

LIVEWIRE

Issue 18 January 1999

UNISON Manweb Branch

Who Wants To Be A Millionaire ?

Understaffing is easy costcutting

Now is the time to have your say

Integration not decimation

Send the right message

One night out of the year

Not to be missed

Annual pay talks underway

Give the Union your support

Make the effort to attend

Who doesn't ?

We can't promise to make you a millionaire, but be assured , attendance at the A.G.M. shows that you support your union and adds strength to all our negotiations on your behalf.

Particularly at this time of year, when pay talks are under way, this is doubly important.

Travel costs will be paid.

Buffet provided.

Coach parties welcome.

Please make every effort to be

there on 4th March

Abbey Court Hotel

Chester

(formerly Plantation Inn).

Upcoming Issues

Harrassment / Bullying

Pay Claim submitted

The Manweb Trade Unions have submitted their 1999 Pay Claim to the four Manweb Business Councils, in the expectation that after a bumper year for company performance and profits the company will be able to fully afford a generous settlement.

At the recent Manweb Common Interest Forum Chief Executive Bill Landels warmly thanked Manweb staff for the support they gave to their colleagues in Scotland during the Christmas storms.

Standards up 62%

Thanks to the commitment and effort of staff across the company Manweb Guaranteed Standards have increased 62% in the last 12 months and significant net gains are being reported for new customers in the Gas and Electricity markets.

Dividends up 10%

Already the half year figures show a Group profit increase to £247 million and dividends increased by 10.3%.

The union claim for a substantial above inflation pay increase should therefore be easily affordable and a proper reward for the extra efforts put in by Manweb staff.

This year has also seen a government cut in Profit Related Pay which has almost cancelled out last years pay rise. By the time PRP has been phased out next year members will have seen their annual take home pay cut by up to £800. Trade Unions are therefore asking for compensation for the loss of PRP.

It is also proposed that grade bands, which have not changed in relative terms since 1993 are extended. This will help compensate staff at the top of their bands who are finding their workload and skills base increasing but with no extra pay.

Finally, the Trade Unions have reaffirmed their long-standing aim to reduce the working week from the current 37 hours. It would bring significant benefits both to staff and the company in terms of improved morale and a reduction in stress and sickness.

Deeds not words

As negotiations get under way over the coming weeks members will be keen to see that the company follow up their verbal congratulation of staff efforts with equivalent financial rewards. **No final settlement will be agreed in a Business Council without an affirmative ballot of all Trade Union members in that business.**

In summary we are asking for:

- **A substantial increase in pay over and above RPI.**
- **A similar increase to be applied to all allowances.**
- **Compensation for the loss of PRP.**
- **Protection of existing Terms and Conditions.**
- **No strings.**
- **Extension of the Grade Bands.**
- **A reduction in the working week.**

Minimum Wage

Well here we are, nearly at the end of the 20th century and a national minimum wage is about to find its way into the laws of our land.

That's good.

But it is to be set at £3.60 an hour. Could you live on £3.60 an hour ? Could you live on £3 an hour , which is what young people will be asked to do ?

A minimum wage at this level just isn't enough. We want it to be higher and to be the same for everyone , regardless of age.

Be there make a difference
Join **Unison** in
Newcastle-upon-Tyne on
Saturday 10 April 1999

For info. about the day:
0800 096 96 00
or your local steward.