

Barnet UNISON Press Release: 10 March 2015

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: “We told you so!” UNISON response to Care Quality Commission (CQC) poor ratings for Care settings in Barnet

“The service was not safe as we found that people using the service were exposed to significant risk to their safety.” (CQC Report 3 March 2015)

UNISON is **dismayed** at the inadequate ratings for Supported Living provided by Your Choice Barnet (YCB).

BUT, we had predicted that this would happen.

In a report on **31 May 2013** Barnet UNISON raised safeguarding risks as a result of a restructure which resulted in over **one third** of the existing staff leaving supported Living as Support Workers and being **replaced** with even lower paid Assistant Support Workers. Assistant Support worker roles are paid at approximately **33 % less** that of a Support Worker role. We added that the current proposal **undermined** the need for qualified, professional, **skilled staff** to work in areas of care, the consequences of which would be **dangerous** for service users and also for staff.

How right we were and the CQC report provides evidence here:

- “One relative commented, “None of the cuts have led to improved care, all work has to be done in a hurry.” **(CQC Report 3 March 2015)**
- “Relatives told us of the effect that a changing work force had on people. One relative said, “My relative lost their key worker, it was very upsetting for them.” Another said, “When a worker leaves my relative feels it like the loss of a family member.” **(CQC Report 3 March 2015)**
- “However, we met and saw staff that were knowledgeable, enthusiastic and engaged with people, we noted these were all permanent staff.” **(CQC Report 3 March 2015)**

The restructures of staff in 2013 and 2014 were as a direct result of serious financial failings of the outsourced one Barnet project called YCB. Even a **£1million bailout** was not sufficient and led to YCB imposing a 9.5% pay cut on staff from 1 April 2014.

The CQC report fully supports concerns raised by our members about the risks to service users from the attacks on terms & conditions. This was always likely to be the case.

Barnet Council were aware of the report yet at no point were the findings publicly shared at any of the Scrutiny Committees.

“We contacted the commissioners of the service to obtain their views about the care provided in the service.” **(CQC Report 3 March 2015)**

“The ratings for this location were awarded in October 2014.” (CQC Report 3 March 2015)

CQC found the following breaches of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2010.”

1. “This was a breach of Regulation 9 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulation 2010.”
2. “This was a breach of Regulation 10 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2010.”
3. “This was a breach of Regulation 13 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2010.”
4. “This was a breach of Regulation 14 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2010.”
5. “This was a breach of Regulation 18 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulation 2010.”
6. “This was a breach of Regulation 22 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulation 2010.”
7. “This was a breach of Regulation 23 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2010.”

The service has failed to deliver the growth to sustain a high quality service and has clearly failed to provide a quality service for vulnerable adults in Barnet.

It is time to call an end to the outsourcing ideology and put the needs of service users and parents and carers first.

UNISON Branch Secretary John Burgess said:

“The driving motivation for our members in this dispute is their fears about what is happening to the quality of services. Low pay in the care sector does not deliver high quality services. This report gives a stark warning of the consequences of ongoing attacks on the pay of care workers. Therefore in light of the content of the CQC report we are calling on Adults & Safeguarding Committee to instruct Council officers to bring this service back in house in order to bring stability to the service and restore confidence of the services users, parents/carers that their children will receive a service to be proud of.”

Notes to Editors.

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Background:

In **February 2012** Barnet Council transferred Learning Disability and Physical and Sensory Impairment services for adults to a Local Authority Trading Company (LATC) called Your Choice Barnet (YCB). About **160 staff (145.6 Full Time Equivalents)** in Adults services transferred to the LATC.

Following a restructure in 2013 and cuts to pay on shift allowances there are now only about **105 FTE** working for YCB a **30% cut** in staffing levels.

Links

1. **CQC Report Supported Living inspection report here**
<http://www.cqc.org.uk/location/1-112848964>

2. **CQC report with highlights by Barnet UNISON here**
<http://www.barnetunison.me.uk/sites/default/files/Barnet%20Supported%20Living%20inspection%20report%202014%20UNISON.pdf>

3. **Winterbourne quote:** "The complaints heard at both the first inquiry and this one testified not only to **inadequate staffing levels**, but **poor leadership, recruitment and training**. This led in turn to a declining professionalism and a tolerance of poor standards." (Page 45, Report of the Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust Public Inquiry February 2013 Executive summary).

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/213215/final-report.pdf

4. **UNISON response to Consultation Paper 31 May 2013**

<http://www.barnetunison.me.uk/sites/default/files/Full%20UNISON%20response%20to%20YOUR%20CHOICE%20May%202013.pdf>

5. **UNISON response to Task and Finish Report 25 November 2013**

<http://www.barnetunison.me.uk/sites/default/files/UNISON%20response%20to%20Task%20and%20Finish%20Report.pdf>

6. **"I Found Myself Just Crying" - Your Choice Barnet**

<http://www.barnetunison.me.uk/?q=node/1263>

7. Why UNISON Your Choice Barnet Care Workers are taking strike action.

<http://www.barnetunison.me.uk/sites/default/files/2015.01.15.%20YCB%20FLYER%20PUBLIC.pdf>

8. UNISON Your Choice Barnet Care Workers “9 Point Flyer

<http://www.barnetunison.me.uk/sites/default/files/2015.01.15.%20STRIKE%20YCB%20FLYER%20nine%20point.pdf>

9. Support UNISON Your Choice Barnet Care Workers strike action video

http://youtu.be/9jVXn6_BcVY

10. The Capita £110million payment

<http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s21029/Appendix%20I%20-%20Capita%20Payments.pdf>

11. Your Choice - in built pension burden creates artificial loss to justify pay cut

<http://lbbspending.blogspot.co.uk/2014/09/nochoice.html>

12. Sign Petition to Stop the ongoing destruction of services for adults with disabilities in Barnet

<https://you.38degrees.org.uk/petitions/stop-the-ongoing-destruction-of-services-for-adults-with-disabilities-in-barnet>