

## **Interim Report on UNISON Convenor Fulltime Release**

Firstly, Unison wants to thank the District Council and UECC in supporting Unisons proposal to increase facility time over a 12-month period to a full-time role. This was agreed in April 2023 and commenced in May 2023. 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.

### **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 example of this include representation, supporting negotiations / disagreements, consultations and decision making on matters affecting staff including restructures, Health and Safety 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. In February 2023 Unison presented a proposal to UECC which reflected the responsibilities and outlined how the time allocated under the Facilities Agreement did not allow those responsibilities to be properly met. The committee agreed to a proposal to extend facility time to 5 days per week, and acknowledged the demand on the Unions was about to increase due to a number of work streams the Council had planned. This is subject to review after a 12-month trial.

### **Progress Update**

Below summarises the activities and work undertaken since May 2023.

#### **1. Supporting the Organisation**

- Improving Job Evaluation timescales with about 25undertaken since May 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 review was undertaken including the Sickness Policy, new policies being introduced, such as Menopause, and 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.
  - Senior Management
  - Council Leadership
  - Health & Safety
  - HR
  - Derbyshire Unison Senior Leadership Team
  - Unison Learning
  - Women's Regional Unison Meeting

## 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
- Introduction of Bolsover Unison's social media and events page

## 3. Case Work

- Disciplinarys
- Grievances
- 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 Centre, Property and Estates and Procurement.

The last 6 months have 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 coming months, demonstrating the benefits of the current arrangement to our members and to the Council.