a cliff, then it is you the staff and the people you support to live a valued life through your personal hard work and dedication, that will be the ones to suffer most.

UNISON is the only body that has held your leadership to account throughout this process to date.

Join online at joinunison.org or call free on **0800 171 2193**

UNISON essential cover for you

UNISON
the public service union

Keep up to date with UNISON and the twitter campaign to stop Cornerstone in their tracks.

Hashtag #cornerstoneunionbusting

UNISON is always looking to improve our methods of communication with members and given the fact that social media is being used by more and more of our members, we'd ask that you follow UNISON Scotland Community on **Instagram, Twitter and Facebook** to get the very latest updates and take the opportunity to provide your own feedback on our various campaigns.

The social media links for UNISON in the Community Sector are listed below – note that we have a new Scottish specific Twitter link and dedicated facebook page.



search for UNISON Cornerstone



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Cornerstone UNISON Stewards List

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Mags Percy	07598720299
Charles Keown	07769205342
Ian Kaye	To be confirmed