

If you are having problems viewing this please click the link to see it on our website:

Yesterday UNISON wrote to Barnet Council about the strike ballot of all of our UNISON members still employed by the Council excluding community schools. This is an opportunity for members to send a message to the Council. Look out for the ballot paper.

## UNISON issue a strike ballot to Barnet Commissioning Council workforce

### Barnet UNISON Press Release: 11 March 2015.

UNISON, one of the UK's largest trade unions, serving more than 1.3 million members, wrote to Barnet Council on 11 March 2015 notifying them of our intention to conduct a strike ballot of the Council workforce. This ballot is a direct response to the five commissioning projects agreed at the 3 March 2105 Full Council which would mean outsourcing of the majority of the workforce. The Ballot opens **18th March** and closes **8th April**.

At the [infamous Full Council meeting on 3 March 2015](#), the Conservative Administration voted through the decision to explore other options for directly delivering council services. The services involved are as follows:

- Libraries
- Adults & Communities
- Children's Centres
- Street Scene services
- Education & Skills and School Meals

UNISON estimates that this will mean upwards of **80% of the workforce** are likely to be working for a different employer. According to a recent Barnet Council committee report there are only **1,466** directly employed permanent staff.

It is important to note that the in-house service option for **eleven** out of **twelve** outsourcing projects have been **rejected** by Barnet Council over the last three years. UNISON has, over the last six years, tried to engage with Barnet Council over the future delivery of council services without success. In-house services, whilst previously being high performing and low cost, have meant nothing. Barnet Council abandoned its role of directly delivering services when it adopted the mass outsourcing EasyCouncil One Barnet Programme back in November 2010.

We now have first-hand experience of what happens following outsourcing and even councillors of all parties are [openly critical](#) of some the services they are receiving from Capita.

The [shocking Care Quality Commission](#) (CQC) report on Your Choice Barnet is more evidence of what happens when terms & conditions are cut and are not taken seriously. It is clear from the report that service users were put at risk as a consequence of YCB's attempts to deliver the seriously flawed One Barnet Business Case.

In committee meeting after committee meeting the public has had to listen to talk of difficult decisions, yet the real difficult decision would be to reject the austerity budget process and refuse to cut and outsource services. Elected members were elected to serve their communities and not impose policies that will see even greater inequalities.

Contrary to the spin that outsourcing protects frontline services and guarantees savings, what all the [evidence](#) clearly documents is that the taxpayer ultimately ends up paying the extra costs whilst service quality deteriorates. Austerity is driving the outsourcing agenda not just in Barnet but across the UK and Europe. Whilst other councils are also considering mass outsourcing Barnet is racing ahead and appears to be in a race with [Northampton](#) & [Bromley](#) Councils which are also doing the same.

### UNISON Branch Secretary John Burgess said:

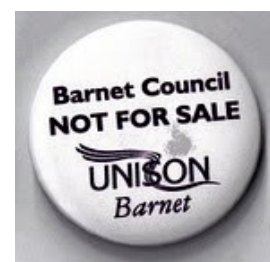
"Barnet Council staff are an incredible, resourceful & understanding workforce, who have been subjected to unacceptable levels of change and stress. The adoption of the five commissioning outsourcing projects makes it very clear to all staff that the Council is not interested in retaining in-house services. This is an ideological assault on public services and our branch is drawing a line in the sand by declaring this ballot. Austerity politics is driving an **anti-in-house services** agenda which we reject and are asking our members to reject."



Meeting Dates—March 2015

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Click logo below to access



follow us on  
[twitter](#)

[You Tube](#)

[facebook](#)

