

Single Status Action News #2



Get Ready For Industrial Action Ballot

Expected Ballot Period – 2 January to 25 January 2008
Planned First Day of Strike Action – 5th February 2008

All the Birmingham trade unions are co-ordinating their industrial action ballots for the January period. Final arrangements are being made for the UNISON ballot with the currently expected dates as above. The form of industrial action will be a series of 1 to 3 day strikes for all members, plus longer strikes for strategic groups of members. The first strike day will be timed to coincide with a full meeting of the city council.



Second Lobby Draws Thousands

The Council Meeting lobby on Tuesday 4th December involved around 2,000 members from the council unions. Spirited speeches were made by UNISON Senior Regional Officer, Tony Rabaiotti, Branch Assistant Secretary Caroline Johnson, as well as Harry Harris and Steve Foster from the Unity/T&GWU.

Three councillors also gave speeches. Lib Dem councillor and MP John Hemmings recognised that mistakes had been made for some in the new grading structure and suggested further talks and individual appeals. The deputy leader of the Labour opposition, Cllr Ian Ward was cheered for giving full support to industrial action by the trade unions, offering to join us on the picket lines. Respect Councillor Salma Yacoub called for greater funding for equal pay from the Government.

Saturday City Centre Demonstration Planned

In response to requests from members for a mass demonstration which more members can attend from outside of the city centre, the joint trade unions are in negotiations with the city centre authorities for a Saturday march/demonstration against the Single Status contract. Likely dates are the 12th or 19th of January.

Council Censors Independent Single Status Web Site

Birmingham City Council hit the front page of the Birmingham Post last week when it blocked access from the Lotus Notes internet system to a web site put together by an anonymous staff member to share information about the new pay and grading contract.

UNISON welcomes the new web site – www.birminghamsinglestatus.co.uk and condemns the council for stopping staff from accessing the site from city council computers. Are they afraid the truth will get out? We recommend you look at the web site from your home computer. It is a great initiative.

Appeals – Start of Period For Lodging Nears

For those who received their contract in the first batch sent out dated 1 November, and received on approximately Saturday 10 November, the deadlines for submitting the Stage 1 Appeal Form are :

Start of Appeal Period	Friday 21 December 2007
End of Appeal Period	Friday 29 February 2008

We are currently discussing with Corporate HR about a possible extension to the 29 February end date, to reflect the fact that the first two weeks of the 10 week appeal period will be over the Xmas and New Year bank holiday period. We will let you know if this is agreed.

If you received your contract after the first batch, your appeal period will start 6 weeks after you receive your contract and end 10 weeks later (ie 16 weeks after receipt of contract).

Our advice to all members is to let your manager know in writing that you intend to appeal, within the 6 week 'consideration' period. This is not strictly necessary under the appeals procedure but would be good practice and will give us some information on how many appeals to expect.

For Collective Appeals, we need to organise groups that wish to collectively appeal. Please contact the branch for a form to give us details on the collective groups and your lead organisers.

Appeals – Revised UNISON Spreadsheet Guide Available

The UNISON spreadsheet appeals model was sent out in early December to all email contacts. Unfortunately, a couple of errors have been identified and a new version (Version 2) is now available. In the first version released the definitions for the Knowledge factor were not the main definitions.

Appeals – Joint Union Stewards Training

Seventy stewards and convenors took part in an all-day training course on the appeals process on Tuesday 3rd December. A second course has been arranged for :

Monday 17 December Appeals Training for Stewards and Convenors.
Contact Branch Office for details

Send Us Your Email Address

To receive Actions News and other bulleting direct, please let us know your email address.

Members Meetings – PUPIL GUIDES

Two evening meetings have been arranged for all Pupil Guides to discuss the effects of the Pay and Grading exercise on this group.

First Meeting	18.30 – 19.30pm	Thursday 13 December, Council House
Second Meeting	20.00 – 21.00pm	Thursday 13 December, Council House

The Last Word will be yours in each Action News.

Send your comments to the branch by post or email.

“ These ill conceived contracts are too one-sided as they demand total flexibility from the workers but give very little in return. This will breed resentment between the winners and losers“

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Membership forms available from the branch office, or UNISON Direct 0845 355 0845.