

# Barnet UNISON e NEWS

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## **Sad Loss to his family, UNISON and the Trade Union movement**

[Kenny Bell](#), branch secretary Newcastle UNISON passed away on Sunday 14 August.

I first met Kenny 12 years ago at Conference as he had put me in touch with Dexter Whitfield ([Dexter](#) is speaking at the memorial service today) about privatisation of our older people's services. Back then I was impressed by his energy and drive and his ability to have the right strategic response to attacks to public services.

More recently I travelled up to Newcastle to hear how the branch had successfully dealt with a **big outsourcing** project. Again I was impressed by his breadth of knowledge and his ability to make best use of resources to promote public services and jobs. There is no doubt about his dedication and commitment to trade unionism and social justice.

UNISON members of this branch will know that for the **last three years** I have been trying to get Barnet Council to travel up to Newcastle to meet Kenny, the Leader of Newcastle Council and his Chief Executive to listen to how they approached issues such as budget cuts and **changes** to service delivery.

Many of you will have heard me talk about the [book](#) called '**Public Service Reform...but not as we know it!**' which documents what took place in Newcastle.

I also wanted Kenny to come down and address our Council about the benefits of meaningful engagement with Trade Unions, staff and the community. It was a very different model to what we are facing here, it was a model that wasn't '**consultant dependent**', and consultants were used but kept on a **very** tight rein.

"Deputy Unison branch secretary, Paul Gilroy, said: "Kenny had a strong sense of justice and fairness which characterised everything that he did."

"Leader of Newcastle City Council, Coun Nick Forbes, said: "Kenny was a visionary trade union leader, who inspired many to fight for social justice and fairness."

"Chief Executive of Newcastle City Council, Barry Rowland, said: "Kenny's made a massive contribution to industrial relations at the city council. He was instrumental in helping us through a difficult period of change, always standing up for the workers he represented with a passion."

To get a sense of whom Kenny was and his legacy I would recommend you read this tribute written by journalist Hilary Wainwright [here](#)

"Kenny Bell the best branch secretary our members **never** had chance to meet."

I am sure he will be sorely missed by the branch and members, his family, UNISON and the wider trade union movement.

Rest in Peace.

### **[Barnet Independence Day – 13 September](#)**

On this day UNISON members who have been balloted on Trade Dispute against the One Barnet programme are planning to take action on this day.

They will be staff working across these services:

**Trading Standards & Licensing, Land Charges, Planning & Development, Building Control & Structures, Environmental Health, Highways Strategy, Highways Network Management, Highways Traffic & Development, Highways Transport & Regeneration, Strategic Planning & Regeneration, Cemeteries & Crematoria; Parking Services, Revs & Bens,**

**More** details will be produced the closer we get to the date.

We are asking **all** our members across public services to join them at a mass lobby of the Full Council on **Tuesday 13 September** from 5.30pm

### **Video - Barnet Independence Day Hollywood version.wmv - YouTube**

Each time we release a video; then **SHARE** it to other social media sites that you use and encourage your friends and family to help.

We have to become **our own media machine** in order to make our members issues an issue, the national media **cannot ignore**.

Our **first challenge** is building for **Barnet Independence Day 13 September**, if you are not one of those on strike you can help by publicising the event and coming along in the evening

**Barnet UNISON Motto** "**Watch it & Share it**"

### **Revs & Bens NLBP picket Line**

UNISON is organising another picket line this Saturday in order to stop the undermining of the action short of strike in Revs & Bens.

If you are able to join the picket line please contact the branch on 0208 359 2088 or email [contactus@barnetunison.org.uk](mailto:contactus@barnetunison.org.uk)

Meet outside NLBP on **Saturday 20 August** from **7.0 am**.

### **Pensions Fund Committee Thurs 1 Sept - please attend.**

UNISON Members are advised to try and attend this meeting. It concerns your Pension. The Committee is considering the following **risk** which was identified at the last Pension Fund Committee on 22 June 2011 (see below)

**"Risk:** The negative affect on the Pension Fund due to **loss of payees** if bulk transfers on One Barnet take place

**CAUSE:** Use of GAD over ABS and abolition of workforce code of practice

**Consequences of Risk:** Potentially reduced pension fund due to **less individuals contributing to the scheme** following the **transfer of staff out** of the council to a **new provider**

**Mitigation of Action:** Meeting with Actuaries to greater understand the effect Meeting was held with the actuaries (Barnett Waddingham) to discuss the implications of the transfer of employees with either Admitted Body Status (ABS) or use of a Government Actuaries Department (GAD) Passport.

Early discussions were held on the potential impact on both employee's pensions and the affect on the Pension Fund. Key points discussed included the current Government consultation on the Fair Deal Policy: treatment of pensions on compulsory transfer of staff from the public sector, current trends by providers is to opt for ABS over GAD due to cost, the detail of ABS including the provision of a bond, related risks and open and closed schemes.

A paper will be going to the **September Pensions Fund Committee** on the position of the procurement Projects within the One Barnet Project, requesting approval for an 'in principle' decision on the corporate approach to managing the pension implications. Individual projects will still need to present their individual specifications to the Pension Committee."

### **Pension Fund Committee, Hendon Town Hall**

**Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> September 2011, 7 pm.**

## **Southampton Workers reject offer & vote to continue strike action**

Public services staff in Southampton have rejected a revised pay proposal by the Tory city council.

UNISON and Unite members voted by four to one to continue with industrial action, while continuing to negotiate for a better deal.

The long-running dispute has seen hundreds of council staff strike over the past 12 weeks - including social workers, waste and recycling workers, street cleaners, library staff and toll bridge collectors.

At the heart of the dispute is the council's decision to sack and rehire all of its workforce, on lower pay, making a total of **£6m** in savings - £3m from wages and **£3m** from allowances

To view full statement click on link below

[http://www.unison.org.uk/news/news\\_view.asp?did=7119](http://www.unison.org.uk/news/news_view.asp?did=7119) and view video [here](#)

## **More Private Sector SAP disasters – Somerset**

### **Southwest One made overpayments of £4.6m**

It was part of a problem affecting Southwest One, the shared service in which the council is involved, resulting from the introduction of a new SAP software system two years ago. Delays with the automated system led to staff at Southwest One issuing cheques to avoid further delays, leading to overpayments of £4.6m to suppliers to all of the organisations involved.

Southwest One has been criticised in the past for not performing to a high enough standard. A report by Somerset county council in June showed that the venture had not met its savings targets, pointed to IT issues and said there were management and training weaknesses.

It was also the subject of sustained criticism from a local MP, Ian Liddell-Grainger, and was put under review after the Conservatives took control of the county council from the Liberal Democrats in May 2009.

To read more about the systemic failure of this outsourced service failing to deliver the outrageous claims made by local politicians click on the links below

1. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-somerset-14528783>
2. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/government-computing-network/2011/aug/16/southwest-one-overpayment-somerset>
3. <http://spendmatters.co.uk/public-sector-procurement-outsourcing-happening/>

## **UNISON publish report on benefits of Insourcing**

Yes you read correctly that is **Insourcing** as opposed to **OUTsourcing**.

“Privatisation is all the rage in central government as they swing the axe at public services, with budget cuts, the Localism Bill and the Open Public White Paper. But the failures of outsourcing are becoming more obvious in local government and new research for UNISON by APSE highlights eight detailed case studies where councils have taken services back in-house to make them better and cheaper.

“Insourcing update: The value of returning local authority services in-house in an era of budget constraints” sets out the financial advantages of “insourcing”, to help branches oppose privatisation proposals and build a case for current outsourcings to be brought to an end. It also gives a step-by-step guide to taking services back in-house.

Survey results in the report show that the case studies are not isolated examples. 60% of council officers surveyed said the need to improve efficiency and reduce service costs had led them to consider bringing services back in-house. After cost, 44% of respondents said there was a need to improve service quality.

The financial benefit obviously depends on the size of the service involved, but 13% of respondents expected savings of up to £25,000 a year. A further 8% reported savings of up to £250,000, 6% said £500,000 and 5% said £1 million could be saved per year. Other advantages of insourcing included flexibility (64% of respondents), greater local responsibility (52%), improved staff morale (33%) and better terms and conditions (25%).

This publication builds on research in 2009 which highlighted 50 examples of councils’ **insourcing** services.

To view the full report click [here](#)

## **More Private Finance Initiative (PFI) Madness**

This article shows just how strong a hold the private sector have over our politicians, despite all the evidence that PFI has been a complete financial disaster which has cost the tax payer billions this government is going ahead t=with PFI.

**“Last December the Conservatives issued a report which calculated that the 544 PFI schemes agreed under Labour would end up costing taxpayers five times the original building cost. It forecast that they would cost every working family in Britain an average of nearly £15,000, even though the original building costs were just over £3,000 per family.”**

Incredible read on [here](#)

## **RMT EXPOSES £6 BILLION RAIL ROBBERY ON EVE OF FARES HIKE**

For those of us who belong to the Order of

This recent report provides more evidence of what everyone else really knows that the private sector always put their shareholders first and the customers second. In the case of the Rail industry we all have our horror stories; we have all seen empty carriages whilst the rest of us are crammed in to the remaining carriages like cattle. Yet these companies still get bail outs to run this service.

## **SAP video - incredible.....not!**

Do you enjoy using SAP it appears some do, have a look at this short video [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qus-pJogtdM&feature=player\\_embedded](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qus-pJogtdM&feature=player_embedded)

## **DON'T MISS Pensions and TUPE Branch Meetings in September**

- 🕒 **Weds 7 Sept** 1pm Committee Room 1, **Barnet House**
- 🕒 **Tuesday 13 Sept** 12 noon Oak Room Building 4

In light of the imminent proposals to attack our pensions and the council's policy of mass privatisation the branch is providing our members with up to date information on pensions and TUPE.

Come along, bring your lunch and join us to help protect our pensions

## **10 Key Facts about your Pension Scheme**

1. LGPS funds collectively form the biggest single pension fund in the country and fourth largest in the world making it a major shareholder in business and the UK economy. Together the 101 LGPS funds hold more than **£150billion** in investments and assets - enough to pay benefits for over 20 years. More than **four million** people are members of the LGPS in the UK either as active, contributing members, pensioners or deferred members.

To view the rest click [here](#)

## **BBC aka Barnet Blogging Community**

If you want to know what is going on in Barnet you can't go far wrong with the BBC, I have checked and I have yet to hear of such a formidable **'bunch of bloggers'**

You can check out yourself.

- [Barnet Eye](#)

- [Mrs Angry aka Broken Barnet](#)
- [Mr Reasonable](#)
- [Mr Mustard](#)
- [Vicky](#)
- [Barnet Trades Council](#)
- [Barnet Alliance](#) (BAPS)

## Proud to be a Barnet Employee

Whilst the above statement might seem out of step in light of news that the Future Shape/One Barnet programme has so far decided that 24 out of 25 services need to be privatised. We know, because we speak to our members, that they want to continue working for the Council. The 'identity of their employer' is important to them.

Please contact the UNISON office on 0208 359 2088 or email [contactus@barnetunison.org.uk](mailto:contactus@barnetunison.org.uk) to claim your FREE wristband and badge.

## Updated Petitions

We have some **new petitions** which need your support. Please take **2 minutes** to sign these petitions

[Stop the One Barnet Programme](#)

[Save Friern Barnet Library](#)

[Save Royal Brompton Hospital's children's cardiac services](#)

[The People's Petition for a Million Climate Jobs](#)

[Demand a Public Inquiry into Legionella in Fremantle Care Homes](#)

[Save our NHS](#)

[Save Our Library](#)

[Save Barnet Museum](#)



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

The Facebook logo, consisting of the word "facebook" in a white, lowercase, sans-serif font on a dark blue rectangular background.

facebook

Click here [John Burgess](#)

