

Hacked Off!

The Voice of Hackney Workers

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Don't be a Silent Victim

As we enter what promises to be a difficult year for public sector workers DAAT Steward and Welfare Officer, Grainne O'Kill reminds us why we need to make a stand and speak up.

It's hard to say how many of my comrades who find their employ with the London Borough of Hackney have much of an opinion on why they choose to work in public services and what that means to them.

For many I suppose, there might be little consideration about what it means, simply having taken work where you could, perhaps with an underlying hope that working in the public sector would offer more security and better terms and conditions than many private sector jobs (not looking so hopeful on that front now!).

How do any of us find ourselves in the places we do? I fell into my career by accident that's for sure. But what was always pretty clear to me was that my value system required me to be doing something that was not simply for my own benefit. To me, working as a public sector worker does mean something quite specific. And in the current political climate, I suggest that the time for any apathy and indifference is over - for all of us who work in public services.

I am not rose tinted about public services, far from it. It is inevitable that corruption will be found in the micro interpretation of macro governance. All power inevitably corrupts, the worse contenders surely being those small fish desperate to swim into a bigger pond.

That universal and confounding problem withstanding, my values are based on principles of fairness, honesty, tolerance and equality. These values are not so different to those that are meant to underpin the delivery of public services, to those communities who fund us through their taxes and economic investment from using businesses throughout the borough, living and working here.

Public services are renowned for their liberal, politically correct approaches to many practices and yet we all know the reality of anti-discriminatory and progressive, inclusive practices is sometimes no more than tokenistic in local government.

I would be the first in line to say that public

services need to be run more efficiently, deliver better services to the communities they are here to serve, and treat their workforce better.

However, the current savagery that is taking place in the public sector under the new political regime is a alarming signpost that we are heading towards social collapse at an concerning rate.

None of these euphemistically so called 'efficiency savings or restructurings' are focused in the slightest on making services better - which is where of course the emphasis should be. Services will be decimated.

As a result of policies determined to further exploit the exploited, it is argued that cutting governmental spending on public services is the only way we can manage the countries financial deficit.

I suspect you don't really believe the rhetoric being spun by the government -there is a mounting body of evidence in the public arena currently highlighting the reality of the situation. The balance sheets in the financial sector are showing significant profit on the bottom line (and never really did anything other than that).

Our government is playing fawning lapdog to the markets. The people with the least are bailing out those with the most. This injustice is simply not acceptable and challenges all of the principles we, as public servants, are meant to stand for.

We all have a responsibility to resist and challenge the ideological, practical and political ideologies that underpin what is taking place in this country currently. And it is worth reflecting that being passive at this time is tantamount to being complicit.

So, get off your backside and get involved in whatever capacity you can! Make you views known and challenge the apathy and assumptions that there is nothing we can do.

Make your voice heard and stand united with your community in saying no. Demand full and meaningful consultation within your teams and with your service users. Be explicit in communicating the real cost of creating higher levels of poverty and social exclusion by cutting services to those people who rely on public services the most. We have the opportunity to resist. Don't be an accomplice.

Hackney



Town Hall

Mare street E8 1EA

Tel: 020 8356 4062/71

Web: <http://hackneyunison.wordpress.com>

**DON'T
FORGET
THE
AGM**

12:00—2:00

Wednesday

2nd February 2011

Town Hall Assembly

Rooms

Refreshments Provided

Time off has been agreed

for all Council, Hackney

Homes and Trust

members*

*members should inform their manager that they wish to attend

so that cover can be

arranged

Motions

1.0 Fight All Public Sector Cuts

This annual general meeting is totally opposed to the generalised attack on nearly all sections of society (except the rich & privileged) by this Con-Dem government.

We recognise that UNISON along with other Trade Unions have a crucial role to play by:-

1. Supporting & Co-ordinating local Regional & National action against Public Sector Cuts.
2. Initiating & Co-ordinating strike ballots of members in defence of Jobs & Services.
3. Calling for a 24 hour Public sector Strike to oppose these cuts in Jobs & Services.

By adopting these measures enormous confidence will be given to members and the wider community campaigns in resisting all cuts.

To this end we call on the NEC and General Secretary of UNISON to implement this policy from now on in leading the fight to preserve Public services.

PROPOSED Brian Debus - Libraries

SECONDED Lee Ray - Facilities

2.0 Cuts and Labour Councils

This annual general meeting condemns the Tory/Liberal government for implementing totally unnecessary cuts in Public spending. This policy is being pursued to benefit their rich backers & bankers in the City of London and their 'God', profit.

Many labour politicians nationally & locally have railed against the governments policies of cutting Public Services. So far none have offered a strategy of defeating the cuts other than offering the hope that labour would be elected back into government in 2015.

By then it will be too late with hundreds of thousands of jobs gone services closed or reduced and local communities decimated.

This national conference calls on all labour councils to set a needs budget to protect jobs & services. A similar strategy when adopted by Liverpool council in the eighties levered tens of millions of pounds out of Thatcher's Tories. Imagine the impact of all labour councils adopting this strategy against a much weaker government today.

PROPOSED Brian Debus - Libraries

SECONDED Lee Ray - Facilities

Amendments to Motions

Any member of the branch may submit an amendment to any of the motions set out in this pamphlet by simply completing the form below and returning it to the branch office no later than 5pm on Monday 25th January. All amendments received by this date shall be included in the AGM agenda. Amendments can also be e-mailed to matthew.waterfall@hackney.gov.uk

Name of Motion

Amendment

Name of Member

Election Results

Nominations have now been received for the following branch officer posts:

Matthew Waterfall	Secretary	Elected Unopposed
Brian Gardner	Chair	Elected Unopposed
Kathy Hamilton	Treasurer	Elected Unopposed
Mandy Richards	Publicity Officer	Elected Unopposed
Lee Ray	Health and Safety	Elected Unopposed
Claire Bunker	Equalities	Elected Unopposed
Grainne O'Kill	Welfare Officer	Elected Unopposed



The post of International Officer has been contested and so an election will be held at the AGM on 2nd February 2011. The candidates for the election are as follows:

Carita Austin
Valerie Easmon-George

This is the first year in several that we have filled so many officer posts and I would like to thank all those who have been nominated for standing up and getting involved.

Hackney Unison Delegate Nomination Form

Please tick the box(es) of the committees/conferences to be nominated to and return to Hackney Unison, Room 40 Town Hall using the internal post.

Regional Council

The Regional Council meets four times a year, normally in Central London, to make decisions on Unison policy for the Greater London region. Hackney is entitled to send three (3) delegates to this body.

Regional Local Government Committee

This body meets three times a year to discuss and decide on Unison policy relating to local government matters for the Greater London region. Hackney Unison is entitled to send four (4) delegates to this body

Regional Health and Safety Committee

This body meets three times a year to discuss and decide on Unison H+S policy for the Greater London region.

Hackney Trades Council

The Trades Council is the local branch of the Trades Union Congress (TUC) and is made up of delegates from all local trades unions. It meets monthly to discuss ongoing campaigns and local trade union matters. Hackney Unison is entitled to send five (5) delegates to this body.

Conferences

The National and Local Government conferences are held once a year and are attended by delegates from every branch in the country. They are the most important decision making bodies for the union and set Unison policy nationally for the coming year. Conference also decides on rule changes to the national rules of the union. The conference is in mid June and is being held this year in Bournemouth. All travel, accommodation and expenses are paid by the union and paid time off is given to delegates by the Council, Hackney Homes and Learning Trust.

National Delegate Conference

The National Delegate Conference decides on national Unison policy for the coming year.

National Local Government Conference

Local Govt Conference decides on national Unison policy relating to Local Government matters

Name and membership number of nominee

Nominated by

Membership no.

Signature

Seconded by

Membership no.

Signature