



DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Spring 2018

'..... and then my heart with pleasure fills, and dances with the daffodils'

Dear Colleague

Welcome to the Spring edition of the Derbyshire County Council newsletter.

Withdrawal of the Foundation Living Wage – GMB Press Release

GMB issued the press release below on 15th March to highlight the decision of the Local Authority to cease payment of the Foundation Living Wage.

GMB, the union for school support staff, has described Derbyshire County Council's decision to stop paying the living wage as a 'direct attack' on the lowest paid. Derbyshire County Council has made it clear that from the April 1 they will no longer pay the Foundation Living Wage to those employees earning less than £8.75 per hour. The authority has also said that schools who currently pay the living wage will no longer be able to do so as the mechanism used for payment will be removed by the council.

This is in direct contravention of the devolved decision making powers that schools have under the provisions of Local Management of Schools.

Derbyshire County Council believe that the two thirds of schools that currently pay the Foundation Living Wage will no longer want to pay it to their staff when the council stops paying it. However, schools have not been canvassed to determine if this is the case and academy schools in the county who do not use Derbyshire County Council as their payroll provider will still be able to pay the Foundation Living Wage.

Jon Smith, Regional Organiser with the GMB, said:

'This is a direct attack on the lowest paid workers in Derbyshire County Council. It is also a unilateral decision taken on behalf of schools in the county that they will also cease to pay the Foundation Living Wage from the 1st April without establishing that schools do actually want to cease to pay it.'

'At its best denying schools the opportunity to pay the Foundation Living Wage is an act of monumental arrogance, at its worst it is the Authority protecting themselves against potential equal pay claims should schools continue to pay the Foundation Living Wage.'

The GMBs quick response to the news about this decision and the press release have had a very positive impact as the Authority have now confirmed that schools will be able to continue payment of the Foundation Living Wage to those directly employed staff earning less than £8.75 per hour.

Jon Smith, Regional Organiser with the GMB, said:

'This is a good decision. However this should never have been an issue as the facility to pay the Foundation Living Wage should never have been removed in the first place. It is disappointing that

the Authority have not reconsidered their decision to stop paying the Foundation Living Wage to its directly employed staff as this represents a pay cut in real terms for those staff.'

The recognised trade unions in Derbyshire County Council – GMB, Unison and Unite have written to all schools to highlight that they can still pay the Foundation Living Wage and if they have not previously paid it they can opt in to do so. If your school wishes to continue paying or opt in to paying the Foundation Living Wage of £8.75 per hour to qualifying employees they can do so by contacting the Schools Adjustments Team at the Shared Services Centre on 01629 535119 and selecting option 4.

2018 Pay Award

As you may be aware GMB members voted overwhelmingly to accept the 2018/19 pay offer. We are now able to confirm that the 2018/19 pay award has been accepted by all unions and will therefore be implemented from 1st April. Derbyshire County Council has confirmed that it is likely that the pay award will be reflected in May salaries with back pay to the 1st April included.

Derbyshire Libraries

Derbyshire County Council are proposing to hand over 20 of their existing libraries to community groups. What this means is that staff employed at the libraries will be replaced with volunteers who will provide services in the library that may not reflect what is currently offered or that may not meet the needs of the community in which they are situated.

Those libraries that will remain within Derbyshire County Council will have their opening hours cut. The consultation period on these proposals will commence on the 7th May and will be for 12 weeks. That will be your opportunity as a Derbyshire resident to have your say on the future of your local library.

Chesterfield Trades Council May Day Rally

This year's May Day rally will be on Monday 7th May in Chesterfield. There will be the usual march around the town commencing at 11am and a number of stalls and entertainments throughout the day. This year the GMB have a stall where there will be opportunities to obtain GMB information and merchandise and to meet GMB reps and officers. In addition there will be a 'bran tub' for children. The stall will be adjacent to the Portland Hotel and Dents Chemist. If you are attending the rally why not come and see us.



Relief Contracts – Guaranteed Minimum Hours

You may recall that last year Derbyshire County Council reviewed the contractual arrangements for its relief employees and from the 1st April 2017 a new framework was put in place offering relief workers a Guaranteed Minimum Contract (GMC), that is a minimum number of hours per week that the Authority will guarantee work for the contract holders.

GMB were heavily involved in negotiations with the Authority on this new framework and supported its implementation as it gave guaranteed working hours for those who wanted them that in turn

offered stability of employment. However, the Authority have reviewed the provisions of the Guaranteed Minimum Contracts offer and have decided that the option of a GMC contract is no longer available.

Local Government Pension Scheme

We have been informed this week at the Pensions and Investment Committee meeting that the County Council are currently reviewing the investment strategy in respect of the LGPS and the discussion topic was the views on how we deal with investments in companies that directly and indirectly cause climate change. It has been proposed that rather than not invest in them or reduce investment in them that efforts are made to via discussion to encourage them to reduce their impact on the environment. The case for divestment from companies that adversely impact the environment has been put forward. If you have a view on this and would like to lobby your County Councillor to support a divestment strategy you can find out who your councillor is at:

<https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/council/councillors/>

GMB Learning Project

The GMB offers learning opportunities free of charge to all its members. Many of the courses are distance learning so you can work at your own pace, completing the course at a time that suits you. You can contact the Productive Learning Project team on 01924 887277 or go to the learning project page on the regional website at:

www.gmbyorkshire.org.uk/learning_for_work_project

Workplace Noticeboard

Do you have a GMB noticeboard in your workplace? A workplace noticeboard is a very visible way to display information on the GMB and the benefits of membership and to put up details of who to contact if there is a problem. The GMB noticeboard is also an ideal place to display information on pay awards, health and safety and advice and guidance issued by the GMB to its members. If you would like noticeboard pack please let us know and we will arrange for one to be sent to you.

GMB Credit Union

Did you know that the GMB has its own credit union? Credit unions are an excellent alternative to banks and other loan providers. Credit unions are not for profit organisations and they are formed by people with a common bond – in the case of the GMB Credit Union that bond is the GMB and all members can join. Credit Unions are an excellent alternative to banks and other loan providers. Their objective is very simple; to help you to make the most of your money by saving regularly and offering responsible borrowing at reasonable rates of interest. They also have a Christmas Club that credit union members can join that pays you your funds in cash each year in November – the money is paid into your bank account. You can become a member quickly and easily by contacting the GMB Credit Union on 0161 486 1777 or by completing the online application form.

For more information visit the GMB Credit Union website at www.gmbcreditunion.com

Benefits & Services

If you are a GMB member you already know about the benefits of membership and the services we offer but here's a reminder in case you had forgotten – you could also share these with colleagues who may not be aware of the wide range of support and services that we offer to our members.

- **WORKPLACE REPRESENTATION**
- **EXTENDED LEGAL SERVICES**
- **FREE WILL SERVICE**
- **WEEKLY ACCIDENT BENEFIT**
- **CONVALESCENT FACILITIES**
- **GMB HEALTHCARE**
- **GMB CREDIT UNION**
- **NHS DENTAL HEALTH CARE PLAN**
- **MORTGAGES**
- **LIFE INSURANCE**
- **HOME & CONTENTS INSURANCE**
- **MOTOR LEGAL SERVICE**
- **FUNERAL BENEFIT**
- **FREE TRAINING & EDUCATION COURSES**



Unionline is the GMBs own firm of solicitors. They are there to provide help and support to members on a wide range of issues and legal matters. As a GMB member they will provide you with legal advice free of charge. If you have a legal issue you need help with you can contact them on 0300 333 0303.

And finally.....



Do we have your correct contact details? If you have changed your address, telephone/mobile number or email address or if your work details have changed please let us know. We understand it's easy to forget to tell us about changes but it is important that we have your correct contact details. It is especially important so that when we do need to contact you – when we are balloting on the pay award for example, we can do so quickly and easily.

You can update us by phone, email or in writing using the contact details below.

GMB Contact Details

Full Time Officer

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