

## BRANCH CALLS FOR YES VOTE IN BALLOT

# It's decision time for job evaluation

**A**fter over five years of wrangling, the Council has at last come forward with proposals for a job evaluation scheme.

Now UNISON negotiators and the Branch Committee are asking members to **vote YES** to a new job evaluation scheme which we believe is best able to meet the needs of members.

*Here we try to answer some of your questions about job evaluation.*

### ● Why do we need job evaluation?

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

The aim was to address pay inequality and get a fairer single pay structure for all staff.

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.

It creates one pay scale for all staff, doing away with the historic manual and APT&C differences.

### ● Why the delay?

Councils asked for extension after extension and Edinburgh refused to implement the nationally recommended scheme.

### ● What's different now?

Edinburgh has come up with a new scheme that UNISON has examined in detail. We now believe it to be better suited to the job situation in Edinburgh than the national scheme with less disruption for staff.

### ● Why do we need pay equality?

Firstly because it is ridiculous in this day and age that we still have jobs done mainly by women that are paid less than comparable jobs done mainly by men.

But it is also the law. Due to councils dragging their heels, Edinburgh UNISON

alone lodged over 1,700 grievances with more to follow. If successful, claimants would be entitled to back money for up to five years.

### ● Why don't we just leave it to the courts?

It might come to that but UNISON wants pay equality for all staff, not just for those who take cases. And we want it now, not after years of legal wrangles.

We also want to avoid job losses and build security of employment. This can only be done by fair agreements that last for the future. One step (but only *one* step) in this direction is a fair job evaluation scheme.

### ● Can we ignore it?

No. Job evaluation is part of the deal signed in 1999. The council must come up with a scheme to meet the legislation. It is better that the union and its members are part of that process.

The union cannot associate itself with standing in the way of an equal pay system. It is what we have long campaigned for.

## WHAT ARE YOU BEING ASKED TO VOTE FOR?

You are being asked to vote to accept the first stage in the Single Status process. That is to accept the Capital Job Evaluation Scheme.

This will allow UNISON and the council to get into detailed talks about how the whole process is implemented.

**Nothing in this will affect anyone's right to take a case for equal pay and claim back money (exactly the opposite because it will show up the inequalities) but it will help ensure that there is equal pay in the future.**

## WHY HAVE TALKS TAKEN SO LONG?

UNISON had to be sure that the new scheme would be equality-proof and would improve on the national scheme. We also needed assurances on protection. We now have those assurances. The 1999 deal (accepted in a ballot) gave three years protection for anyone downgraded.

## PROTECTION

After lengthy talks in Edinburgh, we have won '**a minimum**' three years protection for **anyone** downgraded, including **three years protection on bonuses** (the difference between any new grade and the old one plus bonus). We will also look at re-skilling and new responsibilities to push these grades up to avoid the need for protection. This improves on the national scheme.

After a hard struggle, we have won the argument to separate job evaluation and organisational reviews.

We have a locally agreed life-time salary protection scheme for organisational reviews. While this won't apply to job evaluation, **it will stay for those reviews.**