

# Crunch talks start for single status

**T**alks expected to bring the long saga of Single Status negotiations to a head, were due start on 6 May 2008.

Key issues facing the branch are:-

- Any scheme must be 'equality-proof'. This is absolutely essential for the union and indeed for the Council if it is to avoid future claims.

- UNISON has consistently said the Council is not investing enough in Single Status. The percentage of the wage bill it has so far allowed is less than most other authorities.

- The Council must address issues of recruitment and retention. It cannot afford to have pay and conditions that are not competitive with other neighbouring authorities or indeed with the private sector. It therefore needs to come up with a fair and competitive deal.

- Forward-thinking authorities have not just relied on protection for staff who may lose out. They have addressed the medium and long term future of local government by re-skilling the workforce, increasing the complexity of jobs to meet the challenges of the 21st century. Edinburgh should do the same.

The Branch will keep members updated and, because things change so quickly, please check the website (address below) for any urgent briefings or updates.

**But please also note:**

**1) That there is unlikely to be anything concrete to put to members for at least 3 weeks.**

**2) That during this period members' patience will be much appreciated, since most senior officers will be involved in the discussions.**

**3) Whenever possible can members please go to local stewards for advice and guidance.**

## Job Evaluation - the background

In 1999 members voted in a ballot for a new deal with councils across Scotland called 'Single Status'.

Every job in local government was to be evaluated through a recommended national job evaluation scheme.

The scheme would assess jobs equally and fairly on agreed and transparent criteria. You know why your grade is what it is.

After years of delay, talks eventually started in Edinburgh and UNISON members voted to negotiate on a scheme.

**THIS IS AN UPDATE ON  
PROGRESS**

## Equal pay update

The City of Edinburgh Council has made secondary compensation offers to those female manual workers who previously were offered settlements in spring 2006, since those offers ran out in October 2006.

Most female members whose claims have been lodged by UNISON will receive an offer through our solicitors Thompsons in due course. The council have not yet forwarded these offers to them for distribution.

The offer has not been extended to men in those groups this time around and UNISON is taking legal advice on this issue and we will update members once we receive it.

As far as workers who are not covered by the above offers (such as APT&C staff) and have made claims, the Council has not been prepared to discuss them with us to date. We are taking legal advice on the validity of claims and will update members as and when we receive it.