

# **Branch Secretary - Report to AGM 2018**

## **A Campaigning and Organising UNISON**

Once again we face another year of continued cuts in funding for local government. The budget recently passed by the councillors will take the spending cuts total to over £100 million since 2010. We have seen hundreds of jobs lost through Voluntary Redundancies, Voluntary Early Retirements and non-filling of vacancies.

This has added a considerable strain on the remaining workforce. This branch has been instrumental in being able to protect our terms and conditions over the years. We have defeated attempts to make cuts to Maternity provision, cuts to all-inclusive pay grades and more recently the Flexible Retirement Scheme. We also expect the employers to return to this issue this year.

We have supported and organised a number of lobbies and demonstrations against the Tory austerity agenda, both in Dundee and nationally. We have taken every opportunity to talk to and challenge Councillors, MP's and MSP's that Dundee City Council services need increased investment in jobs and services not continual cuts. We have shown no favour to any politician or political party. I will support all who would campaign and vote against the cuts in Parliament or the Council Chamber.

We have been proactive in raising issues with Senior Management and the Elected Members as well playing a role at a national level to try and ensure that UNISON takes a firm line against all cuts.

## **Pay 2018**

We have submitted a joint pay claim along with the other trade unions. The claim for 6.5% pay increase is nothing more than we all deserve. To get what you deserve we will need all members to take part in the wider campaign.

For too long we have endured job losses, service cuts and pay deals that result in the lowering of our living standards while those at the top continue to live a life of luxury, this can change if we show determination to challenge them.

## **Building our UNION**

Our Branch Officers and Stewards are all volunteers, doing UNISON work day in day out supporting members in managing absence meetings, grievances and disciplinaries. They are the backbone of our organisation and deserve a huge round of applause for a lot of the great work they do that goes on under the radar sometimes. I also want to thank the support we have had from UNISON staff for their input, knowledge and ideas.

Your reps have also been heavily involved in the whole range of reorganisations and reviews that have been taking place across all the depts. We strive to continually improve how we communicate and support members and will always welcome constructive criticisms, advice or support on how we can do things better.

## **When we fight, we win**

Every right we have at work has been won through collective struggle. It has never just been handed to us by a benevolent employer or government. We can build on our strength to ensure we continue to have those rights.

Our members in Social Care faced the threat of having a change to working patterns of split shifts imposed through potential dismissal and re-engagement. They organised and campaigned which led to the Councillors asking for a review and full consultation. Their lobby of the council meeting was UNISON at our best.

We have also supported other UNISON branches whose members have been forced into taking industrial action to defend their jobs or services in Glasgow and Kirklees for example.

## **Your UNION**

We need more of you to think about becoming more active in your union. We can offer excellent training and mentoring that can suit however much or little time you can offer. Our union can only be as strong as it can be if we are well organised, growing membership density and prepared to take action when necessary.

Member involvement is vital for our movement.

**Jim McFarlane**

**Branch Secretary**