

**Cangen Sir Caerfyrddin
Carmarthenshire
County Branch**

undeb gwasanaethau cyhoeddus **CYMRU**



the public service union **WALES**

5 Heol Ysgubor, Caerfyrddin SA31 1DE / 5 Barn Road, Carmarthen

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TO: MEMBERS OF THE UNISON CARMARTHENSHIRE COUNTY BRANCH

Dear Member,

SINGLE STATUS NEGOTIATIONS

UNISON, GMB and UNITE met the Chief Executive on Wednesday 21 September 2011. The purpose of the meeting was to try to gain improvements in the single status offer and remove the requirement for staff to accept their changes to pay, terms and conditions by the 30 September 2011. You will recall that if acceptance was not received by this date staff would not be entitled to further payments such as protection, additional increments and the ex-gratia payments.

Management agreed to some improvements in the single status offer. However, they would not agree to extend the 30 September deadline and neither would they agree to present the offer without the penalty of losing the above payments if the acceptance form was not returned by the 30 September 2011. We made it clear to management that their approach was being driven by their legal advisors and was not in keeping with fairness and equality towards industrial relations. Unfortunately, despite our best efforts, they would not budge.

The improvements agreed by management are set out in the attached sheet. Despite these improvements UNISON still believe that the offer is unacceptable and is poor in comparison to other agreements that have been reached by local authorities in Wales. We need to make you aware however that it is very unlikely for further improvements to be achieved by negotiation alone.

UNISON maintains that our members should not accept the offer. However, in giving this advice we need to inform you that you may lose the additional payments regarding protection, additional increments, and the ex-gratia payments. Management have also indicated that they would be prepared to impose the offer on staff who do not sign the acceptance form by giving notice. This would mean that you would be on the new grading structure, but would not receive the additional payments.

UNISON will offer full support for all members who do not wish to accept the offer including legal advice. It is our view that members would need to be prepared to ballot and take part in industrial action to have a chance of fighting the imposition and making any gains. Again, UNISON will offer full support.

COT3 Agreements

Members with equal pay claims should **not** sign COT3 agreements and must first await advice from Thompsons, Solicitors. All our other members who receive a COT3 agreement should also **not** sign until they have received advice either from Thompsons, Solicitors or from the Union.

Negotiations are taking place with our solicitors, ACAS and the Council regarding the content of the COT3's and all members will be advised of the outcome.

The Branch Committee will be organising follow-up meetings with members*. In the meantime, if you require any further advice please contact: **Shop Steward, Senior Shop Steward, Barn Road office – 01267 224942**

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Evans".

Mark Evans – Branch Secretary – Carmarthenshire County Branch

*Single Status Surgeries for individuals and small groups will continue to be held on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 6:00pm to 8:00pm at the Barn Road Office, Carmarthen.

MANAGEMENT'S RESPONSE PRESENTED TO THE TRADE UNIONS

Trade Union Meeting 21 September 2011

1. Trade Union Facilities Time

A draft Trade Union Facilities Protocol was distributed to Trades Union colleagues for their input and comment. Feedback requested as soon as conveniently possible.

2. Single Status

Based on feedback from Trades Union and staff themselves the following revisions to our original proposals are as follows:-

- 2.1 Double time to be paid (not time and a half) for bank holiday working
- 2.2 Increase in stand by payments from £26.50 to £53
- 2.3 Agreement to remove spinal point 4 from the new pay model. The starting point for staff will now increase to £12,312.

3. Matters requiring clarification

- 3.1 The £1,000 discretionary payment will not be subject to tax and N.I.
- 3.2 The £250 discretionary payments (for those earning under 21k) will not be subject to tax and N.I. (The Council will meet all Tax and NI elements)
- 3.3 Confirmation was given that the Authority has no plans to revisit terms and conditions post 2013.
- 3.4 By signing the Statement of Personal Information this will not affect any existing Equal Pay Claims.

4. Severance Scheme

- 4.1 The Council will encourage maximum flexibility to enable those people eligible to access the severance scheme; this will include discussions with schools in relation to schools based staff.
- 4.2 Whilst the Council will focus initially on red circles further consideration may be given to expanding the scheme to include both white circles and green circles subject to business case considerations.
- 4.3 Agreement has been reached to work with Trades Unions to look at the most serious losers with a view to potentially ameliorating their position.

The total increased cost to the pay bill will rise to £6.5m and as a result of the above there will be an additional one off cost of £700k, to pay for the N.I. and tax for the discretionary implementation payments, which will be borne by the Council.

- The deadline for responses will remain at the 30th September 2011.
- Agreeing to accept the Single Status proposals and COT3's will not prejudice any appeal against Job Evaluation scoring.
- The date for submitting appeals is the 31st December 2011.
- There was an agreement to meet again after the 30th September deadline.