

NETWORK BULLETIN

COUNCIL PROPOSES TO TAKE AWAY CONTRACTUAL BENEFITS

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Branch Finance

In this climate of proposed cuts to public services and our jobs our Branch finances need to be robust and Harrow's continue to be in good shape. We have invested in new technology and increased our contribution to our strike fund.

Treasurer: D Hattam

Dear Members,

Just an update on issues that the employers side are wishing to progress, one of the most significant if instigated is the removal of a major part of the contractual terms contracts of employment, the council are proposing to remove the contractual status of approximately 90 policies and procedures, this will lead to an erosion of a majority of your

contractual rights. At present this Branch has launched a substantial legal challenge with the employer, and is awaiting the outcome from the council's legal department to unisons challenge. Before the next stage of our campaign begins to ensure that all our members rights are protected by law, this will require your input and full commitment as individual employees and members of

this union to challenge this unilateral decision. Remember we can only act with your authority this directly affects each and every members terms and conditions (employment contract). We will continue to provide a professional challenge to Harrow councils negative employment issues. UNISON is the union challenging every harmful impact to its members.
Gary Martin

PUBLIC REALM Steve Compton: Convenor

Public Realm entered a new phase last year with the appointment of our new Corporate Director Brendon Hills. Under Brendon's leadership the service will be moving ever closer to the Councils priority of 'Cleaner Safer Streets'. This UNISON believes, will be best achieved under the current 'in house operation and we will continue to work with Mr. Hills on this basis. Mr. Hills has clearly intimated to UNISON that his sole intention is that the im-

provements and efficiencies required will best be achieved by the 'in house' option and we would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Mr. Hills on his firm belief that 'in house' is the best way forward to deliver these services.

The vehicle fleet replacement is nearly at the end of its current phase and the corporate liveried Lorries, trucks, vans and sweepers are now seen right across the borough, thus raising our profile with residents.

UNISON would like to thank all its members within the service who have gone above and beyond during the recent hazardous weather conditions to clear and make safe shopping areas, transport hubs, cemeteries and emergency services access for our residents while other services have been stood down. Finally, I look forward to a year which sees us all remain as Harrow Council employees continuing to improve the services we deliver.

Harrow Unison Training a credible partner—Ken McDonald: Branch Training Officer

Harrow UNISON Training

Harrow Unison Training is committed to partnership working and keeping training and development services in-house and out of the hands of external consultants. For further advice or to request a copy of our 2010 training brochure please contact Ken McDonald or Varsha Patel at the Union of Offices. Telephone 0208 424 1795 or email info@harrow-unison.org.uk.

Home Care

Since domiciliary care was privatised there has been a drastic decline in the quality of care provided. Private companies are seeking to make a profit. Care provision is sold off to the cheapest bidder, this offers nothing to improve the service, and it's just taking advantage of service users.

Department of health states ...'Every person requiring care should be entitled to safe, high quality, dignified care anything less is unacceptable'!!!!!! How is this achievable when carers are paid a little more than Minimum wage, only receiving time spent with service user, no travel allowance; how can the service continue to attract a dedicated and committed workforce when they are bearing the cost of these out bidding wars? Carers are also being rushed as time to undertake certain tasks is limited, as commissioned by social services.

**Lorraine McHugh
Convenor**

Harrow Unison Training (HUT) has gone from strength to strength since its conception in 2005. It remains the only fully accredited training organisation within the council that is able to independently offer a range of accredited training solutions in conjunction with CIEH, IOSH, HABC and RSPH covering statutory linked training in Health and Safety, Food Hygiene and Environmental Awareness topic areas. There are a number of other reasons why Unison stands out as a credible partner-

Experience-Unison are already an established workplace learning organisation with extensive experience and resources in workplace learning initiatives.

Economically- There is no other training provider within the council, competing on a like for like basis that currently matches the cost savings that Unison are able to deliver to the council.

Many of our courses are delivered on an 'at cost' basis, are individually tailored to meet service user requirements and delivered on a fully flexible basis at the clients preferred venue and at a time that suits service demands.

Politically- On a national basis, it is known that the HSE is keen to see a much greater degree of trade union engagement and partnership with employers within the UK's Health and Safety Agenda. This is listed as one of its key goals in its new strategy document entitled "The Health and Safety of Great Britain- be part of the solution". Politically, on a local basis, Partnership working with Unison underlines and supports the recognition agreement between the Council and Unison and fully demonstrates support for full implementation of the council's IIP programme for all directorates.

The Future -Training in all of its forms needs to be sustainable, accessible and on going in order to meet staff development and IPAD requirements. The poor medium to long term economic outlook will have a bearing on the extent to which the council is able to meet its training commitment and obligations to its staff, especially with respect to statutory based training. Unison receives independent funding in respect of many of its training programmes and initiatives and is therefore in a strong position to provide some support to the council and ensure continuity of any joint training programmes that are developed. Additionally, where other workplace training initiatives such as the HCU (Harrow Corporate University) have failed, most if not all of Unisons initiatives and programmes are still in place.

A WORKPLACE REPRESENTATIVES VIEW

Many of my members in the Parks Department are becoming concerned about the up coming elections General and Local Council. This together with the press reports about the amount of cuts there will be to Local Government. We have been given no

updates or information from management about our futures and our job security. We often only find out about changes to our work and the Council plans from the Local Newspaper. I am grateful for the Harrow UNISON Branch which I am able to contact

and gain information which is clear. I am also able to get answers and find out what is going on by contacting the UNISON branch office.

John Royle
Health & Safety Rep
Public Realm Parks Dept

UNISONS CONTINGENCY PLAN FOR WASTE

Harrow UNISON branch has written to Councilor Susan Hall the portfolio holder for Public Realm, with a proposal for a contingency plan to provide the waste department with an alternative option to enable service delivery to be achieved without any extra cost to the ser-

vice. The adverse weather conditions has affected the service in recent weeks has impacted on the service to residents.

Unison has presented the service with a proposal that provides flexibility to enable a quicker way to resume

normal collections. The front line workers are the ones who often have to face the complaints from residents. Unison is always willing to work creatively with the Council to provide an excellent service to residents of the Borough.

BETER DEAL FOR RESIDENTS

LYNNE AHMAD: JOINT SECRETARY

A Transformation Forum has been set up and the Joint Secretary position has been established to liaise with GMB and UNISON. I am honoured to hold this position on behalf of both trade unions. This is a new role for Harrow and I am keen to represent fairly and consistently the staff side as part of the 'Better Deal for Residents' Transfor-

mation Programme Forum. As stated in the Chief Executives' News in December 'The Programme has and will continue to be a big commitment for many of you.... Which in time will impact on every area of the organisation....' The programme is tasked with the challenge of closing the funding gap and make savings of

£50m over the next three years. The Council hope to accomplish and provide better value for money services for residents of the Borough.

The main threat is to retain services and jobs in house. A joint statement is available following each monthly meeting; <http://harrowhub/sitescriptsdocuments.php?categoryID=260>

ADULTS SOCIAL CARE

PERSONALISATION IN SOCIAL CARE:

UNISON has published leaflet '10 essential questions for councils on personalisation in social care'. A useful tool for branches to challenge the rapid roll-out of personalisation schemes when so many questions remain unanswered. Contact your rep or branch for a copy or see UNISON

www.unison.org.uk

PERSONAL CARE

IN SEPTEMBER, 2009 THE GOVERNMENT PUBLISHED THE PERSONAL CARE BILL CONSULTATION FOR ENGLAND, ON THE REGULATIONS TO ACCOMPANY THE PERSONAL CARE BILL WHICH WILL MAKE PERSONAL CARE (NOT SOCIAL CARE) FOR THOSE WITH THE HIGHEST NEED FREE FROM OCTOBER 2010. UNISON is inviting comments on the separation of personal and non-personal care and how this will change the roles of social care staff: the tasks and jobs that we do, and the impacts for service users, providers

NEIGHBOURHOOD RESOURCE CENTRES

The new Neighbourhood Resource Centres (NRC's) at Byron Park, Vaughn Centre and Kenmore Park have now opened and staff and clients moved in. Harrow UNISON has been very active in the planning, opening and transfer processes. Milmans and Bentley Day Centre will become part of the NRC's and the new vision to providing day services and engaging service users more actively in the community.

Harrow UNISON has successfully negotiated an 8 year contract for the Special Needs Transport service and has kept this valuable service in-house.

Harrow UNISON undertook keeping Residential Services in-house, and was successful - currently keeping the status-quo.

SOCIAL CARE SURVEY

UNISON is currently undertaking a Social Care survey on the impact of

personalisation on commissioning social care. The survey asks social care members to complete a survey to tell us what types of social care commissioning is now emerging locally due to the roll out of personal budgets. The information will be used to write future branch guidance on social care commissioning models. If you would like to contribute speak to your Rep or contact the branch.

Heralding the In house Service Darren Butterfield Asst Branch

Despite the doom and gloom regarding the wider public sector cuts and the 'Transformation Programme' which members may be aware of here in Harrow, UNISON are in the process of negotiating a Procurement Agreement with the Council. This Agreement aims to involve UNISON at all key stages of service reviews, transformation

and any future procurement processes the Council enters into. Ultimately, the agreement, which was endorsed by Conservative Cllr Osborn at two separate senior forums, enables UNISON to influence major service provision decisions and herald the quality that exists within Harrow's in house services. Let's not forget, these in house services

contributed to the Council recently achieving its much improved three star status. The signing of this Agreement will no doubt enable the Council to work with UNISON to further develop our in house services and reach the required efficiencies clearly identified through the Transformation Programme and conveyed in recent staff forums by the Chief Executive.

Harrow Unison
LG Branch

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Dates For Your Diary

Annual general Meeting

The Harrow UNISON AGM will be on Thursday 18th March @ 7pm at the Civic Centre. Information stalls open from 6pm

Branch Meetings –civic centre 6–8pm

Thursday 18th February;
20th May;
19th August;
11th November:

Workplace

Reps Meetings

Unison Office Depot
1pm–2pm

Tuesday 26th January;
9th March;
11th May;
13th July;
14th September;
9th November:

Your Branch Officers:

Lynne Ahmad - Joint Secretary
Gary Martin - Branch Secretary
Steve Compton – Assistant Branch Secretary
Darren Butterfield – Assistant Branch Secretary
Ken McDonald – Education Officer
Bob Thomas - Health & Safety Officer
Mary Cawley - Assistant Health & Safety Officer / Welfare Officer
Alex Shola-Gbade - Equalities Officer
John Rattray - Vice Chair
Deborah Hattam - Treasurers / Schools & Adults Convenor
Neil Millington - Children's Convenor
Kanti Halai – Communications Officer
Youth Officer – Vacant
Darren Butterfield/ Lynne Ahmad (Joint) -A.P.F Officers
Social Secretary – Vacant
Chair – Vacant



Unison Croyde Bay Holiday Village

Book a cottage on any of the following dates for a special price of £29.50pp per break based on a minimum of five sharing.

Fri 16th April x 3 nights
Mon 19th April x 4 nights
Sat 24th April x 2 nights
Mon 26th April x 4 nights
Mon 3rd May x 4 nights
Sun 16th May x 4 nights
Sat 22nd May x 3 nights
Tue 25th May x 4 nights
Mon 5th July x 4 nights
Mon 12th July x 4 nights
Fri 16th July x 3 nights
Mon 30th August x 4 nights

Book now to receive a huge discount on your holiday on the beautiful North Devon coast