



## SAVE OUR SERVICES FROM EXTINCTION

#FairfundingNPT #ExtinctNPT

# WE ❤️ OUR LIBRARIES!

We love our libraries and museums, our galleries and theatres – but they're under attack, facing cuts on a massive scale. If politicians don't act soon, our communities could lose these vital services forever.

**Enough is enough.** Stand with us and call for an end to cuts in our vital cultural services. NPT UNISON branch launched a 'Save our Libraries' Campaign when Cwmafan, Glynneath, Skewen and Baglan libraries were selected for closure as part of the councils cost cutting scheme. Over 700 people signed a petition to support the campaign with over 100 coming to the Port Talbot Civic Centre on 11th January to see it presented to Rob Jones, the Council Leader.



We hope the council members listen and take note as to the strength of feeling our community shows for these vital public services.

"The library has helped my daughter develop so much. Providing a safe environment for children to come and sing and play. It's something I always look forward to every week. I would be lost without these services as I don't know any other mums." **Laura**

"We love visiting the library with our 3 sons. They have been library members since attending 'song and rhyme' when they were weeks old! Now they are older and enjoy a huge range of activities that the library offers. The staff are always welcoming and friendly." **Catherine**

"The library is an asset to the community, we need it!" **Carol**

"The village NEEDS the library." **Glenda**

"I haven't lived in Glynneath long but have used the local library wherever I've lived all my life. Introduced my children to the fun of choosing their own books at a very early age, this instilled an interest in reading and taught them how to look for information ... a valuable life skill." **Paula**

Save our Services from EXTINCTION



# Protesters rally over library cuts

By **Mark Reynolds**

CAMPAIGNERS protested yesterday against a “terrible” and “short-sighted” decision to close several libraries.

More than 100 people joined the rally outside the Neath Port Talbot civic centre in South Wales in a bid to persuade the local authority to prevent the closure of four libraries.

It is part of the council’s efforts to save money as it plans to increase council tax by five per cent and make £12million of cuts.

However, dismayed residents and politicians said the libraries provide good value for money as they were “critically important” community hubs as well as offering traditional book-lending services.

Unison branch secretary Jane Gebbie said: “Our libraries deliver mother and toddler groups, education for those more disadvantaged and socially isolated, job clubs, story-telling groups for children and local history workshops.” The union had arranged the demonstration. Stephen Kinnock MP for Aberavon was also at the event to try and reverse the decision to close the libraries in Cwmafan, Glynneath, Skewen and Baglan.

He said he often used libraries to hold his advice surgeries and other community meetings and they were “critically important hubs in the communities they serve”.

“Government cuts to local authority funds had forced Neath Port Talbot Council to explore all options to plug the funding gap,” he said.

“But these libraries are vital assets, and we must do everything possible to keep them in our communities.” Meanwhile National Assembly member Bethan Sayed said it was vital the trend of closing libraries was stopped.

“I believe these decisions are short-sighted. Libraries don’t need to be and are often not, just a place to borrow books.

“I would urge Neath Port Talbot to think about the impact of their proposals and perhaps consider new ways to use libraries before any firm decisions are made. Libraries, even

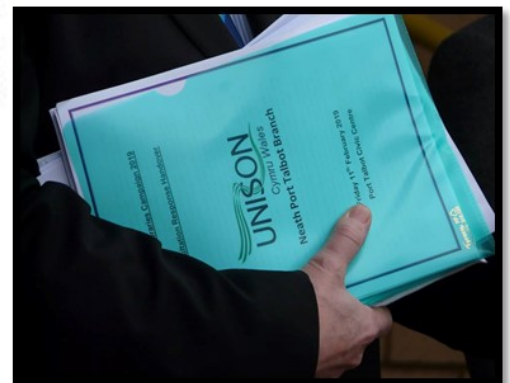
if they are underused, can with a bit of imagination, become centres for a wider array of services, partnering with the private sector and local services, to expand their offer.”

A council spokesman said: “Final decisions on setting the budget will be made by councillors next month, and will take into account the responses to the consultation, including petitions.”

The Daily Express is backing the campaign as part of our ongoing Save Our Libraries crusade which is calling for a national rethink on how we fund the UK’s libraries.

The amount spent on our library network nationwide has fallen from £1billion to £720million, resulting in 737 closures in the last eight years.

Of the 3,745 remaining, 500 are now staffed by volunteers and countless more are under threat as experts warn of a possible “library extinction”.



## Branch Chairman's New Year Message

Firstly, I'd like to wish you and all of your families a happy and prosperous New Year. What a past year we've had! We have faced potential redundancies, possible outsourcing of services, continued lack of funding from the Welsh Government, management of change meetings to name but a few. Through all this I am really pleased to say there have been no compulsory redundancies, no outsourcing, and we have attended and supported all our members through the management of change process.

I would like to place on the record my thanks to YOU for your support in our recent campaign for Fair Funding for Local Government. As you are aware, UNISON alone has been standing up and fighting for a better financial settlement for Neath Port Talbot. I am pleased to say we have achieved a better settlement, which will hopefully avoid outsourcing, job losses and redundancies. We could not have achieved this extra funding without your support. I thank you.

However, we face difficulties year in year out with pressures on services. We will continue to lobby and fight for you, our members, who will be at the heart of our decisions and campaigns for 2019. If you would like to become a part of



UNISON's fantastic team, then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Your UNISON Branch works in partnership with the local authority to try and avoid outsourcing, job losses, redundancies, loss of services and cuts to our terms and conditions. We face uncertain times and we will be calling on you again in 2019 to support our campaigns to keep services in house and to protect our terms and conditions into the future. If you have any ideas or suggestions, please let me know. Your input is VITAL.

Again I thank you for your support and look forward to seeing you all over the coming year.

Kind regards,  
Your Branch Chair Mark Fisher

## Invitation to YOUR branch AGM

**Free lunch and a £50 raffle prize at each meeting! What's not to LOVE!**

The AGM will be an interesting and enjoyable get together. It will be an opportunity to find out more about what the branch has been doing over the last year and to make plans for the coming year. There will also be plenty of time to discuss issues which concern you and to find out how you can get active.



### UNISON Neath Port Talbot Local Government Branch AGM 2019 dates:

**Monday 4<sup>th</sup> February**

NPTCBC Port Talbot Civic Centre ~ 12.30pm Chambers  
NPTCBC Neath Civic Centre ~ 4.30pm Rooms A&B

**Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> February**

NPTCBC - SRC ~ 6am Room 20  
NPTCBC Neath Civic Centre ~ 1.00pm Rooms A&B

**Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> February**

NPTCBC The Quays ~ 12.30pm Rooms 3&4

**Friday 8<sup>th</sup> February**

Celtic Leisure - Neath Sports Centre ~12.30pm Lecture Room

**Monday 11<sup>th</sup> February**

NPTC Group Neath Campus ~ Noon

NPTC Group Newtown Campus ~ Noon Conference Room N17

# YOUR PAY

Dear Member,

In 2018 the National Joint Committee (NJC) Award for Council and School Workers was agreed with the key features being:

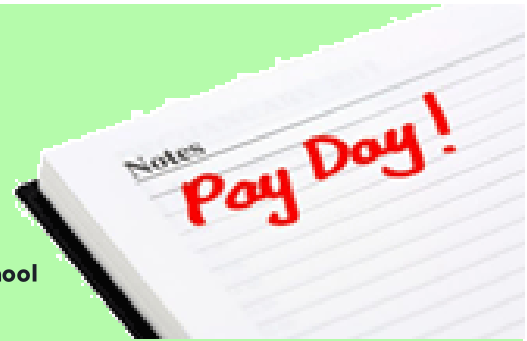
- ✦ A two-year award from the 1st April 2018 – 31st March 2020;
- ✦ It incorporates a joint review of the NJC Pay Spine, triggered by the National Living Wage and the Foundation Living Wage;
- ✦ An increase of the lowest scale point - scp6 = 15.65%;
- ✦ An increase on SCP29 and above = 4.04%;
- ✦ A 4.04% increase on scale points above SCP49.

The review of the NJC Pay Spine was necessary to:

- ✦ Give “headroom” above The National Living Wage;
- ✦ End the compression at the bottom of the pay spine and accommodate future increases;
- ✦ Create even 2% gaps between SCPs.

UNISON have been negotiating a new model on your behalf with the employer to ensure that our new spinal system is transparent, in line with other employers and has been equality proofed. This model ensures that it is easy to apply future NJC Pay Awards and includes your Pay Award for 2019. We have ensured that there have been “no cuts” to your terms and conditions or gender pay gaps. We do appreciate that we did not give you a lot of advance notice prior to the sign off date of the 16th January, 2019, but we wanted to ensure that it is implemented on 1st April, 2019, however should you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact us.

In solidarity,  
Jane Gebbie, Branch Secretary & Mark Fisher, Branch Chair



UNISON Neath Port Talbot’s response to the NPTCBC Forward Financial Plan 2019/20 can be seen on the UNISON website. Thanks for all your comments - all were incorporated into the response.

## REPORT FROM SAM ALKARNAZ, BRANCH ASSISTANT SECRETARY & EQUALITIES OFFICER

I attended the first Equality Liaison Committee (ELC) on behalf of the Black Members Self-Organised Group in Wales. The ELC was established recently and will be chaired by UNISON’s Wales Convenor or a Deputy Convenor as per the UNISON Wales Constitution. A vice chair will be elected at its first meeting every year from this committee.

The ELC will consist of two representatives from the Self Organised Groups (SOGs), the Chair and one other delegate from the Self Organised Groups (SOG), Young Members Forum (YMF), Retired Members and the Equality Forum (EF). The ELC will be a strategic overarching body with the power to provide a report with recommendations to the Regional Council.

This year we had a successful Black Members Development Weekend with 5 first time delegates to the group. We were proud to have the UNISON National Officer for Race Equality Margaret Greer and Butetown Labour



Councillor Saeed Ebrahim as our guest speakers. Saeed gave a speech on how he became a councillor and how to encourage members to become more active within their communities.

Margaret Greer discussed the Race Discrimination Protocol as black members in their workplaces are too often scarred by the injustice of racism. It affects their ability to access jobs, to earn decent pay, to be treated with dignity and to receive the support and opportunities that are due to all workers.

Sam

## Dave Prentis' New Year Message

**New year is a special time. It's a time to look forwards with hope to the possibilities of the year ahead, and it's an opportunity to look back at what's gone before to see how far we've come.**

In UNISON, we like to look forward. 2019 will be another challenging year for public services and everyone who works in them. Yet it's also a year that holds genuine promise. It's a year when we can continue the fightback against austerity, it's a year when our union can continue to strengthen and grow and it's a year when we might get to chuck the Tories out of Downing Street and elect a government that genuinely cares about the services UNISON members provide.

2019 will be tough, but like every year I relish the challenges our union faces and the opportunities we will have to fight for better, stronger, better funded public services.

Of course each new year is an opportunity to look back as well. A chance to take inspiration from our achievements, to learn and grow and drive ourselves onwards into the year ahead. There is perhaps no better time to do that than now, as UNISON continues to celebrate our **25th anniversary**.

In UNISON, we're not very good at celebrating the incredible achievements of our union and our members. Instead we tend to work hard, reach our goals and then move onto the next thing. In many ways that's admirable, but I hope you won't mind if I take an opportunity this new year to celebrate – really celebrate – our special union's achievements.

25 years ago, UNISON was formed from the merger of NALGO, NUPE and COHSE, to provide a home for all public service workers. A proud union of the left, fighting and winning for working people. We were the biggest union in the UK then, and we're the biggest union in the UK today, representing 1.3 million people working for the benefit of our communities. From the day our union was founded – and especially at the advent of austerity – our downfall was predicted. Yet the naysayers underestimated UNISON members, and instead we've achieved incredible things together.

**“Let's make  
2019 our  
union's best  
year yet!”**

Ours was the union that led the fight for a **statutory minimum wage**, against opposition from employers and even some in the Trade Union movement. We won that fight – and now we lead the fight for a real living wage for all.

We were the union that led the fight against the **Trade Union Act** – taking on and defeating some of its worst excesses. We were the first union to back Jeremy Corbyn's campaign for Labour leader – and work with him to put UNISON policies into the Labour manifesto. And we've repeatedly taken on the government over **Universal Credit and Tax Credit** changes – winning changes for low paid workers worth thousands of pounds.

It took years of hard work – but we were the union which won the historic **Employment Tribunal fees** case at the Supreme Court. Thanks to UNISON, all working people have better access to justice – and the government saw what happens when they try and attack the rights of working people. They won't get away with it on UNISON's watch.

Likewise on equal pay, UNISON – with over a million women members – fought for and won **equal pay for all public service workers**. We've helped tackle pay discrimination and will keep on doing so until there's a genuinely level playing field for everyone. We do that because it's right, and also because women lead our union at every level. Ours is the only union in the UK where the majority of democratic positions are reserved for women and where four out of five UNISON Assistant General Secretaries are women.

For years the Tory government attacked public sector pay – yet it was our union that broke their vicious 1% public sector pay cap with our **Pay Up Now** campaign. Of course there's so much to do, so we'll fight on until all public service workers receive the wages they deserve.

On care, it's our union which stands up for some of the most vital but lowest paid workers in our society. Dozens of councils have signed our **Ethical Care Charter** – ensuring decent pay and conditions for care workers and better care for those who need it most. And whether we're campaigning against mental health stigma, or providing the tools our members need to succeed through the incredible education and training we provide, it's UNISON which cares about every aspect of our members lives.

But it's not just our members – or even just our country – that UNISON cares about. We're proud internationalists, whether we're campaigning for dignity and respect for women diagnosed with HIV across Southern Africa or playing a leading role in the fight for Palestinian rights as a constant supporter of the Palestine Solidarity Campaign. We've fought everything from Ebola in West Africa to the blockade of Cuba – and through our leadership role in EPSU and PSI we'll continue to push for better public services around the world.

That better world is, after all, what we're all striving for. UNISON members care about the services we provide, not out of self-interest but because we care about the world around us. That's why we helped to create and continue to support incredible anti-racist and anti-fascist campaigns like Hope Not Hate, Show Racism the Red Card and Stand up to Racism. That's why we campaigned alongside the Neville family for justice for their son Stephen – and for all victims of institutional racism. And that's why we dedicated ourselves to taking on the BNP – and wiping them out. We've spent twenty five years fighting racism and fascism, because they are the direct opposite of the inclusive, open, loving, caring and respectful world we seek to build.

**This our union. This, and so much more.**

Achievements in your workplace and around the world. And every one of them happening thanks to the passion, dedication and decency of UNISON members, and the hard-work and support of UNISON staff.

Yet we can't and shouldn't rest on our laurels. I still have big dreams for this union – and I know you do as well. Together, we can be the bridge that takes our members and our country from an imperfect present to a better future. We can grow faster, deliver more and fight even harder. It won't be easy – it never is – but it will always be worthwhile.

**So to everyone in UNISON, the beating heart of our country and our communities – Happy New Year. Let's make 2019 our union's best year yet, but let's also be proud of our union, and everything we've achieved together.**



Dave Prentis, UNISON General Secretary, January 2019

### Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST)

is a two-day interactive workshop in suicide first aid. ASIST teaches participants to recognise when someone may have thoughts of suicide and work with them to create a plan that will support their immediate safety.



#### Learning Goals & Objectives

- To understand the ways that personal and societal attitudes affect views on suicide and interventions
- Provide guidance and suicide first aid to a person at risk in ways that meet their individual safety needs
- Identify the key elements of an effective suicide safety plan and the actions required to implement it
- Appreciate the value of improving and integrating suicide prevention resources in the community at large
- Recognise other important aspects of suicide prevention including life-promotion and self-care

**10<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup> April 2019 9.15 am – 16.30 pm**  
**Briton Ferry Community Centre**

**This course is being run in conjunction with UNISON and the Learning Training & Development department.**

**If you are interested in attending the course please contact Debbie John on: 01639 685276 or email [d.john3@npt.gov.uk](mailto:d.john3@npt.gov.uk)**



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**@UNISONNPT**

Yfed  
Doeth  
Heneiddio'n  
Dda



#### Drink Wise Age Well - free training course

4 in 5 adults over 50 at risk from their drinking had never been asked about their drinking by family, friends or health workers. Drink Wise, Age Well aims to reduce alcohol-related harm in later life by helping people make healthier choices about alcohol as they age.

**We have been offered FREE training for people who provide a service for people over 50.**

This training is suitable for: **Front liners** If you come into contact with people over 50 on a regular basis AND **Enhanced** Enhanced support and professional development for those working in a health and social care field.

**From the course you will learn about the extent of the alcohol problem in the ageing population; the reasons why the over 50's are at risk from increased drinking and learn how to recognise and respond through brief interventions.**

This course is a vital contribution to the continuing professional development of people who

- work in substance misuse services;
- work in non-alcohol specialist settings but who encounter the over 50s who use alcohol in the course of their work, whether this is in health, social care, housing and third sector services or the criminal justice system

**21<sup>st</sup> February 2019 9.30 am – 4.30 pm**  
**Rooms 3 & 4 at The Quays**

**With rising fuel costs and another cold winter many members are worried about how they're going to pay this year's winter fuel bills.**

UNISON's welfare charity **There For You** is once again making grants available to help low paid members meet winter fuel bills by way of a one-off payment of up to £60.

To download the application form visit [unison.org.uk/thereforyou](http://unison.org.uk/thereforyou) or telephone UNISON Direct on **0800 0 857 857**. Completed forms must be returned no later than February 15th to There For You (WFG), UNISON Centre, 130 Euston Road, London NW1 2AY.

If you need help with the form, please contact the Branch Office.

there  
for you supporting UNISON members  
when life gets tough

Get help  
staying warm  
this winter

### DID YOU KNOW?

**UNISON is the largest trade union in the United Kingdom with almost 1.4 million members.**

#### Want to do something more?

Help your colleagues and other members by becoming a UNISON rep or workplace contact. Being a UNISON workplace rep gives you the opportunity to:

- ▶ make a positive difference to people's work lives
- ▶ learn new skills and meet new people
- ▶ help create a fairer society

**Get involved in UNISON. To find out more contact the local branch office on 01639 763820 / [unison@npt.gov.uk](mailto:unison@npt.gov.uk)**



***If your membership details have changed please help us by completing this form.  
Every form returned has the chance to win one of 20 travel mugs (what's not to love?)!***

Membership number:

Surname:

Forename(s):

Home address:

Postcode:

Previous surname (if applicable):

Previous address (if applicable):

Postcode:

Personal contact number:

Personal email address:

Job title:

Work address/location:

Postcode:

Employer:

Work contact number:

Work email address:

Please indicate your preferred email address:

Personal email

Work email

Please indicate if you would like UNISON to contact you via:

Email

Text

Phone

***Please email completed forms to [unison@npt.gov.uk](mailto:unison@npt.gov.uk)  
or send to UNISON Neath Port Talbot Branch, Room 254, Civic Centre,  
Port Talbot, SA13 1PJ***

*Please go to [unison.org.uk/privacypolicy](http://unison.org.uk/privacypolicy) to see how we will protect and use your private information*





*Hi Everyone!  
My name is Hannah Jones and I will be your new Sports and Social Officer for 2019/20. My hobbies include brass banding, reading and socialising. I am a recent Swansea University graduate and am eager to become more involved with Neath Port Talbot UNISON Branch. I'm very excited to take on this new role and look forward to meeting you all on our trips!*

*Hannah*

## NPT UNISON

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### Green Officer

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### UNISON Direct Hotline

**0800 0 857 857 (Freephone)**  
Open 6am-midnight Monday-Friday  
9am-4pm Saturdays

## Festive Maqloobeh (Chicken, Aubergine n' Rice)

Here is a delicious recipe from Sam - a great one to try! Thanks Sam 😊

### Ingredients:

- 1 onion
- 2 medium sized aubergines
- 4 cloves of garlic
- 1 large cauliflower, cut into small florets
- 1kg of meat (chicken, lamb or beef works)  
diced or cut into pieces
- 2 or 3 cups of plain rice
- 1 tsp turmeric powder
- 1 tsp cumin
- 1 tsp baharat ("7 spices") *Note: this can be obtained at most Middle Eastern grocers, but if not, you can make your own. The 7 spice blend is a mix of ground spices: black pepper, paprika, cumin, coriander, cloves, nutmeg, cinnamon and cardamom. Go easy on the cardamom if making your own – it's quite strong!!!!*
- 200ml vegetable oil
- salt & pepper to taste
- sliced almonds and pine nuts (optional, but it's good, trust me!)



**Instructions:** Peel and cut up the aubergine into thick horizontal slices, sprinkle them with salt and leave for 2 minutes. Next wash the salt off with water and dry the slices with paper towels. Soak 2 cups of rice in warm water with two pinches of salt and leave for 30 minutes. In a large saucepan, fry the cauliflower florets and aubergine slices in the vegetable oil until brown. Place the fried vegetables in a strainer lined with paper towels to drain off any excess oil. *Note: If you prefer a healthier alternative, brush the florets and aubergine slices with olive oil and grill until golden brown.* In the same pan with a little oil, heat the almond pieces and pine nuts until they are browned. Set aside for later. Place meat into a large pot and cover with water. Add in an onion chopped into quarters, the bay leaves, the 7 spices mix and cook until meat is done, approximately 30 minutes. Remove the meat and season with salt, saving the broth for later.

**Time to build your maktouba pot:** In your large pot (the one you used to cook the chicken), layer the cauliflower florets and aubergine at the bottom in a nice pattern, then add the chicken pieces as a third layer. Spread the garlic cloves over the chicken, and then arrange the strained, uncooked rice over it all. Add some salt and cumin powder to the chicken stock, and then pour it on top of the chicken-veggie pile you have just built. Make sure the sauce *just* covers the rice (2cm over the rice is ideal). Cook the saucepan on high heat for 7 minutes, and then cover and simmer for 40-45 minutes. When the water has fully evaporated (and the rice is fully cooked) take the pot off the heat and leave to cool. Flip the pot onto a serving plate and slowly and carefully remove the pot. Garnish with fried nuts.