

WEEK COMMENCING 30<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2012

# BARNET UNISON

## ONE BARNET WEEKLY UPDATE



### Proposed Strike Day Announced

Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> February 2012 has been announced as the next proposed day of action against One Barnet.

Picket lines, Community event “proud to serve our community” and Project X are being organised.

Welcome to the new look One Barnet update. This update will be sent out every Monday with all the latest news on all of the projects.

The big news is the proposed strike action next week. Make sure you have spoken to your local rep about what you will be doing on the day.

You should have a flyer which details the three actions it is important as many of our members take part.

I hope you like our latest video [here](#)

Finally just a quick reminder you can contribute to One Barnet updates (quite a few send the branch stories/information already).

Best wishes  
John

### Important Dates:

#### Next UNISON Meeting:

Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> February

12pm

Oak room Building 4

**UNISON One Barnet**

Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> February

1pm

Oak room Building 4

## NSCSO – New Support and Customer Services Organisation

One of the big issues to emerge this year facing our members in this project is the Call Centre aka Customer Contact centre. Members are aware that the Council are looking for savings before outsourcing and want to know why these plans are not being disclosed. There is also a real concern about the viability of these services to function if they are to become part of the Call Centre.

Incredibly, a previous decision not to include Social Care Direct staff in the Call Centre has been overturned, if this was not risky, news reaches UNISON that the same approach is being applied for Children's Services.

## Housing Project

In a meeting last week Housing members spoke of their concerns about the transfer to Barnet Homes. They have been told that in less than three months after transfer there will be a restructure as a result of the takeover of Housing Needs and Resources by Barnet Homes. Every member was adamant it would mean redundancies for members and expressed their support for the branch to oppose redundancies.

All members please note next meeting on **Monday 6th Feb** at 12pm in Barnet House

## Parking Project

On Thursday all staff will meet NSL. UNISON will be present at the meetings and will be looking for early discussions with regards the transfer of the back office staff to Croydon. I will be asking why the same business reasons do not apply to this contract as are being applied to other One Barnet projects namely that the council has already committed spend to NLBP until 2015 therefore surely NSL could continue to operate from NLBP?

### **Interviews**

I note there have been interviews last week, if any members have any issues or concerns about the process please make contact with the branch ASAP.

### **New depot?**

We will be seeking to establish where the enforcement staff will be based as they will no longer be operating from Mill Hill depot

### **Ticket quota's**

I have had a meeting with senior managers to discuss my concern that the ticket targets put our members at risk. There have been a number of recent high profile employment tribunal cases recently involving [NSL](#) which revealed a target driven regime. I will be discussing this matter with members in due course.

## LATC – Local Authority Trading Company

On the first of February some 150 of our colleagues will no longer be working for the local authority as they will have TUPE'd across to the new Local Authority Trading Company -- Your Choice, a subsidiary in a grander Local Authority Trading Company alongside Barnet Homes. These are the colleagues who work in the provided services in adult services. They provide a variety of assistance to adults with learning disability, primarily, and also to adults with physical disability. The officers of the council, the officers of Barnet Homes and councilors concede that the **business plan is weak**. According to that business plan these services are now expected to hold their own on the open market and create a surplus. Nonetheless it took **5 minutes** to wave the decision through General Functions – quite a contrast to the 1 hour it took to debate the issue of the site of polling stations.

## Our Critique

Barnet UNISON submitted a detailed report once more offering a critique of this proposal alongside 20 questions. The report was written by Professor Dexter Whitfield. You can read our questions and the answers and Dexter Whitfield's report [here](#) and [here](#)

## What next?

It should not be a surprise to many reading Barnet UNISON E-news that the so-called promise of no changes to anybody's terms and conditions within the first year of transfer is already looking a bit thin when considering the business plan for the LATC. Potential changes come within the first year with:

- Day services staff providing a service at the weekend and extended hours during the week.
- Staff currently providing supported living at specified housing units to expand this service to include anyone living in accommodation provided by Barnet Homes and, in fact, possibly to others living outside of Barnet.
- Closure of services which cannot hold their own.

Barnet UNISON will continue to provide a service and union organisation for the colleagues working for Your Choice and we will aim to ensure our members are truly protected with their terms and conditions.

## Contractor failure - Council workers face

About 450 people have been made redundant after a major council contractor went into administration. The majority of assets from Fountains Group have been sold to outsourcing and facilities management company OCS Group, based in Crawley, West Sussex.

[http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-16689990?utm\\_source=twitterfeed&utm\\_medium=twitter](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-16689990?utm_source=twitterfeed&utm_medium=twitter)

## Contractor threatens to leave - Street Lighting PFI Contract)

This was reported in the Performance Indicators [Quarter Two](#)

“Contractor has struggled to deliver the required standards and as a consequence has suffered large financial adjustments. Contractor has indicated this is not sustainable and has threatened to withdraw from contract. The financial implications could be up to 50% increase annually potentially equating to £2.25m annually”.

## Development and Regulatory Services (DRS)

The staff working across Highways services have submitted the following questions:

1. Are the Council aware of how nervous members of the Network Management and Traffic and Development Teams are following the recent treatment of the Parking Team, especially how far they are expected to travel to Croydon (at an additional extra average cost of £2,700 per annum)?
2. Is a staff survey of the Parking Team going to be carried out? It would be beneficial to collate their individual experiences of the position and highlight the issues and concerns they are going through as they are further on in the process. This information should be published on a 'parking website'.
3. When were parking told that they would be moving to Croydon and how was this process managed?
4. When is the TUPE Briefing going to start being honest with the information they are giving staff?
5. If one of the final two bidders is not selected as part of the Competitive Dialogue Process, would Barnet have to go out to tender again?
6. Who are the final two bidders? 'Harris and Conway' and 'Capita'?
7. What happens if one of the final two bidders drops out? Would it depend on the stage of the process and could the various stages be explained. When would it be technically too late for a bidder to drop out?
8. Do individual members of staff have to take part in talks with the bidders in Stage 2 of the Competitive Dialogue process? What if a member of staff doesn't want to talk directly to a bidder?
9. Has Barnet looked at the track records of the two Bidders? Has their individual suitability been factored in to the process? Has either bidder been awarded a similar Contract to the Cluster offered by Barnet?
10. Are the Bidders able to 'pick off' individual, more profitable, sections of the Cluster?
11. Where does the position of the Director of Environment Planning and Regeneration sit in within the Contract?
12. How would the Director of Environment Planning and Regeneration manage the process from the client side?
13. What is the role of the Assistant Director, Highway and Transport in the DRS Process?
14. What are the management's views regarding staff engagement as there is a feeling amongst most staff that the management have disengaged completely from the Highways services, made worse by the management hub relocation?
15. The Contract is due to run for 15 years, is there an 'Get out clause' or 'exit strategy'. If so, please can this be explained, if not why?
16. Where are 'Harris and Conway' and 'Capita' based?
17. In the ISOS Submission was there an indication of where the successful bidder is likely to run the Service from?
18. A number of functions within the Service are reactive works, how will this be managed if the final Contract is moved away from Barnet?
19. Do the DRS outsourcing team realise that with contracts such as these, there is no, "*good will*." Everything the contractor is asked to do that falls outside of the contract will be invoiced as an, "*extra/over*." This will seriously skew the financial predictions over the lifetime of the contract and may well end up with the council being forced to pump far more money into the service than initially anticipated. How is this being addressed in the writing of the contract?
20. Who is responsible for writing the contract with the new provider and what oversight or scrutiny covers this process and the final draft?
21. How is the contract to be monitored and with what numbers and level of "technical / engineering" staff experience on the client side?
22. Why is a 15 year contract being considered in the current climate, when most contract such as these are for an initial 5 year period with extension clauses for performance?
23. What is the DRS team's reaction to the increasing number of news items revealing that in-house bids give better value to local authorities than outsourced services?