



SUMMARY - REGIONAL COUNCIL – 14TH MAY 2013

1. Ricky Tomlinson and Eileen Turnbull addressed Council on the Shrewsbury 24 Campaign.

In 1972 construction workers faced hostile and powerful employers, lump labour and isolated workplaces that changed constantly whenever a contract finished.

Building workers, predominantly in UCATT, T&TWU, FTAT and NUG&MW, organised themselves and carried out effective picketing of sites throughout the country.

12 week dispute ended in September 1972 they succeeded in winning the highest ever pay rise in the history of the industry.

5 months after the dispute ended, 24 pickets were picked up by the Police and charged with over 200 offences.

None of the pickets had been cautioned or arrested during the strike. No complaints were laid against the pickets at the time.

First Shrewsbury trial in October 1973, three of the pickets were found guilty of conspiracy to intimidate, unlawful assembly and affray.

Jailing these building workers remains one of the most notorious anti-trade union acts of the state in recent times.

All the power of the police and criminal justice system was used against the pickets to deter trade unionists from organising effectively.

The convicted Shrewsbury pickets were blacklisted from the industry.

Shrewsbury 24 Campaign was established in 2006, the aim of which to overturn this miscarriage of justice.

Several years have been spent researching the background to the trials.

On 3 April 2012 an application was made to the Criminal Cases Review Commission on behalf of the pickets to have the case referred to the Court of Appeal, confident that the case would be quashed.

Research has uncovered many documents in the National Archives at Kew that have been released under the thirty year rule. However, there are a number of Government documents relating to the 1972 strike that have been withheld. Government has used section 23 of the Freedom of Information Act to claim that these documents should not be seen on grounds of national security.

17 national trade unions have affiliated to this Campaign, as well as many individual branches and trades councils.

Council urged to support the campaign and to sign the paper petition - <http://www.shrewsbury24campaign.org.uk/petition>.

2. Presentation was made to Alan Manning, ex NWTUC Regional Secretary on behalf of UNISON NW.
3. Chris Tansley, UNISON National President, addressed Council.

Unemployment up to more than 2.5m and forecast to rise by another 200,000 despite the lies and distortions we get from Cameron and his cronies about job creation.

This year a million young people out of work, a whole generation whose young lives are ruined by employment. A total of 875,000 public sector jobs expected to be cut by 2017 and all lost because of a failed economic policy that has seen UK debt increase by £62m for each day of this Coalition's economic mismanagement.

1% pay rise offered in LG and a threat to devolve National bargaining to a local level and only keep pay as a National bargaining issue. LG branches asked to consult its members on whether they want to accept or to reject and whether prepared to take substantial strike action to win a decent pay rise this year.

Excellent campaigning across the union against privatisation and outsourcing, in the NW the successful campaign against privatisation in the University of Central Lancashire and the successful securing of NHS pensions for 350 Manchester Ambulance staff transferred to Arriva.

As President, chosen campaign is Hope not Hate because one of the effects of this Government's Austerity agenda has been to create racial hatred and division in our communities and Hope not Hate has been instrumental in combating this. Successfully campaigned against the BNP. BNP now down to from 67 councillors to 2.

4. Emergency Motion submitted by Rochdale Branch on 'Industrial Action at Future Directions' was carried.
5. Election results for Regional Council Officers, Regional Council Auditors and Regional Committees were received. Branches urged to get involved with Sports & Social.
6. Happy Lands film to be shown at NDC on 16.6.13.
7. Kevan Nelson, Regional Secretary, updated Council as follows:
 - a. Successful UCLAN campaign. Tribute was paid to the UNISON UCLAN Branch.
 - b. March national recruitment campaign, NW region had highest recruitment in the country.
 - c. Health recruitment campaign taking place over the next fortnight.
 - d. Further recruitment campaign in September
 - e. NWTUC rally to mark 65th anniversary of the NHS on 5th July to be organised.
 - f. New legal help available for branches.
 - g. Personal Injury – branches should have received self addressed envelopes to forward on any PI Forms to Thompsons