

EDITORIAL

As we come to the end of another year the signs for bargaining remain gloomy. We are starting to see the anticipated reduction in inflation rates but this we anticipate will be a slow process over the next 12 months and it will be necessary to press hard to make up for those who have lost ground of the past 2/3 years.

Bargaining in the public sector is again under political attack both through capping and the prospect of decentralising pay structures. This must not be allowed to be used by the private sector as a means of joining the race to the bottom.

We have seen some very positive results in the automotive sector over the last couple of months and hopefully these will be replicated elsewhere. It is vitally important that we are not distracted from the RPI basis for calculating inflation which is the most accurate reflection of the rate of increase in prices that impact on our members.

Finally this is my last Bargaining Brief as I am leaving the union at the end of this year. Simon Dubbins, the union's International Director, will be replacing me and Bargaining Brief will continue to land on your desks (or screens) every month. I have been privileged to have worked for Unite and its predecessors for the last 33 years and I wish you and your families best wishes for Christmas and 2012, and keep bargaining!

Roger Jeary
Director of Research

NOVEMBER INFLATION FIGURES

RETAIL PRICE INDEX (RPI) – 5.2% (down from 5.4% in October)
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (CPI) – 4.8% (down from 5.0% in October)

| BREAKDOWN OF KEY RPI STATISTICS | ANNUAL RATE |
|--|-------------|
| Housing | 1.2% |
| Petrol & Oil | 13.0% |
| Vehicle tax & Insurance | 15.4% |
| Rail Fares | 6.1% |
| Food | 4.9% |
| Oil & other fuels | 26.7% |
| Clothing & footwear | 11.5% |
| Motoring costs | 7.2% |
| Household consumable | 7.9% |
| Source: ONS www.statistics.gov.uk | |

| INFLATION FORECASTS (RPI) | ANNUAL RATE |
|--------------------------------------|-------------|
| Quarter 4 2011 | 5.3% |
| Quarter 1 2012 | 4.0% |
| Quarter 2 2012 | 3.8% |
| Quarter 3 2012 | 3.6% |
| Quarter 4 2012 | 3.2% |
| Source: IDS Pay Report December 2011 | |

LRD PAY & CONDITIONS DATABASE ONLINE – SUMMARY OF PAY ROUND

Recent Unite settlement as reported to the Pay & Conditions database online

| SETTLEMENT DATE | AGREEMENT | STANDARD INCREASE |
|-----------------|------------------------------|-------------------|
| 01/11/11 | Jaguar | 6.10% |
| 01/11/11 | Land Rover | 6.10% |
| 01/11/11 | Vauxhall Motors (production) | 5.00% |
| 21/10/11 | Cadbury (Kraft) | 3.75% |

EARNINGS AND PAY

Full-time average weekly earnings by occupation

(the table below shows estimates of full-time average weekly earnings by occupation. It is based on the median earnings figures published by the ONS in the Annual Survey of Hours 2010, updated by the 3.3% increase in the average weekly earnings figures between April 2010 and September this year)

| | |
|--|---------|
| All workers | £610.90 |
| All male | £665.20 |
| All female | £526.50 |
| Managers | £910.40 |
| Professionals | £810.00 |
| Associate professionals | £615.40 |
| Administrative and secretarial staff | £425.30 |
| Skilled/craft | £501.20 |
| Services | £356.70 |
| Sales | £333.90 |
| Operatives | £458.50 |
| Other manual jobs | £356.90 |
| Source: www.ons.gov.uk/ons/labour-market-statistics/december2011//index.htm ; | |

Percentage Annual Rise in Average Weekly Earnings September

| | |
|--------------------------------------|------|
| Whole Economy | 2.3% |
| Private Sector | 2.4% |
| Public Sector | 1.8% |
| Finance & Business Services | 4.4% |
| Manufacturing | 1.5% |
| Services | 1.3% |
| Source: IDS Pay Report December 2011 | |

RPI/CPI – UPDATE

Trade unions have vowed to challenge a 2-1 majority High Court ruling that has upheld Government changes to the way annual public sector pension increases are calculated. Following the ruling TUC general secretary Brendan Barber said

'This is a disappointing judgement for pensioners and scheme members whether they draw a private, public or state second pension. But we take great heart that the court accepted the argument that the government did this to cut the deficit rather than carry out a proper consideration of the best way of measuring the cost of living for pensioners, even if only one judge said that it was unlawful.

'With the Office for Budget Responsibility now predicting that the long-term gap between CPI and RPI will be 1.4 per cent, pensioners in both private and public sector schemes will find that their pensions will be 20p in the pound lower after 18 years of retirement.

'Ministers keep saying that they are cutting public sector pensions for the benefit of private sector workers, but this move hits both, as well as those with a SERPS or state second pension.'

The petition is just short of 500 signatures to ensure a debate in the Commons. So again we are asking if you could publicise the petition as widely as possible, as we just might be able to get this important debate into the House of Commons. We're not far off the magic figure of 100,000 so for those who haven't yet signed it please go to the Directgov webpage:

<http://epetitions.direct.gov.uk/petitions/1535>

ACCESSING DATA

The data contained in this brief can all be obtained by using online facilities available to Unite members and general websites.

Unite has provided a workplace representative's guide to the web and this is available at http://www.unitetheunion.org/pdf/Reps_guide_to_web.pdf

In addition all Unite members can access the pay and conditions database maintained by LRD at: http://www.lrd.org.uk/payline/index.php?auth_token=6c54e1a919aba7bca4c206fd0201eb03 or through the LRD website - username: unite and password: opal961

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