

Feeling the Heat?

Our warming world is hitting Europe particularly hard. After 4 heatwaves in the UK last year, at the time of writing we have entered the 5th heatwave this year. Record temperatures are broken year after year showing that global warming is with us now and it will get even hotter unless we stop burning fossil fuels.

Continuing to burn fossil fuels means the droughts will get worse, disruptions in food production will worsen and so too will the fires and floods. This is why it is referred to as a climate emergency.

2026 is UNISON's year of green activity and whilst we campaign for governments to act quicker to a greener future, we must also ensure our employers keep us safe at work.

Last year we argued for and secured an agreement on extreme weather policies at Sandwell MBC, Sandwell Children's Trust and Sandwell Leisure Trust, which includes anyone with a known health condition or who is pregnant receiving an individual risk assessment to take the appropriate precautions. This is the least any responsible employer should do.

UNISON and the TUC are also campaigning for legislation to introduce a maximum workplace temperature. You can sign the TUC petition here [We need a maximum working temperature | Megaphone UK](#) You can write to your MP with a few clicks from the UNISON website here [Turning up the heat on the government | UNISON - the public service union](#)

In Sandwell our new Reform UK led Council voted against a motion at a council meeting which called for a maximum working temperature for Sandwell Officers – click here to see the motion [Reform Cllrs voted against For a Maximum Workplace Temperature – Sandwell General UNISON Branch](#)

We have also launched a joint trade union petition for air conditioning in all Sandwell Council vehicles, which can be seen on the above link too.

NJC Pay Offer Ballot Results

UNISON balloted over 200,000 members covered by NJC pay, including members at Sandwell Council, Sandwell Children's Trust and Sandwell Leisure Trust. The results are listed below:-

- Sandwell MBC – 81% for action on a 24% turnout.
- Sandwell Children's Trust – 77% for action on a 26% turnout.
- Sandwell Leisure Trust – 89% for action on a 23% turnout.

Across England & Cymru there were 16 employers where UNISON secured a legal mandate for industrial action, beating the ballot thresholds, to try and win a better pay offer than 3.3%.

This was deemed insufficient by UNISON's NJC Committee to force our employers to offer more and therefore voted to accept the pay offer. The 3.3% should be in your September's pay, including the back-dated element from 1 April.

The post service was clearly an issue in the ballot this year with many requesting replacement ballot papers. From this month the law has changed and legal formal ballots via email will be allowed in future.

Make sure you and your colleagues are members of Sandwell's biggest trade union

UNISON

To join click <https://join.unison.org.uk/>

