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Summer Edition

Today ⚠️

☁️ 37°
22°



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September newsletter: deadline for content is Thursday 5th September

Please email articles to shannah@lambeth.gov.uk and JCruywagen@lambeth.gov.uk

Lambeth BWG joined the Windrush day of action

June 22 was the 1st annual Windrush Day of Action. Lambeth BWG joined the Windrush day of action demo and banner drop from Westminster bridge organised bamelawyersforjustice.com.

It is important that the justice for Windrush campaign continues in strength and resolve to get justice for the Windrush and wider generation.

The local government conference and National delegate conference thanks to you our Unison branch members who voted for us to at-



June 2019 was attended by 2 delegates from the BWG committee and we would like to extend our

tend. We are pleased to report back that the composited Windrush motion (Justice for Windrush) , Gun and knife crime – stop the senseless killings. Tackling racism at work, were carried. We cannot be complacent we need to take positive action in our work place and wider communities to bring about positive changes. We will be campaigning on these issues and need you to support us on these very important challenges that face our community.

RMO Terms and Conditions Victory: UNISON

The branch received a request for help from a member in the employ of an RMO (Resident Management Organisation): an autonomous body in charge of the running of a council estate or estates). There are a number of these and they are of a very variable quality in terms of their levels of awareness as employers. This particular one has embarked on a particularly ill-advised course of action.

The estate manager being under suspension pending disciplinary investigation, a board member took over staff

management and attempted some extraordinary changes.

Advised by a HR company called Peninsula they attempted to introduce some extraordinary provisions in a new contract of employment: a right to search employees and their vehicles at any time; a clause allowing the employer to send people home if there was insufficient work for them to do and pay them "the statutory minimum" (which I take to mean the minimum wage).

All of this on top of the fact that they had mis-

laid the original TUPE provisions when they employed the member in question !

I communicated the trade union position on this to the board member in question on several occasions, by email & on the phone. Relying on advice from this equivocal HR outfit this individual claimed that these provisions were nothing out of the ordinary.

The member informed me last week that all staff members would be required to sign this contract on Friday 05/07. Unable to attend (I was already

booked in to support another member) I represented to the RMO board member that employees had a legal right to be accompanied by a TU rep on such occasions. She did not reply but on Monday, the member sent me this;

"Hi Eamon, Friday meeting was cancelled for all staff (due to union involvement)!"

Looks like we won this one, at least for now.

[Eamon Maguire](#)

World Earth Day: Climate change isn't "business as usual"

World Earth Day this year is on 20 September and there is a growing international campaign for workers to take action to save the environment.

Capitalism is the cause of climate change. It is our profit driven economy that is destroying the planet. Workers are in an incredibly strong

position to take action, to freeze the machinery of climate destruction at the source.



Lambeth Trade Council are hosting a meeting on 12 September with

speakers from the local trade unions and climate change activists.

Come and discuss what we can do to fight alongside the inspiring school student strikers who are on the front line of the battle for climate change. The planet is dying, millions of species face extinction and the polar ice caps are melting. Irre-

versible climate change is already with us, the question now is how we can save the planet for future generations.

We need system change not climate change!

<https://www.facebook.com/events/2284812811555748/>

Civic Centre Ground Floor Major Redesign

Following on from Bernie's latest meetings with Corporate Health & Safety: he is pleased to announce some major progress to ensure the health and well-being of our Union members and staff. "

The Civic Centre will have a major redesign on the ground floor.

Customer Service Area: Following a long Unison campaign to improve safety for staff in the Customer Service Area, a Police risk assessment was conducted that broadly supported my concerns in that staff were not offered adequate protection. The Customer Service Area will be redesigned I understand with a counter area.

First aid rooms: Following another long campaign to improve First Aid Facilities at both the CC and TH. Corporate HnS have agreed to improvements in G-09 that will bring it in line with the standards recommended by the Health & Safety Executive. The Town Hall first aid room will also be moved from the current basement Prayer room to the ground floor and will also be in line with the standards recommended by the HSE.

Staff entrance and lifts: I think everybody recognises that this is a design fault. The staff barrier entrances are too close to the lift indicators that are spread very wide. So a staff member

enters and then stops to see what lift is leaving first, other members of staff behind him/her come through, which causes congestion and they cannot get through, meantime the barriers may close on a member of staff!

Hot food area on the ground floor: Another design fault was having one hot food eating area on the 5th floor, which is too small, crowded, noisy, and dangerous for all the CC Staff wishing to eat there lunchtime between 12 – 2pm! Another hot food area will be introduced for use lunchtime on the ground floor.

Hierarchy diagram for Health & Safety meet-

ings. From my latest count there are 21 meetings (monthly, bi monthly, or quarterly) that concern Health & Safety – or consider Health & Safety issues. However there is currently no hierarchy or diagram to show how these meetings interact with each other, or paths of issue escalation. Basically it is a bit of a muddle. Corporate Health & Safety have promised to produce a diagram to show interaction, how issues are identified, escalated and resolved (well that's the plan!).

[Bernie Conmy](#)
(Branch Health and Safety Officer)

Exit Cap May Affect You !

As part of its attack on public sector workers, the Westminster government has introduced a set of reforms to exit payments (including redundancy payments) in the public sector – each set of proposals goes further than the last. All fly in the face of local, and even national, collective agreements, some agreed at the highest levels of government.

Some of the proposals will mean re-opening regulations on pension entitlements, breaching the commitment not to alter public sector pensions for 25 years. The proposals have been on the back burner for a couple of years as the government tries to sort Brexit but, we now have

a new set of draft proposals for implementing the £95k cap on exit settlements.

When does it come into force?

This is unclear at this stage but currently in consultation phase for regulations. The legislation for allowing this cap was agreed in 2015.

Who is affected?

Anyone working in the public sector who gets an exit/redundancy/early retirement settlement. It will mostly affect high earners, but despite previous government promises, it **will also affect moderate earners** if they have long service. In local government, where anyone made redundant after age 55 is currently

automatically entitled to early retirement instead of redundancy, someone earning as little as £25,000 could be affected, because an early retirement settlement (made directly to the pension scheme to compensate for taking current entitlements earlier than expected) is often much larger than a straightforward redundancy settlement. In other words, the £95,000 cap applies to the whole settlement, even the part of it which is paid to the pension scheme – not just the part which the individual receives.

What do I do if my exit payment is no longer enough to cover my entitlement to an early retirement?

The government is clear that the member would have three choices:

- Take a straight redundancy payment instead of early retirement or
- Make up the difference themselves (find part of the lump sum to pay the pension scheme) or
- Accept a partly reduced pension.

However, current regulations in the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) conflict with this advice as, **currently, regulations do not give those options to employees**

[Ruth Cashman](#)
(Joint Branch Secretary)

Apprentices

It's hard enough to get an apprenticeship as it is, yet we now find that young adults leaving school without any qualifications or any decent grades have an impossible job, competing with others that have those qualifications.

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...As we all know not everybody takes to schooling, or are ignored at school for one reason or another. Pressure is on schools to get the best results and to conform to Ofsted rules and targets.

You can't leave until you are eighteen, (unless you continue with your education at college then you can leave at sixteen) yet if you are not interested or even

not academically minded this could be a waste of two or three years. A few decades ago you could leave school at fifteen and get an apprenticeship without any qualifications. This, mixed with training on the shop floor going to college, but also gave you a wage. Various governments have focused on education, which is all very well if you are an early learner,

but what of the late developer or the young person who wants to get out and work with their hands.

We have massive skill shortage in this country and it will only get worse when we leave or, if we leave the European neighbours.

Let youngster leave if they have an indentured apprenticeship to go too, at 15 or 16. They

will still have to complete an education to gain their trade qualifications but will have an actual aim in life to have a skill which can be used anywhere in the world.

It may even help prevent youth crime on the street, giving a young adult a real goal in life and a purpose for the future

[Reg Morrison](#)

The Return of the Direct Labor Organisation ?

DLO'S, seen as outdated, hammered by various Government Act's, starting with the Local Government, Planning and Land Act, stating that direct labour organisations should have a rate of return of at least 5 per cent and that work had to be con-

tracted out. Instrument does the Government no good (Conservative Government) and is not worthy of the House to debate. It was introduced ostensibly in the name of efficiency and fair competition, but it was thought it had little to do with either. It was seen by

Health Service in different disguises, Privatisation of all statutory services, and a new modern name for DLO's: Direct Service Organisations (DSO).

Many Local Authorities and Housing Associations have had enough of private contractors and the quality of work produced and more importantly the cost of paying contractors.

Now is a good time to push for the ongoing revival of the DLO or if you wish DSO's. The list grows where people have lost confidence in the private sector not only nationally but locally, Leisure centres being privately run, and expensive, refuse privately run and ineffi-

cient, highway's road maintenance, pot holes etc. not being repaired. Colleges closing sections, as there is a lack of students in apprenticeships and training, lack of local employment.

Not only is it a great idea to have a DLO organisation but a necessary one, DLO's are more flexible, accountable, closer to tenants needs, and don't have to make profit from public money. We need to get Councils to adopt a policy statement supporting fair competition for the DLO. Giving the best possible value for money in fair competition with the private sector.

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tracted out.

Then we had the Local Government (Direct Labour Organisations) (Competition) Regulations 1983.

It was argued at the time that this Statutory

many that it was a way of rewarding building contractors who contributed to the Conservative party.

Forty plus year's on where are we: privatisation of the National

The return of the DLO / DSO ? (...continued)

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. Labour Councils will already be aware that Labour Party policy is against contracting out.

or another. Back in 1983 an MP for Manchester pointed out to the House that Manchester took on between 150 to 180

Tory councillors and Tory press. It is vital that this mud-slinging is not used as an excuse to give work to contractors. Often the problem lies with poor management and organisation. Some contractors have a loss leader tender led contract, work for free for short while to hopefully attract long term contract for profit, so as to undermine DLO organisations, and are probably subsidised by claiming on variation orders or some other means to keep DLO's out.

Ideally DLO's should be set up with trained officers, experienced in the art of putting tenders together. Making sure contractors are members of established building organisations.

Tradespeople should be well trained and if possible live locally, so they have the interest of the area in their mind.

[Reg Morrison](#)



Management support must also be sort by educating them into why DLO's can be more efficient, effective in emergency situations. Can hire local labour, give worthwhile apprenticeships in the building, leisure industry and possible more approved training in other areas.

Not all young women or men achieve academic qualifications at school or college, do we leave them on the scape heap or offer apprenticeships with or without qualification in Local authorities, and many could be late developers for one reason

apprentices, taken on at any one time in 27 different trades because of the DLO and this was vital to the industry, but because of the demise of DLO's we will have less craftspeople.

Back in the 80's Local authorities were the largest group employing apprentices, giving youngsters male and female a purpose in life and a start to a good courier.

Inevitably there will be those that will bring accusations of so called previous services provide by Councils, but much is hearsay put out by



See more news from Local Government on the [UNISON Web Site](#)

Diary Dates:

[Rally in Windrush Square 20th against climate change.](#) 20th September from 12:30

World Earth Day 12th September—Lambeth Trade Council Meeting: **Karibu Centre 7 Gresham Rd, Brixton, London SW9 7PH from 6pm**

See other events on the [Lambeth UNISON website](#)

Training Courses:

Pensions: 2-4 December
Negotiating: 30 Oct-1 Nov
Dealing with bullying and harassment at work: 28-30 October

Benefits & Discounts:

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