

Probation members reject pay freeze

Members of all three probation unions have voted overwhelmingly to reject the attempt by the Government and the Probation Service to impose a pay freeze on them this year.

The results of the union pay consultations are as follows:

Napo: 99% of members voted to reject
UNISON: 98% of members voted to reject
GMB: 86% of members voted to reject

In light of these results, the unions have formally rejected the pay freeze proposals and asked the Probation Service to re-open talks to reach a decent pay award for our members this year.

It is no surprise that members are angry about the way the Probation Service is treating the workforce:

- This is the 11th year of pay freeze in the last 12 years
- Pay points have increased by only 1% during this period
- Probation salaries are no longer competitive

- A staffing and workloads crisis has resulted as staff leave to find better pay
- Inflation continues to grow – up by 4.8% in August
- Food and fuel prices are going through the roof
- Members face a 1.25% increase in their national insurance contributions next April.
- We face a log jam of unresolved pay issues, such as outstanding job evaluation reviews, the deletion of pay band 1, the managerial review and probation pay manual promised in the 2018 pay award, and confusion over unsocial hours pay.

In addition, the Government's attempt to impose a pay freeze on probation staff has undermined all the joint work we have been undertaking with the Probation Service on pay reform at a critical time in these negotiations.

So, we understand the strength of feeling among our members and we are determined to try to deliver a better deal for you on pay this year. If the Probation Service refuses to return to pay talks the unions will consider what further action to take. If necessary, this could include moving to industrial action ballots.

Dates for your diary.....

At some point in the next few months we hope that we will be able to move to hybrid meetings, with some people attending in person and others able to join online from home.

October

- 12th National Retired Member's Conference, 2 day event online.
- 21st Branch Committee, 6pm to 7.30pm.

November

- 4th Negotiations Committee, 12pm to 2pm. **NOTE CHANGE OF TIME.**
- 18th Branch Committee, 6pm to 7.30pm.

December

- 2nd Negotiations Committee, 10am to 12.30pm
- 6th Retired member's committee, 11am. Venue to be confirmed.
- 16th Branch Committee, 6pm to 7.30pm.



Branch Activist Newsletter

Improve pay offer or face strike action, local government employers told

We are going to ballot for industrial action our 400,000 council and school staff we represent in England, Wales and Northern Ireland over what UNISON says is an "inadequate" pay offer from employers.

An overwhelming majority (79%) of our members in local government and schools who took part in the month-long consultation exercise voted to reject the 1.75% offer. Our branch members voted by the same margin to reject the offer (80% voted to reject).

We believe it is not too late for local government employers to think again and improve the offer to staff who have worked through the worst of times. We want to use the result to show the employers, and government, that our members have had enough of pay freezes and below-inflation pay rises.

Members will now be asked to vote 'yes' to taking action in support of the union's campaign for better pay.

Our national deputy head of local government Mike Short said: "Council and school workers have made clear the strength of feeling about their pay.

"They've been the unsung heroes of the pandemic, working tirelessly and often at risk to their own health to serve their communities. Staff carried on working throughout successive lockdowns, keeping people's neighbourhoods clean and safe, ensuring schools remained open and looking after the most vulnerable.

"But council and school employees have also seen the value of their pay reduced by a quarter since 2010. The recent hike in the cost of living means their wages are falling further and further behind.

"An offer of just 1.75% is totally inadequate for workers who're already among the lowest paid in the country. Their efforts and sacrifices should be better recognised and rewarded."

Potential timetable for industrial action ballot

Ballot opens on 1 December

Ballot closes on 14 January

Result announced by 19 January

Period in which industrial action can take place is between 28 February and 13 July.

When ballot papers do go out, it is really important that all members take part and return their ballot paper. As workplace representatives you will play a really important role in encouraging members where you work to return their ballot papers. If members do vote for industrial action, by law we need at least a 50% turnout.

Contact the branch office

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The branch office is currently closed to visitors due to Covid restrictions, but branch admin staff are continuing to work as normal 9am to 4.30pm on Mondays to Fridays.

Report from the NJC Committee

Helen Gray and Sarah Carter, two of our branch officers, is a regional delegate to UNISON's national NJC committee. This is their report on the meeting held on 1 October.

NJC Pay Claim outcome of consultative ballot nationally was discussed and in summary nationally the result was 78.8% to reject and 21% to accept. The point was made it is rare for all regions to vote to reject and all disappointed the turnout wasn't higher considering the effort put in by regions and branches.

We both spoke about the turnout being concerning, that branches are picking up employers in our region had budgeted for a higher pay award than offered and given the members have voted by nearly 80% to reject, it would be a missed opportunity not to utilise the response and go back to the LGA and demand an increased offer. We talked about the financial pressure on our members and their families, levels of uncertainty given the end of furlough, changes to Universal Credit and increases in cost of living and national insurance.

With almost an 80% response to reject, many attendees shared views there was no choice other than to go to an industrial action ballot. The time between now and the ballot should be used to campaign, to approach the employers again to seek an improved offer and continuing to cleanse data. The law prevents digital balloting. The campaign will be highly political with the message how local government employees are undervalued by central government. Attendees voted for an Industrial Action Ballot.

Future of the NJC we received an update on the Service Group Executive's action plan for the motion submitted at Conference. 3 reps from SGE and 3 NJC have been identified to form a small working group. The group is due to meet in the next 2 weeks and will report back to NJC Committee and SGE.

Public Health it was reported the new United Kingdom Health Security Agency (UKHSA) has been considering a new model for the local health protection system. It recognises that local knowledge and expertise adds value to national policies and programmes and that local intelligence and analysis is key to rapid outbreaks responses. The pandemic has shown the value of local authorities in tackling surges through its strong links to communities. The new model considers that what can be done locally should be done locally, but there should also be a local authority presence at the highest level of the UKHSA. Local authorities should pay a leadership role in bringing together partnerships to improve and protect health.

Term Time Working Group the LGA has indicated that they are unwilling to conclude the guidance on maternity leave and pay for term time workers until the review of maternity arrangements agreed as part of this year's claim is concluded. Discussions remain ongoing about issuing further guidance on the impact of the additional public holiday on TTO staff resulting from the Queen's Diamond Jubilee next year. The DfE has announced that the school year will be reduced by a day in 2021/22, which makes the calculation of pay due to TTO staff less straightforward.

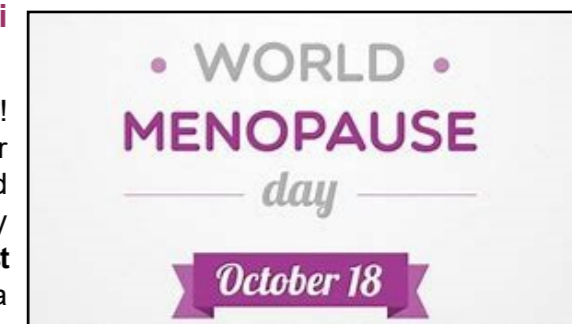
Chief Officers pay the offer is 1.5%. Attempts are being made to improve the offer and we are waiting to hear back from employers side.



World Menopause Week: events and give-away from the Humber, Coast and Vale Partnership

In conversation with Kaye Adams and Dr Shahzadi Harper - Let's all talk about menopause

Kaye Adams, TV presenter, journalist and author of STILL HOT! 42 Brilliantly Honest Menopause Stories will be speaking to Dr Shahzadi Harper, a medical doctor and leading light in the world of perimenopause & menopause and discussing the way menopause is managed and perceived on **Thursday 21st October at 1pm**. To book on this session please register via this link: <https://forms.office.com/r/BsTw82LFk4>.



Reflexology Self-care Techniques to support during the Menopause

Live session which demonstrates simple Reflexology and Self-care techniques to support you with the menopause. The techniques will empower you so that you apply self-care when you need it to aid relaxation, soothe anxiety and promote restful sleep. There will be advice on how to balance out hormones, soothe brain fog for clarity of thought and help to soothe headaches.

Monday 18th October 8am to 9am, Tuesday 19th October 1pm to 2pm, Wednesday 20th October 1pm to 2pm

All sessions are the same so you only need to attend one of the sessions. Visit this link to book your place <https://forms.office.com/r/r1LP1U4tun> (limited places allocated on a first come first served basis).

Giveaway

As part of World Menopause Week Humber, Coast and Vale partnership are giving away copies of STILL HOT! 42 Brilliantly Honest Menopause Stories to colleagues who send a short video clip or write in to tell them: How have you been supported in the workplace (menopause related), OR about anything new you have learnt or things you might do differently either yourself or to support others (as a result of our menopause webinars/activities/resources etc).

They will pick 10 stories at random and send you a copy of the book. Please note that your videos/stories will be posted on the Humber, Coast and Vale menopause webpage. Send your entries to emma.marshall26@nhs.net.

Follow the branch on social media

We provide and share regular updates, news and interesting articles via the branch social media accounts; If you don't already, why not follow us?



You can also engage with us and share your ideas and views, but please remember never share anything on social media that can identify where you work and never make comments that could bring you or your employer into disrepute. Keep social media and work separate.