

UNISON Matters

Scotland's
care workers
for change

Aberdeenshire

JANUARY 2021



CARE AFTER COVID



UNISON Scotland aim to strengthen the voice of social care workers and build the case for a National Care Service based on Fair Work as the only route to high-quality person-centred care.

Social Care Review

The national review of adult social care is a response to a deepening crisis. It is an important opportunity to create an inseparable link between Fair Work and Fair Care.

The review has three phases:

Phase 1 The needs, rights and preferences of people who use care services and the experience of the workers who meet those needs

Phase 2 The options for a social care system that delivers on the needs, rights and preferences of people using services and improves the experience of staff working in social care

The Adult Social Care Review

Phase 3 Designing the funding, delivery, governance and regulation of a new system

UNISON's position

UNISON Scotland represents 11,000 community, private and voluntary social care workers and many more within health and local government. UNISON members are speaking directly to the Advisory Panel. The direct evidence of workers will be supported by research and policy submissions. Our core message is as follows:

- Policy makers, funders commissioners and employers have all the power and choice in social care. That power undermines care quality and Fair Work and must change.
- Quality care centres on the relationship between service users and staff, yet the system conspires to disempower the people who matter most. We need powerful care voices.
- High quality social care will only be provided consistently across Scotland when common national standards for Fair Work and Fair Care replace cost cutting and profit taking.



- Choice within social care requires the empowerment of service users and workers to overcome barriers based on disability, gender, race and social class.
- A human rights-based approach is a vital starting point but such an approach must embrace the needs of service users and workers. Quality care centres on human relations so we can never build care quality on poverty and exploitation. If one of us is chained, none of us are free.
- Common standards is a key part of the powershift that will empower service users and workers to assess needs, co-design solutions and actualise person centred care. (See **UNISON Scotland: "The Future of Social Care 2020"**)



SAVE OUR SERVICES #plugthegap

– essential for communities & the economy

Council workers have been key during this pandemic as they have stepped up to go above and beyond to provide essential services, often to our most vulnerable citizens, and often at risk to themselves.

However those very services are under threat as council funding, already cut to the bone, looks to be hit even more, threatening jobs and the vital services these workers provide.

UNISON is calling on the Scottish government to fund local councils properly to keep communities safe and rebuild the country following the pandemic.

UNISON Scotland's campaign to save our services, #PlugTheGap, calls on the Scottish government to find additional resources for Scotland's councils to avoid devastating harm to services that have already suffered ten years of budget cuts.

Branches across Scotland are calling on their members and the public to demand action to protect these services and the workers that provide them.

If you are a UNISON member please ask your MSP to demand that the Scottish government acts to protect essential council services

Write to your MSP using our automated email page – Sign up to support our campaign, read the letter and if you agree, we can send it for you. Or edit the letter yourself and we will send it.

Glasgow City Branch Secretary, Brian Smith said: ***“Public services are the glue that holds communities together and will be crucial to our society's recovery in the years ahead.*”**

“Council services and community organisations funded by councils should be expanded to cope with the social and economic fallouts of the Covid-19 pandemic.

“All thirty-two council areas in Scotland require more funding and investment”.

Councils can play an important role in the economic, cultural and arts recovery and must be funded to do so.

Expanding these much needed services will create job opportunities for our young people.

Jobs with decent employment conditions and permanent contracts rather than zero hour, insecure work with bad employers.



NESPF (NORTH EAST SCOTLAND PENSION FUND) UPDATE

McCloud judgement on age discrimination.

Transitional protections will be extended from those within 10 years of retirement to all members.

This is straightforward to understand, but time consuming to implement. The fund is confident they have accurate records to work from as they

check all the pensions that have been awarded since 2015.

£95k severance cap

The implementation of the public sector severance cap has caused concern in some parts of the UK, but the Scottish Government has not considered it necessary to introduce this legislation, so local authorities are not required to adopt it.

Investment changes & de-carbonising

The fund has made big changes, reducing the investments once held in companies that produce equipment that may be used in weapon manufacture. Replacing them with more infrastructure investments. Also under consideration is an updated 'Strategy Statement' clarifying their position on de-carbonising.

NO GOING BACK TO NORMAL

– CAMPAIGN UPDATE

Scottish government must invest in public services, says UNISON.

UK Chancellor Rishi Sunak has announced more cuts to public services. UNISON has made clear that a decade of spending cuts left public services exposed when Covid came calling. We cannot make the same mistake again.

Rishi Sunak's public sector freeze is a kick in the teeth to key workers, a blow to struggling local economies and it is divisive.

The Scottish government must take a different approach. They can do things differently – and they should.

We must invest in our public services to rebuild communities, support our economy and support a fair recovery. You can help make that happen.

You can write to your MSP to demand that the Scottish government take a different approach. They have tax raising powers, can prioritise spend and have considerable accumulated reserves.

Write to your MSP using our automated email page.

UNISON will continue to campaign to protect public services and those that deliver them.

We don't want to go back to the 'normal' that doesn't appreciate or value public service workers properly -that's why unison has launched this major campaign.



Grants of up to £500 available

Have you or your partner had your hours reduced or lost your job due to COVID-19? Have you been furloughed or are you relying on statutory sick pay during isolation or COVID-related sickness?

Your union is here for you. Grants of up to £500 are available to help members struggling financially due to the pandemic. <https://www.unison.org.uk/get-help/services-support/there-for-you/financial-assistance/>



PAY CLAIM 2021

Local Government Trade Unions have submitted their 2021 pay claim.

The claim calls for:

- A one-year settlement that runs for the period 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022
- A £2,000 flat rate increase to all spinal column points, or 6%, whichever is greater.
- An underpinning minimum rate of pay of £10.50 per hour.
- A separate, additional payment towards pay restoration.
- An equivalent percentage paid where the base salary increase is paid as a flat rate, uprating of all allowances.
- No less than parity with other Local Government bargaining groups.
- All professional costs associated with the role to be met by the employer.
- A commitment to exploring ways in which to achieve a no-detriment reduction in the working week.

CLIMATE CHANGE EMERGENCY ACT

– A SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC AVOIDABLE INJUSTICE

A brief overview of our proposed motion to STUC this year prior to the COP26 Climate Conference in Glasgow November 2021.

Climate change impacts upon our lives now. The 'Climate Change Act (Scotland)' is no longer fit for purpose in the rapidly worsening climate change emergency that affects Scotland and the world.

While the headlines focus on other things the climate emergency disasters have mounted up.

Here in Scotland the weather has washed away bridges, roads and caused a landslide that derailed a train leading to the death of three people in August 2020.

Scotland and the UK need a Climate Emergency Act to provide the legal, structures needed to deliver a climate emergency resilient zero carbon Scotland by 2035. This is the date advised by the UN Climate Change Panel scientists and will be the subject of negotiations at the COP26 Climate Conference in Glasgow this year.

I hope that you agree that UNISON Scotland needs to join with other partners across the trade union movement and civil society to campaign for.

If anyone needs further convincing on the urgency of such matters, they only need to look at the recent reports on the death of young Ella who died age 9 as a result of air - pollution in 2003.

The full version of this motion will be included with your AGM paperwork.

RETIRED MEMBERS TO THE FORE

Late last year we sent out a survey to all our retired members in both Moray and Aberdeenshire.

We are delighted to report that we have had a

good return of surveys and if you still have yours either in paper form or on an email it is not too late to respond. So far we have had interest in a retired members newsletter and information on joining the retired members forum. More news on the results will be in the next N. E. Equalities newsletter.

CONTACT DETAILS

Get our full support by joining BEFORE you need us

Please see our website at: <http://aberdeenshireunison.org>

email: aberdeenshire@unison.co.uk or call: 01224 620 624 or write to Aberdeenshire UNISON, area resource centre, 7 Alford Place, Aberdeen, AB10 1YD.