

# Barnet UNISON E NEWS 11 January

## Today's content

Just click on the link and it will take you straight to the article

[Barnet Council refuse to discuss the Budget Cuts](#)

[30 January march across Barnet.](#)

[BRANCH MEETINGS – PLEASE ATTEND](#)

[Bankers Bonuses are still being handed out!](#)

[EasyCouncil – on BBC Mock of the Week programme](#)

[Public spending myths](#)

[Libraries in the firing line across the UK](#)

[Deputy Prime Minister Video](#)

[Petitions](#)

## 1. Barnet Council refuse to discuss the Budget Cuts

Dear Colleagues

Unfortunately due to caring commitments I was not back in the UNISON office until yesterday. I was not at the Budget meeting with councillors and was shocked to hear the report back from my trade union colleagues. I would ask that all members make plans to ensure you attend the planned demonstration on 30 January.

Our UNISON Regional Organiser Laura Butterfield attended the meeting and had this to say “I attended the CJNCC meeting on 6 January. I am responsible for supporting a number of Local Government branches in London, including Tory run Councils, and I have never seen such contempt displayed towards the trade unions. They had clearly agreed prior to the meeting not to discuss the budget with us and blocked us at every turn. For a Council to propose such drastic changes to services, that affect staff, and not be prepared to discuss the budget with the trade unions is beyond belief.’

Here are the first three reasons why you should attend.

**Reason no.1: Council refuse to talk about the cuts.**

***“We’ve sat here for 56 minutes going round in circles”***, said a Conservative Councillor at last Thursday’s scheduled meeting between the Trade Unions and the employer to discuss staffing issues.

Some **1,000** members of staff have been issued **“at risk of redundancy”** notices and the list of services which are being reduced or ended by the Council is breathtaking. This is not to mention the mass privatisation of all our services. The implications of the budget are deep and wide in terms of their impact on staff being made redundant and those “lucky enough” to remain in their job.

The trade unions felt we had to raise general issues relating to the budget with our employer.

**WE WERE NOT ALLOWED EVEN TO STATE OUR OBJECTIONS AS THE BUDGET IS NOT AN EMPLOYMENT RELATED ISSUE!**

The Trade Unions with support from the Labour Councillors made various points as to how the Budget of course impacts on staff and so therefore is impossible to separate out from the issue. In the end all we could do was register our disappointment that in the only forum where the Trade Unions can meet with the employer and so discuss the Budget, there was no willingness even to hear what we had to say.

**56** minutes is not too long to consider the devastating consequences of the Budget on **1,000s** of members of staff.

If we are going to be heard we will have to do what the students did and take to the streets.

**Make sure you have made arrangements to attend the march on 30 January**

### **Reason no.2 for joining the March 30.1.11**

#### **Mental Health Services**

Mental Health Teams are due to lose 5 Social Worker posts this year. It is news to our colleagues in the service and outside of the service that there is so little for them to do they can afford to take this kind of a reduction in posts. The report, which went to Cabinet showing this cut talks about the risk of service quality reducing and potentially waiting times for assessments increasing. This will be offset by a manager monitoring the situation closely.

After 15 months of asking Barnet UNISON finally had a meeting with Mental Health managers last autumn to discuss the proposed restructure. At no point in this meeting was there a mention of job losses. Specifically no jobs were at risk.

At monthly meetings with our Adults Services senior management there was no mention that Social Worker posts were in consideration for job losses.

We found out when the Budget report was printed.

**Make sure you have made arrangements to attend the march on 30 January**

### **Reason No. 3 to be there 30.1.11**

#### **Children's service**

There is no doubt the biggest hit in terms of job losses will be borne by the Children's Service.

- Most of the Children's Centres will be closed.
- Most of Youth Services will be stopped.
- Behavioural and High Incidence support and educational psychology is to be cut to the statutory minimum.

The fall out of this will put pressure on other services and yet the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service is to be reduced, support for the Teenage pregnancy service is to be withdrawn, commissioning of services for supporting and preventing substance misuse is to be ceased and the current Youth provision will cease. This coupled with the ceasing of the EMA and the increase in University tuition fees will trap young people from low-income families struggling in mainstream settings.

The cumulative impact of all this can only mean that instead of help being offered in a timely fashion young people and their carers will be left to struggle on or have their situation deteriorate completely needing much heavier intervention.

**Make sure you have made arrangements to attend the march on 30 January**

### **2. January 30 march across Barnet.**

To all Barnet UNISON members: You are invited to attend the march across Barnet on [Sunday 30 January](#). Barnet UNISON is organising this march with the other Council Trade Unions and Barnet Trades Council and Barnet Alliance 4 Public Services.

The march starts outside Finchley **Central Tube station 11.30 am** and finishes at the Arts Depot in North Finchley.

There is a rally in the Arts Depot with key speakers such as Tariq Ali and Frances along with a number of musicians supporting the event under the banner of Barnet **'Rock against the Cuts!'** campaign.

**Make sure you have made arrangements to attend the march on 30 January**

### **3. BRANCH MEETINGS – PLEASE ATTEND**

- Monday 17 January 12- 1 pm Cmmee Rm2 Barnet House
- Tuesday 25 January 1-2 pm Conference Rm 2 Building 2, NLBP.

#### **4. Bankers Bonuses are still being handed out!**

So public services are to be decimated or sold off to the lowest bidder whilst bankers 'carry on regardless' and award themselves [billions in bonuses!](#)

Apparently the justification is that if they don't award the bonuses they will lose the staff. Perhaps UNISON should take up this approach and demand that all council workers are paid bonuses!

**Make sure you have made arrangements to attend the march on 30 January**

#### **5. EasyCouncil – on BBC Mock of the Week programme**

An eagled eyed UNISON member spotted this [broadcast](#) this over the Christmas period. I never understood why we would want to be associated with cheap airline.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lawZoLMeTgo>

#### **6. Public spending myths**

It's an uncertain and confusing time. People will try to exploit this by spreading misinformation and creating scapegoats. Some are even saying that public services are part of the problem. Here are the facts.

##### **Was this crisis caused by too much public spending?**

- ☛ the UK still spends less (21% of GDP) on public services and social security than France (29%), Germany (27%), Italy (25%), or Sweden (29%).
- ☛ before this crisis, total UK public debt was less than 40% of GDP – lower than other comparable economies and lower than it was in 1997.
- ☛ irresponsible borrowing and lending in the private sector caused this crisis – in 2008 household debt was 109% of GDP, and corporate debt almost 300%.
- ☛ public deficits are now rising fast because the government has had to take on
- ☛ the private sector's bad debts and counteract the damage to the economy.

##### **Does the recession mean public services have to be cut?**

- ☛ right now the government should be borrowing to increase social spending. Cutting benefits or services would make the recession longer and harder.
- ☛ in future years we will have to reduce government borrowing. But this can be done by raising taxes or cutting spending in other areas. It's a political choice.
- ☛ more people think the government should raise taxes (53%) rather than reduce spending on public services (35%) as a way of paying back public debt.

- billions could be raised by ensuring big companies and the super-rich pay a fairer share of tax. More could be saved by cancelling Trident or ID cards

## 7. Libraries in the firing line across the UK

Why do Councils think Libraries make easy targets?

[Click](#) on the link to see the alarming number of Libraries facing cuts or closure across the UK.

## 8. Deputy Prime Minister Video

How quickly things change.....

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tQLOj-lyZI&feature=player\\_embedded](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tQLOj-lyZI&feature=player_embedded)

## 9. Petitions

All it takes is a few minutes to sign a petition.

- [Save the Libraries](#)
- [Save Barnet Museum](#)
- [Save the Arts Depot](#)
- [Save Church Farm Museum](#)



You can follow Barnet UNISON on Twitter by clicking on [here](#) or



Click here [John Burgess](#)

*[Barnet Alliance for Public Services march and rally Sunday 30 January](#)*

**Barnet UNISON Your Friend at Work**