

**catch  
UP & match  
UP**

PAY CAMPAIGN 2008

## 2% IS NOT ENOUGH

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Meat Hygiene Service to remain in government inspectors hands

*UNISON has been a vocal critic of privatised meat inspection, arguing that it would be a recipe for disaster... More on page 2*

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## This year your pay rise matters more than ever

**W**hy? Because the cost of living is riding high and pay rises over the last four years have not kept up. What's more, local government pay is the lowest in the public sector and so-called 'efficiency' savings are leaving fewer of you to keep services going. You're still doing more for less.

UNISON says your pay needs to catch up with the cost of living and match up to other public service workers and the rest of the workforce. The government says you must get 2% for the next three years, while private sector workers are getting 4%.

We say 'No'. You deserve a fair deal for improving council services and making a real difference to local communities.

Members across the UK are being consulted on whether to accept or reject this year's pay offer in local government. The ballot closes on Friday 20 June with results being published on Monday 23 June, which will be available on the national website:-

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

Or the branch website:-

[www.unisonlancs.org.uk](http://www.unisonlancs.org.uk)

### Car parking update

A recent ballot of UNISON members who work in and around Preston came back with a resounding rejection of Lancashire County Council's re-hashed car parking charges. A meeting for our members is to be held on Monday 23 June in the Council Chamber at County Hall. In the meantime industrial action short of strike will continue and the legal challenge will proceed.



# MEAT INSPECTION SALE GETS THE CHOP

**The Food Standards Agency has halted plans to privatise meat inspection in a decision hailed by UNISON as a victory for the union and public health. The decision means that meat inspection in England (Scotland and Wales) will remain in the hands of government-controlled inspectors until at least 2010.**

UNISON is delighted at the move, describing it as “the only way to protect public health”. The union has been a vocal critic of privatised meat inspection, arguing that it would be a recipe for disaster.

UNISON argued that privatised meat inspection would seriously limit the FSA’s ability to control large-

scale health and hygiene issues – exposing the public to a heightened risk of infections such as e-coli and salmonella.

**A recent poll conducted for the union found that:**

- 76% of people would like meat inspection in slaughterhouses to remain a government responsibility;

- 58% of people would feel less confident that meat would be safe to eat if the meat hygiene service were privatised.

UNISON is now working with the meat hygiene service to bring about increased efficiency and cost effectiveness without compromising public health and safety.

**Ed**

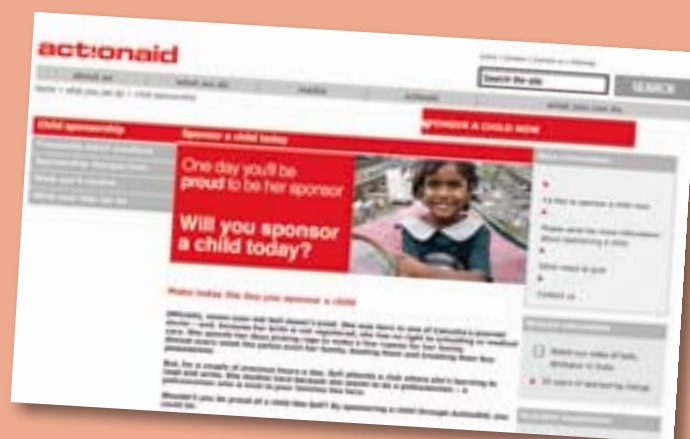
## ACTIONAID

Poverty kills 28 children every minute of every day. Millions more children worldwide are losing out on their childhoods. Not because they choose to grow up too quickly, but because they are forced to.

Children like 13 year old Mwajuma from Tanzania, who was almost pulled out of school and married at the age of 12; and Angeena, nine, from India, who has to scavenge on rubbish tops with her family to make sure they have enough to eat.

ActionAid is working with children like Angeena and Mwajuma to make sure they still get the chance to learn and play – but help is needed to make childhood matter.

Poverty is man-made – created by people and only solvable by people. ActionAid works relentlessly every day in over 40 countries to help poor and marginalised people take charge of their futures. In Kenya over a million more



children now go to school after the abolition of school fees.

***Have you ever thought about sponsoring a child?***

Sponsoring not only benefits the child but their entire community, helping families and

carers become self-sufficient and, when the time comes for ActionAid to move on, their work is sustainable and lasting.

Find out more:-  
[www.actionaid.org.uk/childhood](http://www.actionaid.org.uk/childhood) or telephone 01460 238080

# Are you a carer?

“A carer is someone who provides regular, substantial and unpaid support to a friend, relative, partner or other person who cannot manage without help because of illness, frailty or disability.”

**Carers can be a parent, spouse or partner, brother or sister, son or daughter, other relative or friend...**

**Carers can be any age, looking after people of any age, male or female and from any background and community...**

**Carers can care for more than one person and disabled people can have more than one carer...**

## How many working carers are there?

- The vast majority of carers (80%) are of working age.
- It is thought as many as 3 million carers already combine work and care.
- Carers make up over 12% of the total UK workforce, 1 in every 8 employees.
- Every year, over 2 million people become carers, some overnight, some more gradually – so there is a new population of carers in the workforce every day.
- 3 in 5 people will become carers at some point in time.

## How does our ageing population affect this issue?

- Carers are set to grow from 6m to 9m in the next 30 years.
- The economy will need an extra 2m people in the next 20 years
- Only 25% of these will be school leavers. Employers need to widen their recruitment pool at the same time that society will see an

increase in the need for care.

- The peak age for caring is between 45 and 64 – when many employees will have gained valuable skills and be employed in senior positions.

## Lancashire statistics

- 1 in 5 of Lancashire’s population are older people
- 1 in 5 of these has a long term illness or disability.
- 11% of people in Lancashire totalling 125,000 people are classed as informal carers
- Lancashire branch has approximately 16,000 members
- Taking the national average, it is likely that a significant number of these members will have caring responsibilities – approximately 1,760

## Work and Families Act 2006 – can this help you?

From 6th April 2007, the Work and Families Act 2006 was extended to

Carers of adults. In practice, this means that the law of flexible working now also enables carers to make a request for flexible working, and places a duty on employers to consider such requests seriously and only reject them for good business reasons.

Eligible employees now are those:

- parents with children under six or disabled children under eighteen (i.e. those entitled to Disability Living Allowance)
- Carers of certain adults.

You need to bear in mind that if your manager agrees any request, this will result in a permanent change to your contract of employment.

If you are a carer and would like more information or support please contact either Yvonne Smallshaw ([yvonne.smallshaw@lancashire.gov.uk](mailto:yvonne.smallshaw@lancashire.gov.uk)) or Rosemary Cunningham ([rosemary.cunningham@lancashire.gov.uk](mailto:rosemary.cunningham@lancashire.gov.uk)) or tel 01772 533072

# CONFERENCE 2008

BOURNEMOUTH

Watch out for a report back from Conference in the next edition of Loud and Clear

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE GROUP CONFERENCE

15 & 16 JUNE 2008

Lancashire's Delegation

- Carol Lukey
- Elaine Cotterell
- Elaine Brookes
- Bob Harvey
- Rosemary Cunningham
- Ashley Bramwell
- Tony Gregson
- Joanne Webster
- Sue Holmes
- Julie Long
- Pete Reynolds
- Linda White

## NATIONAL DELEGATE CONFERENCE

17 TO 20 JUNE 2008

Lancashire's Delegation

- Carol Lukey
- Elaine Cotterell
- Bob Harvey
- Roger Wells
- Rosemary Cunningham
- Tony Gregson
- Joanne Webster
- Sue Holmes
- Julie Long
- Elaine Brown
- Pete Reynolds

# CONFERENCE

## INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

I've been off on another freebie – or so my colleagues thought, no matter that it was in my own time. I had a very puzzled look. What have international issues got to do with international problems? At least I'm already known for

***International issues are an interest of mine given that I've seen first hand some of the countries whose political situation means that ordinary working people live in awful conditions, and there are countries I haven't visited where they live in constant fear. Over two days we heard from a number of speakers from around the world and a recurring theme was the reality of some trade unionists who are not allowed the luxury of free speech we take so very much for granted.***

There was the situation in China, where child labour still exists albeit unofficially. An organisation called Labour Behind the Label publicises the reality for clothing manufacturing workers in China who are affected by wildcat strikes, no freedom of association, no health and safety regulations leading to some workers suffering chemical poisoning from glue, etc. It's a hot subject due to the fact of the Olympics this year since a lot of the expensive sportswear sold here is manufactured in China

where the workers are paid very little and the manufacturers then make huge profits selling at higher prices here. But it's not just China, the same situation applies in Bangladesh, Vietnam, Cambodia and Indonesia.

Still in the Far East there was a Burmese civil rights campaigner who is in this country as a refugee from her home country and she is desperate to return but dares not. No-one can fail to have been moved by the television pictures of the monks demonstrating in Burma and the subsequent crackdown by the military government. I was struck by her first words "Thank you for the right to speak". In her home country her life would have been in danger if she had spoken of the forced labour and ethnic cleansing of the Karen in Burma. And refugees are not treated well in Thailand or Bangladesh for those who do make it across the border.

Two contrasting situations apply in South and Central America between Cuba and Colombia. Cuba is managing to survive

despite the fact that it has health systems which outperform those in the western world. Cuba has a child mortality rate lower than in the medical team around the world will celebrate the revolution with a buses in recent years they weren't get because Colombia is yet its trade abducted and daily basis. human rights conditions of supports the

We heard of free Mansour bus driver ja out about w There is the Palestine wh are walled i border contr to do a full queuing for And we con

# UNISON CONFERENCE SPECIAL

## CONFERENCE, 14-16 MARCH, MANCHESTER

They would probably tell you. A weekend in Manchester spending their UNISON on their own time. I did tell them it was about international issues to which all I got to do with us, and more to the point what can UNISON do to influence or taking off to odd places around the world during my precious annual leave...

US blockade and health and education which are free to all and many other countries in the world (literacy and health rates are better in the UK). It supplies aid to disaster areas around the world and this year marks the 50<sup>th</sup> year of UNISON. UNISON provided ambulances and health care in recent years which were not able to otherwise because of the blockade. UNISON is supported by the US and other unionists are being killed on an almost daily basis. Their campaign for decent working conditions continues and UNISON supports them.

of the campaign to free our Osanloo, an Iranian who failed for speaking out about working conditions. The distressing plight of these ordinary people in and because of the controls they are unable to work without long hours at checkpoints. Continue to work with

South African trade unions on health issues, helping to fund the fight against HIV/AIDS, working with 32 public sector trade unions and empowering them to challenge their own political leaders especially to try and ensure basic services like water supplies are run by public services and not private investors from abroad. Why – well to keep the cost down and to help the people themselves with employment and to ensure they maintain good quality services. Sound familiar?

Talking of South Africa, my report of Tabitha Khumalo's speech at the annual conference a couple of years ago prompted a group of admin staff in my local area to do some fundraising. We raised £400 for the Dignity! Campaign in a day of selling cakes, running raffles and competitions. Tabitha said during her speech that she is only alive because foreign organisations like UNISON sent letters and e-mails of protest to the Zimbabwean government at times when someone had managed to get the news of her latest arrest out of the country.

The same has been said for Aung San Suu Kyi of Burma in her years of house arrest. I saw on the news that Tabitha – should there finally be some outcome of the recent elections – had been elected a member of parliament for the MDC, and UNISON has in this way effected some change in a country where ordinary working people have had it tough for so long. I also noted that the South African dockworkers trade union had refused to unload the shipment of armaments bound for Zimbabwe prompting governments including the UK to consider ceasing the supply of arms to the country.

**Who says trade unions have no power these days?** I am proud to support UNISON who in turn support so many other public service trade unions around the world. I know from conferences in recent years that we have helped to train shop stewards in Iraq to rebuild the trade unions there; that we have twinning arrangements with public service unions in other countries; and that the list of international projects funded by

UNISON around the world runs to 13 pages. If you want to know more look on the UNISON website and click on "International" under Campaigns on the right hand side of the homepage. It's a big world out there and this big union is taking on some big projects.

### What can you do as a member?

Well remember what Jamie Oliver did for chickens? You might just have to pay a bit more for your sportswear and trainers to get better pay and working conditions for workers in the Far East. And you need to get e-mailing governments and keep signing petitions because they do work in telling repressive governments, who prefer to work in secrecy, that we know what they are doing. We at least have the privilege of free speech and ordinary people in those countries rely on us to speak for them.

Isn't that what trade unions are all about?

### Sue Holmes

Steward  
Lancashire, Adult & Community Services

# CONFERENCE SPECIAL

## The UK National Work-Stress Network

Steering Group Meeting: Date: Saturday 19/04/2008 Venue: Hillscourt Centre, Rednal, Birmingham

**M**y name is John Hall and I am a steward for the Adult and Community Services Directorate. I was made very welcome at this my inaugural Steering Group Meeting.

Needless to say it soon became apparent that the majority of the other Steering Group members came from the teaching profession which was rather ironic when the vast majority of the conference members I later discovered came from UNISON.

Therefore undaunted in the circumstances I felt I solely waved the flag for my fellow UNISON colleagues.

The meeting was very businesslike and the Agenda was worked through in a brisk and structured manner which I welcomed. The Agenda itemed a financial report which highlighted the significance of the annual Stress Conference for the organisation being its major source of income. Another source of income for the organisation was donations received from Union branches when the organisation Convenor would be asked to speak at a Union branch Annual General Meeting on Stress in the Workplace and how the UK National Stress network can assist in this matter. It is my opinion that this UNISON branch would like to consider for their Annual General Meeting and be an incentive for members to attend.

Following on from this was the Convenor's Report which highlighted his work with other UNISON Branches including the UNISON branch Annual General Meeting at St Richard's Hospital Chichester. The Annual General

Meeting of the UNISON Branch at Birkbeck College, London and the UNISON Health Sector Conference in Manchester in April.

There then followed a discussion on the Professor Carol Black's Report 'Working for a Healthier Tomorrow'. Some of the key challenges of the report are that the economic costs of sickness absence and worklessness associated with working age ill-health are over £100 billion a year – greater than the current annual budget for the NHS.

That the current sick note is claimed to have been unchanged since it began in 1922. That it is too focused on what a person cannot do and needs to be reformed to explore what can be done to return to work given appropriately workplace adjustments. It further points out that employers have a responsibility to consider how staff feel valued by their organisation and what will motivate them to deliver a quality service without undue stress that might lead to poor health.

It goes further by highlighting that there are several key dimensions that are likely to cause poor health in the work place:

- When employment is insecure
- Work is monotonous and repetitive
- Workers have little or no autonomy, control and task discretion
- There is an imbalance between effort and reward so that workers feel exploited or taken for granted.

One of the key recommendations is that an integrated approach to working age health should be underpinned by; the inclusion of occupational health and vocational rehabilitation within mainstream healthcare.

In regards to occupational health the report quotes the UK National Work-Stress Network stating that occupational health should be workplace / sector specific. It should be knowledgeable and responsive to specific problems in the workplace. The outcome of this discussion was that one of the other steering group members other than me would be attending a follow up conference in London to discuss the main recommendations.

The next major item on the Agenda was the forthcoming Annual Conference on the

15 and 16 November. The theme for the conference is Eradicating Workplace Bullying, including Cyber Bullying –The Case for Dignity at Work.

Its premise will be to explore what is 'bullying'? One of the keynote speakers will be Professor Charlotte Rayner, from Portsmouth University who has produced a research paper entitled 'Working together to tackle Bullying and Harassment at Work.'

### Workshops will include:-

- Bullying in the Workplace Policy
- Dignity at Work Campaign
- Management Style, Bullying Relationships and HSE Stress Management Standards

Finally one of the last items on the Agenda was the UK National Work – Stress Network with the Annual Hazards Conference which this year is being held at Keele University on the 18-20<sup>th</sup> July where they will be running workshops on;

- Handling Stress Cases
- Risk Assessment and Stress

The next Steering Group meeting is being held on the 5<sup>th</sup> July 2008 which I will be attending representing Lancashire UNISON.



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# SCHOOLS OUT FOR SUMMER

It's nearly that time again! The school summer holidays!

But between now and the middle of July can often be a difficult time in some schools due to the prospect of changes to staffing structures that could be in place for the return in September. This can sometimes mean Support Staff having changes being made to the number of hours they work

or sometimes a change to the grade of post they are held against in a "new" staffing structure.

If you are caught up in a situation like this UNISON is here to offer support and advice - and that does not stop when school finishes for the holidays! You can contact us at any time

all through the year. Just ring 01772 533072 and you will be put through to the Duty Officer who will assist you and if necessary refer you to a Branch Officer with schools experience.

Have a lovely summer break!

**Elaine Brookes** - Convenor

PS we recently sent out copies to every school in the authority of a very useful book called "The Support Staff Little Pocket Book" packed with information on school issues, employment legislation, equal opportunities, health and safety and much more. If you have not had sight of this booklet contact the Branch Office on 01772 533072 and we will send one out to you for you to place in the staff room where fellow support staff can access it.

## National Negotiating Framework for School Support Staff

**M**embers in schools will recollect that discussions have been ongoing at a national level for some time about setting up a separate pay framework for school support staff. UNISON has played a major part in the negotiations and this was recognised by Schools Minister Jim Knight at a recent UNISON seminar in London.

Currently 40% of schools nationally are self governing i.e. have foundation, trust status or are voluntary aided. These schools do not have to follow the NJC (Green Book) Agreement although most schools in Lancashire do irrespective of their status.

There has been a huge increase in the numbers of school support staff since 1997, some 300,000 and whilst there has been a focus on trying to reduce the workload burden for teachers the same can not be said for support staff. Neither can it be said that pay rates have kept pace with the developing and increasingly specialised roles that support staff now undertake. The new framework would be designed specifically to reflect and reward school staffs roles and responsibilities.

Work already undertaken has identified 43 roles in schools at differing levels. Put into a local context, prior to the Classroom Support Workers Agreement 2004 over 20 classroom roles were identified in Lancashire schools!

The framework will seek consistency in terms of:-

- Role profiles/job descriptions
- Common contracts with core terms and conditions
- National framework for training and staff development
- Term time agreement
- Fair and equal pay
- Time off and back filling for trade union representatives

Which staff will be affected? It is likely to be all staff appointed by the school (community and self governing) this will include all classroom based staff, administrative, clerical and technical staffs, bursars, librarians, learning mentors, caretakers and premises managers. Staff employed in centrally managed services but who work in a school or schools e.g. Early Years SEN or Short Stay Schools will also be included.

Discussions are continuing on whether or not staff working in school but not appointed by the school e.g. (local authority employee DLO/DSO such as Lancashire County Commercial Group) school meals or cleaning staff will be covered.

Staff employed by private companies or voluntary organisations that provide these (or other) services will probably not be covered and this may also include staff employed under a PFI contract. If catering and cleaning staff are directly appointed and employed by the school they should be included.

There will be no change in the employer to staff who work in a community school will continue to be employed by the local authority and staff in Trust, Foundation or VA schools will continue to be employed by the governing body of the school.

There are a number of key issues for UNISON. The framework needs to deliver for UNISON members.

- Fair pay & equal pay for the future
- Consistency across all schools
- Statutory underpinning to ensure all schools comply with the framework
- A no detriment clause to ensure that no staff are worse off
- A transparent assimilation process

### What are the next steps?

The Government has said they want an agreement by September 2008 but much of the detail has yet to be negotiated. As soon as we have any proposals to put to members we envisage holding briefings with members and in addition members will be balloted, probably in the spring term next year.

UNISON is the biggest union for school support staff and growing all the time but if you know of anyone in your school who is not a member of a union encourage them to join up today and participate in shaping their own future.

**Elaine Cotterell**

## Local Government NJC Car Allowances 2008/09

Effective from 1 April 2008	451-999cc	1000-1199cc	1200-1450cc
<b>Essential Users</b>			
Lump sum per annum	£753	£849	£1,095
per mile first 8,500	34.0p	36.9p	45.8p
per mile after 8,500	13.3p	13.6p	15.8p
Petrol element	9.227p	9.804p	10.695p
Amount of VAT per mile in petrol element	1.374p	1.460p	1.592p
<b>Casual Users</b>			
per mile first 8,500	42.9p	46.9p	58.7p
per mile after 8,500	13.3p	13.6p	15.8p
Petrol element	9.227p	9,804p	10.695p
Amount of VAT per mile in petrol element	1.374p	1.460p	1.592p

Employers will not look at the petrol element in isolation of the whole package.  
This has been referred back to them twice.



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[www.unisoninsurance.co.uk](http://www.unisoninsurance.co.uk)  
Telephone 0800 66 88 55

### Lancashire winner

Congratulations to Lancashire UNISON member Mrs A McMinn who has won a holiday to the Maldives (flights, accommodation and transfers) by entering a recent prize draw which was run by UNISON Travel Club. Have a wonderful holiday Mrs McMinn!



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