

Unison Office, East Annexe, Town Hall, Warrington, WA1 1UH

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**DECEMBER 2007**



## Seasons Greetings

Dear Member

WHAT A YEAR! Major changes have taken place within the Warrington Local Government Branch. We have completely reviewed both our administrative procedures and office systems, thus enabling us to give our members the support and representation they expect from UNISON.

Although hectic at times, given all the major changes within the Local Authority, we have met the challenges head on, and are confident that we have given and will continue to give 100% in the work we do on your behalf. Negotiation and consultation with management has now increased and we aim to keep you fully informed of any major issues. We value your input into your union, and welcome any comments or suggestions you have, please feel free to contact us at the Branch office for a chat.

Thanks go to all colleagues, stewards, workplace contacts and members who have helped and supported the work of the Branch since April, and we look forward to working with you as we work to achieve improvements under UNISON'S objectives in 2008.

We hope you all have a peaceful, relaxing time over the holiday period with your families and friends. Also, let us not forget those colleagues for whom it is business as usual, working with vulnerable people in our care homes, Children's Services, Social Services and all those 'on-call' etc., at this time.

Best wishes for Christmas and New Year!!

Kind regards

*Pam Howard & Jason Horan*  
*Joint Branch Secretaries*

## BRANCH UPDATE

Following the AGM that was held in September the following Branch Officers have now been confirmed in post:

Linda Sinnott	Chairperson
Shirley Forbes	Shared Vice-Chairperson
Lesley Deans	Chairperson
Pam Howard	Joint Branch Secretary
Jason Horan	Joint Branch Secretary
Julie Pickles	Treasurer
Pearl Bowden	Woman's Officer
Tony Sweeney	Welfare Officer
Albert Hartley	Retired Members
Dave Eatock	Education Officer

- Branch Auditors x 2
- Terms & Conditions Officer
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Officer
- Equality Officer
- Sports & Social Officer
- Black Members Officer
- Disabled Members Officer
- Health & Safety Officer
- Membership Services Officer
- International Relations Officer
- Affiliated Political Fund Officer
- Communications Officer
- Young Members Officer (under age 27)

All officers work together to ensure that the branch is run effectively and to ensure that our members will be represented at all levels.

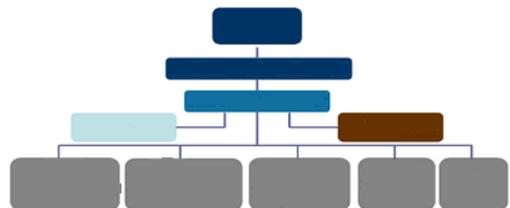
As well as the above posts the Branch Executive has vacancies for the following positions:

We also require Workplace Representatives and Workplace Contacts. If you would like further information on either of these roles or any of the positions above, please contact the Branch Office (01925 44-2186/2187) for more information and an informal discussion.

## Re - Structure News

It has recently come to light that Warrington Borough Council have attempted to proceed with re structuring services without consulting the Trade Unions at the earliest opportunity as detailed in the WBC managers guide to restructure and reorganisation. UNISON has made it clear that we must be consulted.

Only recently it was brought to our attention that there are two separate restructures which the Trade Unions were neither informed about nor involved in any kind of consultation. UNISON along with other Trade Unions objected to these restructures proceeding and requested that Warrington Borough Council aligned themselves with their own policies and procedures and formally consulted on the proposals.



UNISON work closely with other Trade Unions within Warrington Borough Council. The Joint Trade Unions must be consulted by Warrington Borough Council to give members the opportunity to express their views through the Trade Union, this is called collective bargaining.

If you or your workplace are involved in a restructure or changes that affect your working practices then please do not hesitate to contact the Branch Office.

## Learning & Organising

One of the benefits of taking on the role of Workplace, Union Learner or Health & Safety Representative in UNISON is that you are able to access a wide range of courses that will help you in both your work and personal life.

In most circumstances you are entitled through the Trade Union Facilities Agreement to take paid time off work to undertake training that has been organised by UNISON to develop your skills and knowledge in a range of areas, such as:

- Introduction to employment law
- The organising steward
- Building confidence
- Health & Safety
- Presentation skills
- Tackling racism in the workplace
- Harassment and Bullying - a workplace issue
- Information, advice and guidance



There are also courses designed to support and develop the roles of specific Branch Officers i.e. Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Welfare, Learner Representative.

You can view the course information on the UNISON website :

[www.unison-northwest.org.uk/learning](http://www.unison-northwest.org.uk/learning)

If you are thinking about getting more involved in UNISON or are a current UNISON Representative who would like additional training please contact the Branch Office or alternatively the Branch Education Officer, Dave Eatock tel. 01925 246902 or email:

[davee@thegateway.org.uk](mailto:davee@thegateway.org.uk)

## Britannia BUILDING SOCIETY

For most people, a mortgage is a lifetime commitment and Britannia advises UNISON members looking for a mortgage to consider the range of options available, to pick the product which suits their finances and their lifestyle. Britannia offers a range of fixed rate mortgages including two, three, five, seven and ten year fixed rate packages. These products give UNISON borrowers, with specific monthly budget, the peace of mind that their mortgage payments will always be the same. In addition to a great choice of mortgages, UNISON members may also receive £150 cash back from Britannia when their mortgage completes. What's more they will also be eligible for the society's unique membership reward and will receive a share of Britannia's profits each year, subject to scheme rules. For more information please contact Rachel Dennis – 07736 929346

### PENSION'S

Do you require information regarding your Warrington Borough Council pension scheme?

If so ring the pension helpline  
01244 602526

Why are turkeys wiser than chickens?  
Ever heard of Kentucky fried turkey!

What did the fire-fighter's wife get for Christmas?  
A ladder in her stocking!

How does Jack Frost travel to work?  
By icicle!

What's the difference between the xmas alphabet and the normal alphabet?  
The xmas alphabet has Noel!

What games do cows like to play at Christmas parties?  
Moo'sical chairs.



## Retired Members

UNISON works to raise awareness of issues which concern older people and to influence decision makers. Our priorities include:

- Pensioner poverty
- Health care and age discrimination
- Isolation and mobility issues



We believe our union should reflect the society we live and work in. There are more than 10 million elderly people in the UK. Retired and working members have a shared interest in obtaining decent incomes in older age, a universal health service and the creation of a civilised society.

Today's workers are tomorrow's pensioners. If you are due to retire and would be interested in becoming a retired member for a one off fee of £15.00 please contact the UNISON Branch Office.

## Single Status - Update

The Job Evaluation interview process is now complete with the main focus now being to complete 100% moderation. This is to ensure that there has been consistency throughout the process and that employees have not undersold or oversold their job during the Job Evaluation interview. Once the moderation process is complete the job overviews will be issued. You must ensure that you read the overview thoroughly and ensure that it is a true reflection of your job. If you are happy with the overview you will be asked to sign it and return it back to the Job Evaluation team. If you are not happy with the overview and it is not a true reflection of your job, you will have the right of appeal. A copy of the appeals procedure will be attached with the job overview.

Negotiations will be commencing shortly on the new pay and grading structure. Because of the amount of work involved Warrington Borough Council and the Joint Trade Unions have taken the decision to merge the three working groups (Premium Rates, Car User review & Job Evaluation) and form a Total Rewards Strategy Implementation Group. The purpose of this group will be to negotiate a new pay and grading structure, implementation of the car user review and consider proposals on the future of premium payments i.e. shift pay, unsociable hours, overtime etc. etc.



When the negotiations are complete and a package is assembled the details will be passed to UNISON at national level for them to consider and to ensure that there will be no legal implications if the package was to be accepted. Once we have approval from UNISON national office a ballot of all our members will be held for you to decide if the package is acceptable.

You must remember that even at this stage if you are not happy with the grade allocated to your post and you can clearly evidence that your job has changed or your duties have increased then you will have the right of appeal, where if successful you will be entitled to a re evaluation of your post.

Obviously there is a substantial amount of work to be carried out over the coming months and potentially some tough negotiations. We will endeavour to keep you updated on the negotiations. However if you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact the Branch Office.