

The Arc
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To: Chair & Members of the Union /
Employee Consultation Committee

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Wednesday 6th March 2024

Dear Councillor

**UNION / EMPLOYEE CONSULTATION COMMITTEE – THURSDAY 14TH MARCH
2024 AT 10:00 HOURS**

I refer to your recently circulated agenda for the above meeting and now enclose a copy of the papers which were marked 'To Follow'.

Item 6 - UNISON Convenor Update

Yours faithfully



Solicitor to the Council & Monitoring Officer

Equalities Statement

Bolsover District Council is committed to equalities as an employer and when delivering the services it provides to all sections of the community.

The Council believes that no person should be treated unfairly and is committed to eliminating all forms of discrimination, advancing equality and fostering good relations between all groups in society.

Access for All statement

You can request this document or information in another format such as large print or **language** or contact us by:

- **Phone:** [01246 242424](tel:01246242424)
- **Email:** enquiries@bolsover.gov.uk
- **BSL Video Call:** A three-way video call with us and a BSL interpreter. It is free to call Bolsover District Council with Sign Solutions, you just need WiFi or mobile data to make the video call, or call into one of our Contact Centres.
- Call with [Relay UK](#) - a free phone service provided by BT for anyone who has difficulty hearing or speaking. It's a way to have a real-time conversation with us by text.
- **Visiting** one of our [offices](#) at Clowne, Bolsover, Shirebrook and South Normanton

UNION / EMPLOYEE CONSULTATION COMMITTEE

Thursday 14th March 2024 at 10:00 in the Council Chamber, The Arc, Clowne

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6.	UNISON Convenor Update	4 - 6

12-month report on the UNISON Convenor Fulltime Release

Firstly, UNISON once again would like to thank the District Council and UECC in supporting the provision of full-time release on facility time for a further 12-month period.

UNISON would like to take the opportunity to provide the committee with an interim update on the benefits this has brought to UNISON members and the Council in the last year.

Background

The Councils Facility Agreement reflects the commitment and collaborative work between the Council and the UNIONS over the years, supporting good relationships with elected convenors and branch stewards. This has allowed convenors and stewards time off to fulfil their obligations to their members.

The role of convenor is a supportive one in it provides a lead role in relations between the Council and UNION members. On a practical level examples of this include representation, supporting negotiations / disagreements, consultations and decision making on matters affecting staff including restructures, Health, and Safety, learning and welfare.

In recent years, the role of convenor has grown significantly, particularly for UNISON since the merger with Derbyshire Branch. This means the Convenor now acts as lead across a number of significant areas including lead steward, Health & Safety, Lifelong Learning, and welfare.

Progress Update

Below summarises the activities and work undertaken since May 2023.

1. Supporting the Organisation

- Improving Job Evaluation timescales across BDC and Dragonfly. The full-time role has allowed the volume of evaluations to be managed and processed in a timely manner.
- Consultations on changes affecting staff undertaken across several services have been accommodated swiftly including:
 - Dragonfly
 - Street Scene
 - Housing
 - Creswell Health and Wellbeing Centre

- Comprehensive Policy reviews have been undertaken including the Sickness Policy. We have also collaborated on the new policies being introduced, such as Menopause, Trans, Probation, Maternity and Neurodiversity and the ongoing work to review Pay and Grading processes. This includes new Policies for Dragonfly also. Undertaking the detailed level of review required without the additional facility time would not have been possible.
- Monthly Meetings with representatives across the organisations which would not have been possible without the additional time, including:
 - Senior Management
 - Council Leadership
 - Health & Safety
 - HR
 - Chief Executive Officer
 - Derbyshire UNISON Senior Leadership Team
 - Unison Learning
 - Women's Regional UNISON
 - Regional UNISON Local Government

2. UNION Organising

- An average of one membership event is held monthly with events at the Arc and the Depot.
- Two stewards recruited to support with case work to avoid delays.
- Increased UNISON membership density across the Council with improved recruitment

3. Case Work

- Disciplinarys
- Grievances
- Department Restructures
- Negotiations – UNISON has played a role in negotiations between management and staff in Street Scene, Housing Wardens / Housing Officers and Scheme Managers, Leisure at The Arc and Creswell Heritage and Wellbeing Centre, Property and Estates and Procurement.

Work Ongoing

Further support has been agreed from the Chief Executive Officer Karen Hanson and Senior Leadership Team to extend the Convenor's full time facility time for a further 12 months and this will enable the Convenor to make considerable progress in the following activities.

- Promote UNISON Learning Charter – to include surveys to all employees at BDC encouraging training to up-skill in their current job roles.
- Co-produce with HR a more beneficial Job Evaluation process.

- Promote with HR Health and Wellbeing Events to boost staff morale and help with Stress and Depression statistics.
- Train 2 new Branch Stewards on supporting members through case work, negotiating etc.
- Promote the benefits UNISON can offer to members.
- Undertake regular work with HR on Policy reviews and the implementation of new policies as and when necessary.,,
- East Midlands Combined Authority work plan.
- Ongoing membership increase – events / membership stalls
- Introduction of Bolsover UNISON'S social media and events page

I am also pleased to advise that having full-time release in the last year has enabled the Convenor to fully represent UNISON members and contribute positively to effective improvements to the way the Council works. We hope to build on this and achieve even more in the next 12 months by demonstrating the benefits of the current arrangement to our members and to the Council.