

LGR Update



Updates on Local Government Reorganisation from the joint North Yorkshire local government branches; Craven branch, Harrogate branch, North Yorkshire branch, Ryedale branch and Scarborough branch

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Tips for day one

After months of planning and negotiations we are almost there. The biggest change to local government in North Yorkshire in 50 years as we become a unitary council. We have some helpful tips and advice for day one.

Get your colleagues to join UNISON

The more members we have, the stronger our voice. In the months and years ahead there will be reorganisations and restructures. At the same time there is the cost of living crisis, and the need to protect terms and conditions. As well as providing individual support, we need to make sure that UNISON is the genuine collective voice of the workforce.

Check your pay slip

When you get your first pay slip, which will be available from Monday 24 April please check it carefully. We are not expecting any problems, but it is always a good idea to check your payslip each month. Check especially to make sure your tax code is correct, your pension deductions are still being applied, and that your UNISON subscriptions are still being deducted (if you pay via your salary). It might be helpful to check your first payslip with your last payslip from the district/borough council. We have been told that anyone who currently gets a paper copy of their payslip will continue to do so.

Confirm your leave , flexi and TOIL carry forward

If you have annual leave, flexi-time or TOIL left on 31 March we strongly recommend keeping a record of this. If you can, ask your line manager to confirm the total amount. This will be honoured at the new council after 1 April but it makes sense to avoid any misunderstandings by having the figures confirmed in writing.

Don't panic

This is the biggest change any of us have seen whilst working in local government in North Yorkshire. Despite all the planning and preparation, there will be some things that don't go to plan from day one. Don't panic, and don't worry. Report any concerns or issues to your line manager. Don't be afraid to ask for help. Talk to your UNISON branch if you need any support.

Which branch?

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Wendy Nichols, 01609 532317
unison@northyorks.gov.uk

Harrogate BC

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North Yorkshire CC

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Richmondshire DC

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Ryedale DC

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Health and Safety at NYC

As we come together as one council it gives us an opportunity to strengthen our Health & Safety role. We have secured a new Joint Health & Safety Committee for the new council, the first part of this is making sure we have union Health & Safety reps across the new council. Have you thought about being a union Health & Safety rep where you work?



What does a union Health & Safety rep do?

They represent the views of staff in relation to anything that impacts on health, safety and welfare at work. They investigate incidents and accidents. They monitor trends and undertake inspections.

Who makes a good union Health & Safety rep?

Anyone who wants to help make sure the workplace is safe and healthy for everyone. An ability to look at issues from a whole-workforce view.

What rights do I have as a union Health & Safety rep?

A right to inspect the workplace four times a year, and to speak to staff in private during inspections. A right to investigate accidents and incidents. A right to receive updates from the employer and enforcing agencies. A right to be consulted on matters that affect the health, safety or welfare of staff in the workplace.

What training or qualifications for I need to be a union Health & Safety rep?

You don't need any

qualifications or experience to become a union Health & Safety rep. All we ask is that you are a UNISON member and that you want to make a difference for everyone where you work. You do need formal training once you become a rep. This is provided by UNISON and the initial training takes five days. You are entitled to paid time off work to attend the training, and any expenses will be covered by UNISON.



How much work is involved?

As much as you want! The basic is to be the link between your workplace and the UNISON branch. You can also undertake inspections where you work up to four times a year, attend meetings, help members to raise issues about health, safety and welfare.

What about getting time off from my normal job?

You have a legal right to paid time off to do your duties as a union Health & Safety rep. This includes going to meetings, investigating incidents, undertaking inspections, and

preparation time. The council must accommodate your role and you should not be at a disadvantage in your job because of being a union Health & Safety rep.

How many union Health & Safety reps do we need?

It would be great to have one union Health & Safety rep in each workplace, but in North Yorkshire that would not be possible. In smaller workplaces we could have one rep to cover multiple sites.



How do I become a union Health & Safety rep?

Contact the North Yorkshire branch office. We will send you a nomination form. You just need two colleagues who are UNISON members where you work to sign your form. Once appointed, we will inform your employer.

Put yourself forward to be a Health & Safety rep where you work. Email the North Yorkshire branch now!

unison@northyorks.gov.uk

Myth busting....

Understandably there are a lot of myths floating around about LGR and how it might impact you now and in the future. As with all myths, sometimes they are completely false, sometimes there is some truth to them. We try to address some of the big ones here.

My pay will be cut

Not true. Nobody will have their pay cut as a result of LGR. All district and borough staff will transfer on their current pay, terms, conditions and job role **unless YOU choose otherwise.** Some jobs may be at a lower grade at the new council, but your current pay grade is protected under TUPE.

The new council can force me on to the new terms and conditions after 90 days

Not true. Your terms and conditions cannot be changed as a result of the transfer to the new council. In the future, the union will seek to negotiate improvements to your terms and conditions but we would put any changes to a vote of our members.

I currently don't work in Northallerton, but will be expected to work anywhere in the county from 1 April

Some truth in this. Your work base will not change as a result of LGR. You cannot be forced to change your work base if it would be unreasonable. So, someone who is currently based in Scarborough cannot have their work base changed to Harrogate, or Northallerton for example. However, you might be asked to attend meetings in



different parts of the county depending on your role. In these circumstances your travel costs and time should be covered. If you can't drive, or don't have access to a car, then the council should provide transport or bring the meeting to you. If you have specific needs such as caring responsibilities or a disability, then these must be taken into account. If these requirements don't happen please contact your UNISON branch.

I have been told that I am in a 'multi-faceted' role, and I have to change my job from 1 April

Not true. You might agree to make changes to your current role in advance of 1 April but that is your choice. Even in so-called 'multi-faceted' roles, your current work will still exist on 1 April so you have the right to transfer in your current role working on your current job description on your current pay, terms and conditions.

I don't pay in to the pension,

but I will be forced to from 1 April

Some truth in this. If you don't pay into the pension, the law requires a new employer to 'auto-enrol' you in to the pension. If you don't want to, then you just need to 'opt-out' by completing an opt-out form. If you are thinking of opting-out of the pension please think carefully. The pension scheme is an excellent benefit, and the council will pay far more in to your pension than you will. It is free money, and opting out is like taking a pay cut.

TUPE only lasts for a year / 90 days/ 2 years [insert your own myth!]

Not true. TUPE protects your current terms and conditions for ever. TUPE never expires. Your terms and conditions can only be changed in the future if there is an 'economic, technical or organisational' reason to make that change. Even then any changes would have to be negotiated with the union.

Pay Update



In January we submitted our national pay claim for schools and local government. We consulted with members across the country and agreed a claim of inflation plus 2%, which meant a claim for 12.5%.

We submitted our claim early so we could engage with the national employers in time for 1 April.

Unfortunately the employers have come back with an offer below inflation.

The offer is:

- A flat increase of £1,925 on all spinal points up to spinal point 43 (which is grade N at NYC)
- 3.8% increase on spinal points above 43 (i.e. grade SM1 and above at NYC).
- 3.8% on all NJC allowances.

This is very similar to the offer that was made last year, and equates to about £1 an hour for most staff. This is about 9% at the bottom of the pay spine.

The £1,925 a year increase is

based on a 37-hour week, so part time workers and workers on term-time only contracts will receive less.

UNISON has agreed to move straight to a national industrial action ballot.

We are asking members if they are prepared to take strike action to improve the offer.

A national ballot takes a lot of preparation, so we are currently updating our membership records and preparing the legal formalities for a national ballot.

The suggested timetable would be for the ballot to start in May and conclude in early July,

Any pay deal will be back-dated to 1 April.

Meanwhile, we are pleased to have negotiated that NYC will pay the Real Living Wage for another year. This means workers on spinal points 2 and 3 will have their hourly rate increased to £10.90 from 1 April. However this is a temporary uplift and would be deducted from the national pay increase when it is agreed.

What has my UNISON branch done for me?

Being a member of a trade union is about so much more than individual support and protection at work. By joining together with one voice, we achieve far more.

Over the past few months, we have achieved so much on your behalf, and with an even larger membership we can achieve even more!

- Increment policy: sickness has been removed as a criteria for awarding pay increments
- Annual leave increased to 34 days, after five years' service
- Removal of Compulsory Unpaid Leave at Christmas
- Maternity pay increased for lower earners and part time workers
- A commitment to honour leave, flexi and TOIL accrued at the district and borough councils
- Professional registration fees to be covered by the employer
- Increased flexi-allowance to be able to build up 24 days over the year
- Apprentice pay increased
- Real Living Wage to be paid from 1 April 2023
- An agreement to have a joint Health & Safety Committee for the new council