

Our ref:

AM/CJ/Derby City

Your ref:

When telephoning please ask for:

Adrian Morgan



**To: Head Teachers at
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Dear Head Teacher.

The Council is Still Cutting Low Paid Women's Pay by up to 25%.

I am writing further to the recent Head Teacher update to clarify a couple of issues. Sadly we think that instead of displaying some leadership to resolve the dispute the Council is, again, hoping that it will just go away behind a screen of smoke and mirrors. Experience is teaching us all that this dispute will only end when people receive financial fairness, not words.

When will there be Negotiations?

Firstly there is a suggestion that the Council is waiting for UNISON to get around the table. That isn't true. We were due to meet with representatives of the Council last Thursday but that was cancelled by the Council the day before. We were due to meet next Tuesday but that too has been cancelled by the Council. We are now due to meet next Thursday, 16 February. UNISON will be there.

Has the Council Agreed to UNISON's demands?

No. UNISON has asked for 2 things that we hope could end the dispute.

- Firstly we believe that the grade E for SENTAs is incorrect. We believe that many Head Teachers at Special Schools agree with us. Previously a UNISON expert met with Hay and explained what we felt were clear errors. Hay disagreed. We are now suggesting that an independent expert, who has knowledge of Equal Pay in general and Hay in particular, should look at the grade. This expert has undertaken a similar role for ACAS. We have asked that the Council implement the decision of the independent expert. Not only has the Council refused to do so they have said that the decision will rest with Hay. In other words the decision will be made by the people who made the original decision twice. Sadly we have little hope of any change on that basis.
- Secondly UNISON has asked for protection of loss of pay for other staff. We have asked for protection worth approximately £4million. The Council has offered £1 million. We have said that we will negotiate however the Council has not improved its offer by a single penny.



In short neither of the Schools Support Staff demands have been met. On that basis the dispute has to continue.

Is UNISON encouraging more people to strike?

Yes. I am sorry that the tone of our letter to members was more bombastic than our usual communications. You know that UNISON schools support staff care deeply about their roles and that is as true today as it was when the dispute began. The sad truth though is that the Leadership of the Council has not heard their concerns. 18 months has passed and nothing has changed. The choices support staff face are simple; walk away or fight harder. What would anyone do faced with that choice?

What next?

The time has now come for the Council Leaders to show some leadership. It is completely possible for the Council to agree to the latest round of suggestions that we have put to them. It just needs some political leadership to make it happen.

Yours sincerely

Andy Belfield

ANDY BELFIELD
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