

Strike at Sandwell Leisure Trust - Friday 30 April

UNISON Members at Sandwell Leisure Trust (SLT) voted for industrial action for the second time. 78% of UNISON members voted for action against being 'fired and rehired' – on a 64% turnout. This vote for action was higher than the 69% for action in UNISON's ballot six months earlier.

Staff at SLT have been furloughed for months as leisure centres were shut during the latest wave of the pandemic. Now that they are re-opening UNISON members can at last show how opposed they are to being fired and rehired in order to move them off national NJC pay, terms and conditions.

SLT's promise not to make any more changes expires in March 2022. SLT have £4million in reserves! They declined additional support from Sandwell Council not to move staff away from national NJC negotiating body.

Furthermore, SLT have chosen to fire and rehire at a time when a new £73million Aquatic Centre is being built for the 2022 Commonwealth Games.

Their decision to fire and rehire has caused this unnecessary dispute and UNISON fully supports members at SLT who want to fight against being fired and rehired, now or in the future.

Picket lines will be outside leisure centres on Friday 30 April.

These leisure centres are still owned by Sandwell Council and Sandwell's Labour controlled Council should do all it can to stop workers running their centres from being treated in such a manner.

NJC Pay Award 2021

1 April was the date that 2021's pay award was due. The employers have failed to even make an offer. They say they won't make an offer until after the elections of 6th May. The pay award is clearly driven by politics.

After the announcement by the Chancellor Rishi Sunak that non-NHS public sector workers will have their pay frozen, and that NHS staff will get just 1%, the signs are not good.

Expect a NJC pay consultation ballot in the coming months. Make sure we have your email address and correct home address for any ballot that may take place.

On Wednesday 28 April - Remember the dead, fight for the living

On 28 April, International Workers' Memorial Day, we remember those who have died as a result of accidents, injuries or illnesses caused by work - and promise to fight for the living.

The events of the past 12 months make this day more poignant than ever. UNISON members have been at the forefront of the fight against COVID-19. They have worried for their families, been infected themselves and tragically, some have paid the ultimate price for their dedication.

UNISON takes health and safety seriously and we have been recruiting more safety reps during the pandemic because we know they really make a difference. Workplaces with active trade union safety reps are twice as safe as those with none.

On 28 April, please take time to remember those who have lost their lives whilst at work.

Check out the video message on the Branch website - www.sandwellunison.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/28April2021IWMD.mp4

Eye Tests

For those of you working on a computer screen at home, remember to get your eyes checked regularly. All employers should contribute to eye tests for staff that regularly use computer screens. For those working at Sandwell MBC check out this link - [https://intranet.sandwell.gov.uk/info/20017/pay and benefits/1044/eye test vouchers](https://intranet.sandwell.gov.uk/info/20017/pay%20and%20benefits/1044/eye%20test%20vouchers)

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