



A clear (pre-Covid) message from UNISON Eastern's health committee

Labour will keep battling in 2021

LIKE MOST of you we're glad to see the back of 2020 but UNISON Labour Link continued to work with Labour MPs and councillors in the region over a number of big issues that affect UNISON members during the year.

I suspect 2021 will be another unique year and at time of writing there are a number of important elections (some postponed from 2020) including Police and Crime Commissioner elections in all six Eastern region counties and a number of city, borough, district and county elections and a mayoral election in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

UNISON Labour Link has already had discussions with Labour in the East about where

to focus our support. Our targets are returning Labour councillors in:

- Peterborough City,
- Cambridge City,
- Southend Borough,
- Basildon District,
- North Hertfordshire
- and securing the election of David Michael as Bedfordshire PCC.

On top of that we aim to ensure that all members in the Eastern region have the opportunity to vote Labour in whatever local elections are being held.

If you want to join UNISON campaigning for Labour candidates in your area please contact us at UNISON Eastern Labour Link secretary [Sam Older](mailto:s.older@unison.co.uk): s.older@unison.co.uk.

Standing up for social care staff

LABOUR MPs lined up behind UNISON Eastern's Stop the Spread pledge last year.

It calls on councils to commit to an achievable set of standards to protect care staff and service-users during the Covid 19 pandemic.

They include priority testing for social care workers carried out in work time and with transport paid, suitable personal protective equipment, full pay during self-isolation and carers leave on full pay for workers caring for a dependent with Covid 19.

Cambridge's Daniel Zeichner, Norwich's Clive Lewis and Luton's Sarah Owens and Rachel Hopkins (pictured) have all offered UNISON their support.

Daniel said: "I'm supporting care workers to stop the spread of coronavirus. Proud to sign the pledge."



Supporting health staff

EASTERN region MPs are supporting a £2,000 pay rise for NHS staff.

UNISON is campaigning for an early rise for health workers who have given their all during the Covid-19 pandemic and members have written to their MPs asking for support.

Cambridge's Daniel Zeichner backed the campaign.

"I support calls for the government to make an immediate commitment to pay talks for NHS workers," he said.

"As we know, valuing our NHS workforce through fair pay and conditions is crucial to tackling the many vacancies across the health service. I believe any new deal for NHS workers must be agreed as soon as possible, in recognition of the bravery and sacrifice shown by healthcare staff during this pandemic.

"NHS and care staff, many of whom are exhausted and fearing burn-out, need more than Thursday evening clapping.

"They have been asked to give so much and too often they get so little in return. The government should recognise and reward NHS

and care staff with a guarantee of a decent pay rise."

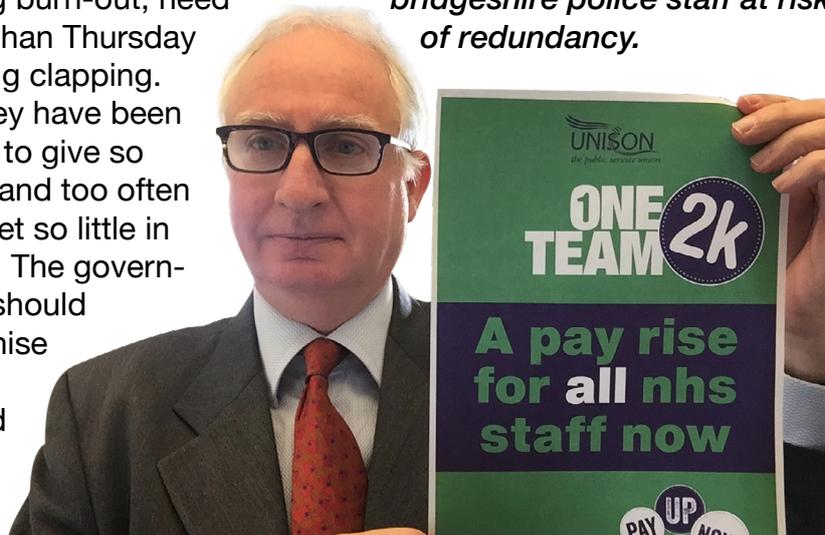
Bedford's Mohammad Yasin is also behind the campaign.

"It goes without saying that the efforts of health and care workers in the NHS and social care, within the public and private sectors has been integral to the fight against the current coronavirus pandemic," he said.

"I support the campaign to raise wages throughout the NHS workforce, and will continue to do so."

MPs Sarah Owen and Rachel Hopkins also pledged their support to an immediate £2,000 rise.

➤ ***Eastern region MPs have joined other UNISON campaigns over the last year, supporting the Save Our Services campaign in defence of council funding, backed schools staff over making classrooms safe and standing with Cambridgeshire police staff at risk of redundancy.***



Run to rebuild

OVER the pandemic it's become increasingly obvious that key workers are absolutely essential in keeping the country running.

But the way they're treated shows how little they're involved in actually running the country.

UNISON believes that workers in public services are the experts on how they should be run — that's why we're supporting Labour's Run to Rebuild campaign, encouraging an army of key workers to get involved and run for office.

Workers like Sarah Barber, a nurse, a UNISON member, a Labour councillor in Ipswich, and star of a new series of videos encouraging key workers to run for office.

For Sarah, being a nurse, joining UNISON and running for the council were all connected.

"I joined UNISON because I realised that nurses need a union that realises to improve things you need to act beyond the workplace. A union affiliated to the TUC that understands the political side of nursing and the NHS."

And the same thing led to her becoming a councillor.

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