



Barnet UNISON
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02/01/2014

Dear Barnet UNISON member,

RE: Personal and political attack on Barnet UNISON branch

First of all we want to thank you for belonging to our branch of almost 3,000 members who work for more than a hundred different employers.

We endeavour to provide assistance to all of our members when they need support.

Fundamental to being able to provide a quick response is having enough UNISON reps, something our branch has to constantly develop.

In the last three years, '**Austerity**' has brought much hardship to our members, who are predominantly in low paid jobs. Our branch is more than aware that many of our members have more than one job in order to make ends meet. If you are in need of any financial support or help please contact our branch as we may be able to direct you to some services which may ease the pressure.

It is with a heavy heart that we have to bring you news that our branch and your union is subject to a personal and political attack. This is also a political attack on your rights at work. The attack is being carried out by Barnet Council who, after having previously cut our facility time by 66%, has decided to cut all remaining facility time on 31 March 2014. This means from 1 April 2014 the branch will no longer have any UNISON officer ready to deal with your issues.

Why is the branch under attack?

We are guilty of robustly representing our members which has upset our Council.

We are guilty of representing our members who have been outsourced through the mass privatisation One Barnet policy.

We are guilty of representing our members in restructures, redundancies, re-gradings.

We are guilty of representing our members at disciplinary meetings, sickness absence meetings and grievances hearings.

We are guilty of being there for members when no one else was prepared to listen.

We are guilty of supporting members trying to cope with or change unhealthy, stressful workplaces.

We are guilty of not keeping silent when our member's terms & conditions are being attacked.

We are guilty of exposing the ongoing reliance and waste of taxpayers' money on expensive consultants.

We are a democratic union and every year we have an Annual General Meeting where members can vote on who they want to represent them.

As your branch officers we cannot turn a blind eye to attacks on workers. Therefore, we will be standing for election on a platform of continuing the commitment to fight over any attempts to undermine and cut the terms and conditions of our members.

The next year is a crunch time for our branch and each member plays a role in deciding how we meet this challenge. There is an opportunity for all working members to stand for election and we encourage you to think about whether you want to stand. It is important that anyone elected to represent Barnet UNISON members does so with the endorsement and support of our members.

We look forward to meeting you at our AGM on Wednesday 12th March 2014 in the Oak room, Building 4 North London Business Park, N11 1NP arrival from 3.30pm/meeting starts at 4pm.

Yours Sincerely

John Burgess

Helen Davies

Louis Smyth

Hugh Jordan

Branch Secretary

Branch Chair

Assistant Branch
Secretary Schools

Health & Safety Officer

Encl. Transcript of Councillors attacking trade unions

Councillors attacking trade unions

1. Conservative Councillor Gordon speaking at Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny Committee 27 November 2013

Below is a transcript from the above meeting.

“there seems to be a huge trade union input into what is going on into the objections whereas we live in a free society and people are entitled to express their views there’s no doubt that some of the views experienced have been very sincere and genuine & personal waymoved by members of the committee I am very sceptical about the trade union input..because we know...we know unions have their own agenda which is a political agenda and are known ...are known to have a left wing agenda...I suspect that whereas there are some very genuine criticism to be made a lot of these criticism are a little bit politically motivated I will view them in that rather suspicious way.....

Or you can view on You Tube here <http://youtu.be/ko-QvCBAMCY>

2. Councillor Robert Rams speaking at Budget Scrutiny, Budget and Performance Overview and Scrutiny Committee 26 November 2013

Below is a transcript from the above meeting.

“I come from a completely different standpoint on this I think that they should be able to do their job without any funding whatsoeverI think there are lots of examples of councils, authorities across London across the country that provide no funding for activity and I believe we should be moving to a model were we don’t provide any funding for union activity, I think as I stated before if we are looking to make cuts out there, there are some difficult decisions, I think it is clear area we can make even more savings, the proposals provide a generous amount of funding, over generous in my personal view towards the service I think as we go forward and tougher decisions are made we will get to the point where we will remove all funding.....

I don’t think the work they do needs to be funded by us, they do some excellent work and as I said they are some other authorities I organisations across London, but trade unions provide an excellent service to their members by no means do I denigrate their work the unions do, they provide an excellent service to their members.....I think there is enough ability for them to do it whilst carrying on doing their work for the council”

Or you can view on You Tube here <http://youtu.be/-7dTF6Kmej8>