

UNISON wins extra 'Covid' leave day for all SBC staff.

Since last year, UNISON has been raising the issue of employers recognising they need to do something to thank all staff who have been working through the Covid pandemic.

Our members have had many different experiences during Covid. This has ranged from juggling childcare and work or taking on a new role to support the changing needs of the pandemic through to carrying and taking the risk of working face to face with the public. All of us have worked to keep the public services this community relies on going.

Extra Covid Leave Day

The Council was not initially interested but we have kept plugging away and now we have won an additional one-off day's leave for all Southend Council staff. It's the least we deserve.

All staff will benefit from this - so if your colleagues are not in UNISON ask them to join! There are more battles ahead, whether it's over safety during the pandemic or making sure we can fight the cuts that are coming down the line from government. The more people who are in the union the better we can stand up for staff and services on all the issues, big or small.

Pass on the link here join.unison.org.uk or ask your colleagues to email the branch for a membership form at unison@southend.gov.uk



Local Government Pay Insult!

How do you think this government will reward all those public sector workers it spent months clapping for?

In 2020 we asked UNISON members what pay rise you felt local government workers deserved and the answer was 10%

The employers' latest offer was just 1.5%! This is an insult! It shows a blatant disregard for our hard work and sacrifices throughout the pandemic.

The employers also rejected the other part of the claim which included a 35 hour week, a homeworking allowance and a minimum 25 days annual leave for all.

UNISON has rejected this 'offer' and is calling on the local government employers to enter into urgent negotiations.

Councils need more funding from Central Government. They can afford it – they've thrown billions away on the failed track and trace system and schemes like 'Eat Out to Help Out'. Now we need to see money being spent on public services, including on staff.

We urge every UNISON member to contact your MP, asking them if they support a fair pay rise for local government using this link: <http://bit.ly/UNISONContactMP>

There's more information on the pay claim and publicity to use here: <http://bit.ly/Councilpay>

UNISON NEWS

UNISON Black Members Self-Organised Group meeting

All Black members in Southend UNISON are invited to the next meeting of our Black Members' Group on Friday June 18th from 12.30-1.30pm.

We held the first Southend Black members' meeting in March and it became clear that Black members are facing a number of issues in the workplace. UNISON would like to provide a space to discuss those issues and encourage members to help and support each other in tackling them.

If you would like to attend then please contact the UNISON office on unison@southend.gov.uk for details of how to join the meeting. Let us know if there are specific issues you'd like to raise.

We hope to see as many Black members as possible at this meeting!

Louise McDermott and Gloria Lawton



Point of view: Stop the Police Bill

As UNISON's Equalities Officer, I spoke to a recent Southend rally against the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill. Here's a summary of what I had to say:

“ If this law is passed, police would be able to put harsh restrictions on anyone protesting. They already have powers where there could be serious public disorder or disruption, but the new law would criminalise even peaceful protest if it causes 'annoyance' or is 'disruptive'. Protests are designed to be noisy and visible so of course they are going to annoy someone!

Every one of UNISON's protests in Southend, over library closures, care homes or our pay and pensions rallies, could have been illegal under this bill! Without protest we would never have got the vote for women, stopped the poll tax or repealed unfair laws like Section 28.

Read more about why UNISON says we should oppose the new Police Bill here: <http://bit.ly/UNISONBill>

Protest gives an essential voice to minority groups, starts debate and empowers citizens. Recent protests like Black Lives Matter have highlighted important issues, and brought changes in areas we never thought possible.

This Bill also has stings in its tail which would take us back to the bad old days of 'stop and search' and make life even harder for the travelling community, already marginalised and discriminated against.

We do not want the Home Secretary or the police to be able to say who can protest in this country. The establishment is running scared because they have seen what the power of protest can do and they don't like it one bit. We must keep the momentum going. That's why I say KILL THE BILL! ”

Louise McDermott, Equalities Officer

Contacting UNISON during the Pandemic:

The Covid 19 pandemic means that our UNISON office is closed to visitors. To contact UNISON, please email us at unison@southend.gov.uk or leave us a message on 01702 215980. You can also follow us on social media:

There is also a national helpline on 0800 0857 857



Unison Southend



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