Phoenix

A Sandwell UNISON Newsletter – June 26

2026-27 NJC Pay Ballot

The offer of 3.3% on all pay points was rejected by all 3 trade unions.

Local government pay is worth 26% less in real terms than in 2010 and over ½ million jobs have been cut. There is now a recruitment and retention problem in many job roles.

Although the RPI inflation rate has fallen, petrol and energy prices have already increased, with food prices also expected to soar following Trump and Israel's illegal war on Iran and Lebanon.

UNISON's national NJC committee met and decided to ballot members firstly in employers where we believe there is a chance of beating the ballot thresholds based on last year's voting and where we have more than 20+ members. This is to try and help the union focus on beating ballot thresholds in more employers.

This means UNISON members working for Sandwell MBC (including Sandwell MBC maintained schools), Sandwell Children's Trust and Kore – Sandwell Leisure Trust will receive ballot papers on whether to vote YES for industrial action to try and secure a better offer or vote NO and thereby accept the offer.

Other members covered by NJC may receive ballot papers later, if the first employers balloted secure successful mandates for action.

What 3.3% means to the pay grades for Sandwell MBC can be seen overleaf.

The ballot will take place between 9 July and 6 August. Look out for your ballot papers arriving at your home between those dates. Importantly, **please use your vote and post the paper back as soon as possible**.

Check out the Branch website in the coming weeks to see the latest developments. Sandwell General UNISON Branch – Stronger together

Pay Claim at Sandwell College

UNISON, alongside the UCU, have submitted a pay claim for September 2026. The claim is in line with the national claim and is for:-

- an increase of £3,000 or 10% (whichever is the greater) across all spinal column points.
- All staff to be placed on the Sandwell College Pay Spine (including staff in receipt of the living wage).
- Improvements to the Maternity and Paternity benefits over and above the day one rights awarded as part of the Employment rights act 2026 to support staff at this important time of their lives.
- A request for an agreement on workload
- Request for a commitment for the college to become an accredited Foundation living wage employer.

The Maternity and Paternity leave/pay improvements submitted include 4 weeks paternity leave, greater protection for pensions of mothers and greater flexibility of reduced hours employment between weeks 39 and 52 of maternity leave.

Such improvements have recently been agreed at Sandwell MBC.

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This Newsletter has been produced by Sandwell General UNISON Branch, Town Hall, West Bromwich. The views expressed may not necessarily be those of the Branch or Branch Committee.