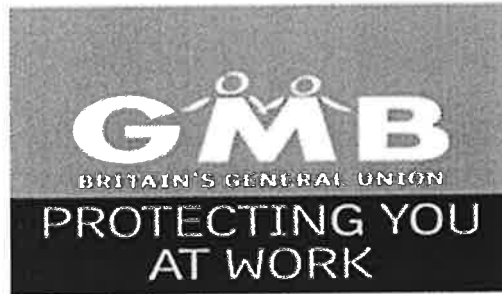




GMB Branch Meeting

5th December 2024

1. Apologies
2. Minutes
3. Branch Secretary Update
4. Education Convenor Update
5. GMB Officer update
6. SRN Nominations
7. Part-time Education Convenor
8. Congress Nominations
9. Part-time Corporate Convenor
10. Strike Fund
11. AOB



As we come to the end of the year and a new Government in power the struggle is still ongoing.

I attend the CCF on the 28th November where we had Director of HR Louise Searle and Duncan Whitfield who attended to give the Trade Unions an update on the Council Financial extra measures.

We were informed by them that they have 13 ½ million overspent and they have a dozen IR35 Consultants in the Council which has gone down from 55

Adam Brittan AD of Operations was explaining that him and Jo Meagher are working on reducing Agency Workers and Consultants in the Council, I pointed out why is Jo still in the Council because she is IR35. Their explanation was that she will be leaving at the end of the year she is filling in until permanent staff starts in HR, I pointed out that we need to trained Council Staff so that we don't rely on IR35 to carry out those roles. I requested data for each Directorates to show where IR35 sits in the Council and can the Trade Unions have formal letter/email giving us the update which they are sharing in the CCF Trade Unions pointed out that the CCF is highjacked to give a verbal update when in fact it should be a separate meeting to discuss the Financial Crisis in the Council due to the discussion dominating the Agenda. Louise apologises for this and the reason she gave was that JSF was postpone and that where should give her update, so she took on board what the Trade Unions views.

I attended the Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting on the 2nd Dec it was said in the meeting the Auditors failed homes for Lambeth not 1 penny spent on Council Homes, we HRA reserves will be zero in a few years it was said. TLA paid out a high payments to Solicitors in the Council, nothing was mentioned in the report of Phoenix house which is standing empty. It was also stated that any services that we lose now will not be coming back, it was rather bleak listening to this.

On the 11th November for 5 days our APCOA members were on strike for 5 days for better Pay Salary our Branch was out with them outside APCOA Shakespeare Road site for 2 days we marched to Lambeth Town Hall, on the 1st day we stood outside the Town Hall demonstrating. The next day we went inside the Town Hall which the Council weren't expecting it, this time we went inside the Town Hall. It disrupted the Corporate Director's for Residency Services meeting she did come down and spoke to me and Alex Etches GMB Officer to say that the **Council is Managing the Contract of APCOA** to date APCOA and GMB have not got around the table to negotiate. Our branch contributed to the Strike fund of £35 per day for each member that was on strike regional contributed £70 per day for each member I made that Executive decision however further Strike in December, and it will be going to the Committee to decide how much we can contribute to the Strike Fund.

Our branch bank balance is £18,285.79

We have now recruited a part-time Education Convenor who will be working with the Education Convenor Christine Golding her name is Blanka Vuolo let's take this moment to congratulate on her new position.

I have leading on the Westminster Bridge Team concerns, our member are deployed to patrol the Westminster Bridge without Stab vest or uniform also I wrote out bodycam. I wrote the Corporate Director Venetia Baptist-Reid, at the end of October raising these issues, I had no response to my several emails until the 27th November. That is because I raised this issue in the previous meeting which Corporate Director was chairing and her director sent out a Teams invite. Our members were threatened by the illegal traders, the hot dogs vendors telling our GMB members that they are going to throw them overboard into the Thames River and taking out their iPads and phones are started to record them. They even wrote a letter of complaint to the Council to report our GMB members who were carrying out their roles, I requested for our GMB members role to be suspended whilst an investigation is undertaken by the H&S Team a risk assessment needs to be completed for the individuals. Our GMB members are now carrying out other tasks, in the meantime management sent out an email stating that staff members are on training

PROTECTING YOU AT WORK

Employment Rights Bill

December 1, 2024

How will the below lists of employment rights be introduced and implemented via Heads of schools and HR. What are the Strategies going forward?

- On day 1 rights and protections like Unfair Dismissal (while allowing employers to operate probation periods)
Entitlement to Paternity Leave; establish Bereavement Leave.

address one-sided flexibility through the request for Flexible working 2 times a year.

- Ending of exploitative zero-hours contracts.
- The end of the use of fire and rehire. This can be evidenced by how some restructures are implemented. *(Reay School) restructure of the Premises team in March 2022. The Full time Premises Officer left Reay in August 2020 and was not replaced, and the premises assistant was made redundant. No officer was rehired until 2024. Until that time, they used agency workers*

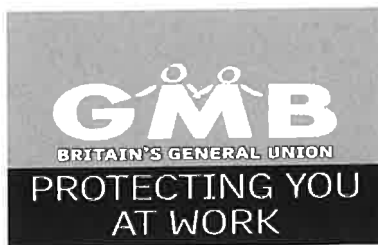
Major topics covered by the bill include:

- Zero hours contracts – introducing a right to reasonable notice of shifts and to be offered a contract with guaranteed hours, reflecting hours regularly worked.
- Statutory sick pay – removing the three-day waiting period (so employees are eligible from the first day of illness or injury) and the lower earnings limit test for eligibility. Sub-contractors such as ISS
- Unfair dismissal – removing the two-year qualifying period (so employees are protected from unfair dismissal from the first day of employment), subject to a potential probationary period.
- Sectoral collective bargaining – reintroducing the School Staff Negotiating Body and creating an Adult Social Care Negotiating Body, which could determine pay and other terms and conditions for workers in these sectors.

- Trade unions – introducing rights for trade unions to access workplaces and repealing the Strikes (Minimum Service Levels) Act 2023 and most provisions of the Trade Union Act 2016.

Measures included in the Employment Bill

- reinstatement of the School Support Staff Negotiating Body (SSSNB). As you know, the body will be tasked with establishing a national terms and conditions handbook and fair pay rates for support staff and providing advice on training and career progression routes.
- Whilst a previous SSSNB existed in 2009-10, we recognise that the school system has evolved since then.
- In response to a question on protections for GMB members over existing Equal Pay claims when the SSSNB is re-established the Schools National Officer on this issue. She would attend the next meeting of the National Schools Committee to update on this issue. At the committee meetings there were comments on the implications of moving members out of the National Joint Committee and the potential effects on pay, conditions and facilities. There is a survey sent out to hear what members in schools



Education Convenor

December Branch Meeting

5.12.2024

Welcome to the new School convenor **Blanka Vuolo**.

I will be reducing my day as of January 1st, 2025, I will be available on Tuesday, Wednesdays and Thursdays only.

Restructures

Archbishop Sumner Restructure has been completed

I attended the Henry Cavendish restructure which initially wanted to change the Job Description of the HLTA and added on additional duties. I argued on behalf of our members and secured an outcome that HLTA would be assimilated into the new structure without any addition to your JD's.

London Nautical School is to transfer (TUPE) to City of London Academy Trust (COLAT) It is proposed that the transfer take place on 1st January 2025. Our Regional Organiser attended the consultation meeting and met with our members and urged them to put their questions, comments and queries to the consultation panel before the end of consultation on 12th December.

Lark Hall has proposed to transfer to Wandle Academy Trust. Unfortunately, Gary Nicol the headteacher has refused to consult with Lambeth council and the Unions over the proposal. I arranged a member meeting to discuss the next strategies and sent over 25 invites to the members but unfortunately only 5 members attended the meeting. I have sent emails to the Headteacher to allow the GMB to visit to the school, but he has not responded to my emails. The only way forward is for members to request their union be allowed to come into the school. The GMB have organised a joint trade union meeting to discuss the options available such as to demonstrate in front of the school and leafleting the parents, but without the support of the majority of members there is nothing we can do. *(as the GMB is a member's led union)*. I asked Lambeth if they can intervene as the build is an asset to the council. The Council response is the building will be leased to Wandle Trust for a peppercorn rent to Lambeth for 125 years.

Gypsy Hill Federation

The background

There is a consultation in progress to De-federate Gypsy Hill Federation.

Four of its schools have a forecast deficit of £2.42 million, of which £1.91 million lies with Kingswood Primary School. Potential actions could have been de-federation, or de-delegation of budgets.

The new governors considered the option to de-federate as they have recently chosen to defederate Crawford school in Southwark which was part of the GHF. The proposal allowed stakeholders to submit questions, comments and queries to the governors, and they have received only 25 questions from Support staff. (*from Paxton schools*).

I have asked if there is a Staff governor and was told the staff voted for two staff governors. The council will come back to me with the names of the staff governors.

Training or TA's in schools

I have raised the exclusion of Support Staff in relation to Children's mental health training which was offered at Glenbrook school. So often support staff are not invited to attend training which benefits the SEND children they are supporting.

Question I put to the Education Director

- How is training for support staff advertised?
- Also, how are support staff including or supported in career progression through training?

I received a response from Sophie Garner the Education Strategy, Access & Inclusion

She has promised that there will be TA training on mental health and will pursue School's for Training for TA's. I will chase this up for the next branch meeting.

Pupil Place Planning

5 proposals were presented to cabinet on Monday 4th November.

1. Fenstanton amalgamate with Holy Trinity.

Update: Holy Trinity and Fenstanton

The governors have a working party with the Diocese looking at the potential amalgamation. This will depend on the pupil's viability which has to be proven

They will bring back a proposal to the Council on the plans how this will work which will be a new proposal which must be presented on 30th December and agreed by 20th February 2025.

2. Christ Church Brixton SW8 amalgamate with St John's the Divine
Update: No change to the proposal
4. Glenbrooke amalgamate with Kings Ave proposed to move the date closer

Update: **Kings Ave**

Unions were told the Council had not decided in respect of the amalgamation and closing the school a year early. However, the Council decision was to give the statutory notice for the implementation, and it would be 2025 which would give a year's notice to close in 2026. If **Governors** want to implement an earlier closure the council has given permission for that to happen.

The school misunderstood and gave out the wrong information. The NEU will review their position considering the clarification.

5. **St John's Angell Town CofE amalgamate with St Saviours** put on hold.

Timetable of closures:

Implementation Sept: 2025/ 2026 the next phase will give detailed instructions into to the closures. These details concerning the implementation will go to Head teacher and Governors on 11th December. This then will be shared with Unions at the Education form meeting on 12th December. I will update members after this meeting.

The HR have presented to the unions a Local agreement Redeployment Addendum for Schools involved in Pupil Planning and Placements. These guidelines will mitigate the impact of compulsory redundancies arising from Pupil Place Planning. Schools in Lambeth voluntarily agree to sign up to an agreement not to fill vacancies but offer them to staff who may be made redundant due to the closing of schools.

Representations

- The majority of my time is answering members concerns and accompanying members to their sickness absence meetings this term.
- Attending GMB National schools Committee, GMB Regional Schools Committee, GMB Public Sector Committee, GMB The Central Executive Committee. Education Form, School Forum, CCF and JFS.
- I am requesting for workplace reps if you need experience, please request to attend meetings with me to observe and get experience on how meetings are organised. Examples grievances, or disciplinary are conducted.

Regional and National Schools Committee

Updates:

- Congress motions was for a new webpage specifically for School Support staff. This is now in place
- Questions have arisen on protections for GMB members over existing Equal Pay claims when the SSSNB is re-established. The Schools National Officer will attend the next meeting of the National Schools Committee to update on this issue. At the committee meetings there were comments on the implications of moving members out of the National Joint Committee and the potential effects on pay, conditions and facilities. There is a survey been sent out to gauge members views.
- The 2025/26 NJC pay award survey went out and the information and data is being collated before presented the outcome to the NJC employer.
- London region has requested an invitation to discuss TTO contracts with the National Schools Committee as it would be preferable to work with Southern Region on a potential campaign. NSC agreed any suggestions from the Lambeth Schools member would be greatly appreciated.
- I have requested Lambeth council to review the payroll systems to consider school support staff or any LA employee on universal credit. Also, the detrimental effect to member who are overpaid by Lambeth payroll and must pay back overpayments. I have pointed out there are local authorities **who can** and have offered this facility and the GMB are aware of the authorities that offer this facility such as Oldham, Sefton, Cumberland Council and Liverpool councils. The Hr are meeting with the payroll director who they will present this proposal. I support this branch is gathering a campaign together to push this through. I also think this is a political conversation and unless legislation changes then there is no mandate to employers to stagger pay awards or even for mistakes by payroll where **employee is overpaid**. This is an issue we are address on a national level by lobbying the new government. Additionally, it is a wider societal issue with support staff and employees commonly employed by subcontractors employed by Lambeth council such ISS catering and Serco who are low paid employees not earning a wage high enough that means they need to claim universal credit and or other benefits.

Serco

Serco have reached the threshold for strike mandate and Alex is negotiating with management over the pay award.

The new offer:

Drivers £18.per hr.

Loaders £15.00per hr to equal housing. This will be taken to the member for them to make a decision to either except or take industrial action.

The issue of Annual leave and the annual leave policy is part of the negotiations.

I have been advising a large majority of Serco member who have tried to book annual leave but have been denied. Through pursuing Serco Hr members have now been given there leave. I am advising Serco employees to book most of their leave for the year in January 2025.

ISS

The company tenure is up this year, and my understanding is schools are looking for smaller catering companies to supply food for their children.

- I have been representing member on the same issues which are the company underpaying staff by payroll mistakes.
- A member who I have got back in work after a 2-year delay.



GMB Minutes 05 12 24

Minutes taken by David Short, Youth Officer

Apologies – Joan Nash, Cllr Hashi, Alex, Blanka

Previous minutes agreed

Branch Secretary update

[Trish has]

Education Convenor update

[Christine has]

After Christine's update, members discussed how school staff who are paid for term-time only are disadvantaged by misleading pay awards e.g. not obvious that pay is pro rata so pay is lower than it appears. Christine advised that payslip needs to be comprehensible, and staff can ask HR for breakdown of pay. Christine represented a woman who was scale 4 but Lambeth

accidentally put her on scale 6. She now owes the council over £6000. Important that members understand their pay as they could end up in financial detriment through no fault of their own.

SRN Nominations

Southern Region – nominations are for People of Colour. Trish is the Vice-Chair; Christine has been Vice-Chair previously. Trish recommended that members attend as it's an eye-opener to see what's happening nationwide. We need more people to attend from this branch as currently only Trish and Christine have been going. Trish will send out a link to members. Vacancies include Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and social media Officer.

Congress Nominations

Congress lasts four days and branch can send someone to do a speech. If it's agreed, then GMB will lobby the Council and/or Members of Parliament to pass motions.

Theresa, Lorraine and Jo expressed interest in going, though Theresa wasn't in attendance.

Christine suggested that one person go to Women's Conference and one person to Congress.

The branch can nominate up to two people to Congress.

Members voted unanimously voted for Jo and Lorraine to go. Discussed possible motions – Jo suggested a motion on training and support for HLATs. Christine suggested Jo write up the motion. Trish asked Lorraine to think of a motion too.

Kathleen Taylor and Angela Lindo expressed interest in going to Women's Conference. Branch voted unanimously to nominate them to go.

Part-time Corporate Convenor

Two names have been put forward and they will be interviewed on Tuesday 10th December by Committee.

Trish mentioned that there are always opportunities for members in the GMB training, Campaigns, Conferences and to learn more.

Strike Fund

Branch has been paying £35 per member per day for APCOA while they have been on strike. Region has been paying £70 per member per day. Trish made an executive decision. APCOA may go on strike again, so it will go before the Committee to vote on how much to contribute to the financial support.

AOB

Christine - proposed to introduce Assistant Branch Secretary as new position. Trish and Christine disagree on this. Branch is very large and there is a lot of work. Other branches have this position. Voluntary position and would involve admin support. Christine would like members to provide more support to the office. Work can be done from home.

Trish – Bill Medlock was the Branch Secretary when there were five thousand Staff employees in Lambeth. When he was off sick, there were officers to cover. When he stepped down, Ian Full took this position. Membership went down. When Ian was sick, Christine and Trish would cover. We are not overrun by work. Joan and Trish booked leave at the same time; Trish advised against this. This left Christine on her own for a week. We are recruiting a part-time corporate convenor. We do not need an Assistant Branch Secretary. Trish feels undermined because neither white male secretaries was asked for an Assistant Branch Secretary; she is a Black woman and being told she needs support undermining her. Trish is concerned that she has not been copied into emails and informed about important updates going on in school. For example, Christine agreed that NEU could sign off policies on behalf of GMB in an email which she received 2nd December. Trish only found about this via a third party because the Branch Secretary of the Head Teachers sent me an email stating it was agreed in a meeting in September that NEU would be Joint Branch Secretary. She is strongly against this. She is not tired, she can do the Secretary role on her own. She is transparent and she speaks directly. We don't have 5000 members anymore, due to restructures in Corporate and in Schools.

Christine – when Ian was Secretary, Christine was allowed to sign off decisions related to education. This is the source of the misunderstanding. Trish said Ian did not give Christine the authority, she had to report to him, and he would make the decision on any major changes

Trish was informed that the NEU officer did not want to take on the role. Christine denies this.

Trish does not trust NEU as they would negotiate without the other unions. Her approach is to involve colleagues from other unions. Trish explained that the Trade Unions lost their office space and GMB, Unite, Unison, NEU had to work from home for about 2 years. The joint Branch Secretary Ruth Cashman Unison were having meetings with Management and negotiated office space for themselves and not for the rest of the unions in the Civic Centre. Trish approached the Chief Executive at the time who led on finding a space for the Trade Unions and she insisted that GMB, NEU, Unite Head Teachers Unions to be accommodated, and that how we got our office space. Unison had their own interest, and not their sisters Unions to be housed and that why she objects to having a Joint branch Secretary in Schools.

Christine – proposal is that NEU would sign policy with GMB logo. Nobody knew that Trish wanted to be involved.

Trish insists that Ian Fall previous Branch Secretary, was included in emails and the Convenors attended Review meetings to give Ian updates.

Christine – we have Joan Nash Part-time Corporate who was off sick for a while 2 weeks, we 'have another convenor who will be starting shortly as Education Convenor and needs guidance. Wouldn't it be nice to have additional admin support.

David suggested we have someone shadow Trish since she had encouraged members to shadow roles. Trish and Christine were both happy with this.

David put forward a motion to invite members to shadow Trish in her role as Branch Secretary. Branch voted unanimously in favour. Trish agreed but is concerned that a members might object to having someone in meetings due to the nature of the meetings would not be able to shadow in all circumstances.

Kind regards,

Patricia Ennis

Lambeth GMB Branch Secretary

Town Hall,

GO4

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To Join: www.gmb.org.uk/join

