



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
Subject:	Industrial Action
Date:	22 August 2014
Reporting Officer:	Jill Minne, Director of Organisation Development
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1.0	Purpose
1.1	The purpose of this report is to update elected members on the national industrial action which took place on 10 July 2014 and to provide information on further industrial action involving Belfast City Council employees proposed for 14 October 2014.

2.0	Relevant Background Information
2.1	The pay and terms and conditions of employment of all UK local government workers, including Belfast City Council employees are determined by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services (NJC) at a national level. As a consequence Belfast City Council has no direct control in the matter of pay negotiations which are within the remit of the national negotiating mechanisms.
2.2	Following a consultative ballot, members of the three national Local Government trade unions, Unite, Unison and GMB, rejected the NJC Employers' Side offer of a 1% pay increase.
2.3	In June 2014 the three national Local Government trade unions together with NIPSA and SIPTU, Belfast City Council's other recognised trade unions, voted in favour of industrial action to support this dispute. As a result strike action at a national level took place on 10 July 2014.

3.0	Key Issues
3.1	The Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA) estimates that out of the total UK local government workforce of 1.5 million, approximately 5% (i.e. 75,000) of its employees participated in the strike action on 10 July 2014.

3.2	NILGA estimates that regionally out of a total local government workforce of just over 11,300 between 15% and 20% of its employees (i.e. between 1,695 and 2,260) took part in the strike action.
3.3	Within Belfast City Council 66% (1744) of its workforce is a member of a trade union. On 10 July 2014 34% (867) of the Council's employees were reported as being on strike.
3.4	In advance of the industrial action contingency planning arrangements for each department were developed; exemption requirements, (i.e. those individuals or groups of staff who should remain in work during industrial action to minimise disruption to service provision, meet health and safety obligations, and provide business continuity) were agreed with trade unions; and a coordinated approach to communication with elected members, the media, the workforce and the public was taken.
3.5	On the day of industrial action the Central Information Control (CIC) team (comprising representatives from HR, emergency planning and corporate communications) managed the strike including monitoring key sites; impact on attendance; impact on service delivery; location of pickets; media activity; and status of Council buildings. Information in respect of the status of Council buildings on 10 July 2014 is attached at appendix 1.
3.6	The main areas affected by the industrial action were in Cleansing Services, Waste Management and the Parks and Leisure department. As a direct result of the contingency and communication plans in place disruption to the public was minimised and no major incidents were reported on the day of the strike. Continual updates were provided on the Council's website and as appropriate through social media.
3.7	Following the day of industrial action the NJC Employers' Side has confirmed its position and has stated that it has no plans to reconsider the 1% pay offer. In response Unison, Unite and GMB have indicated t it is their intention to hold a further day of industrial action in October 2014.
3.8	It is therefore anticipated that industrial action by members of Unite, NIPSA, GMB and SIPTU will take place on 14 October 2014.
3.9	Should this be the case the IACG, chaired by the Director of Organisation Development and comprising representatives from each Council department, emergency planning and corporate communications, will be initiated and will manage all issues associated with the industrial action.
3.9	Throughout August and September 2014 the trade unions will be organising a number of 'protest days'. These will include local lunchtime meetings, demonstrations and a 'leafleting day' on 20 August 2014.

4.0	Resource Implications
4.1	This report has no financial resource implications. Human Resource implications are outlined above.

5.0	Recommendations
5.1	Members are asked to note the information as set out in this report.
6.0	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
6.1	No equality or good relations considerations arise.
7.0	Decision Tracking
8.1	Further updates will provided to elected members in October and November 2014.
9.0	Key to Abbreviations
9.1	NJC – National Joint Council for Local Government Services NILGA - Northern Ireland Local Government Association IACG - Council's Industrial Action Contingency Group CIC - Central Information Control
10.0	Documents Attached
10.1	Appendix 1 – Status of Council buildings on 10 July 2014.

Council building status

City centre buildings	Status
City Hall	Open
Adelaide Exchange	Open
Cecil Ward Building	Open
Gloucester Street	Open
Lanyon Place	Open
Waterfront Hall	Café facilities open
St. George's Market	Closed
Gasworks Business Park	Open
Consumer Advice Centre	Closed
Ulster Hall	Café facilities open
Learning and Development Centre	Closed
Parks buildings	
Cemeteries Office	Open
City Cemetery	Closed – side gate open
Crematorium	Open only for two cremations and one burial
Dundonald Cemetery	Closed – gates open
Belfast Castle	Open
Malone House	Open
City of Belfast Golf Club	Open
Zoo	Closed
Leisure centres	
Andersonstown	Closed to public
Avoniel	Closed to public
Ballysillan	Closed to public
Falls	Staff only
Ozone	Staff only
Grove Wellbeing	Closed to public
Loughside	Closed to public
Olympia	Closed to public
Shankill	Closed to public
Whiterock	Closed to public
Community centres	
Dee Street	Open
Ligoniel	Closed
North Queen Street	Closed
Olympia	Closed
Divis	Closed
Glen	Closed
Horn Drive	Closed
Hammer	Open
Ardoyne	Closed
Concorde	Open

Donegall Pass	Open
Duncairn	Open
Finaghy	Open
Highfield	Open
Inverary	Open
Knocknagoney	Closed
Markets	Closed
Morton	Open
Sandy Row	Open
Suffolk	Open
Whiterock	Closed
Woodvale	Open
Play centres	
Olympia	
Avoniel	Closed
North Queen Street	Open
Loopriver	Open
Whiterock	Closed
Ballysillan/Benview	Open
Duncrue Complex	
Duncrue Complex	Open
Waste Transfer Station	
Waste Transfer Station	Opened as normal
Port Health Corry Place	
Port Health Corry Place	Open
Recycling centres	
Palmerston Road	Closed
Ormeau	Closed
Blackstaff Way	Closed
Alexandra Park	Closed
Civic amenity centres	
Agnes Street	Closed
Springfield Avenue	Closed
Cleansing services sites	
Agnes Street	Open
Alex Park	Open
Charlotte Street	Open
Garron Crescent	Open
Medway Street	Open
Kennedy Way	Open
Springfield Avenue	Closed
Dunbar Street	Open
Dargan (Dog & Pest Control)	Open