

## After BREXIT: Defend migrants and keep Corbyn!

### Statement from Lambeth UNISON

Like our national union, Lambeth UNISON supported the campaign to stay in the EU. We believed UK withdrawal from the European Union in the referendum would be a victory for the nationalist right and their vile, racist campaign against migrants, including members – and potential members – of our union. We wanted to see a campaign that sought an end to austerity, and the levelling \*up\* of wages, conditions, services, and rights across Europe; for the scrapping of bureaucratic EU structures and for a sovereign, democratic European Parliament; and for freedom of movement and an end to “Fortress Europe”.

### Lambeth Remains

We are proud of the role we played in Lambeth’s 79% vote in favour of staying in the European Union. The vote to leave the EU reflects deep and growing social distress caused by

years of vicious attacks against living standards and public services. Our next actions can only be to redouble our fight against austerity, defending migrants and to fight for a decent life for all workers. The three million Europeans living, working and studying in the UK will now be fearful about their future, many of them will be UNISON members. We must fight any concessions or triangulation by the Labour Party and wider labour movement to the mood of nationalism – such as justifying the strengthening of immigration controls. Instead we will champion the politics of unity and social solidarity amongst workers.

### Keep Corbyn!

The referendum result has already been used by the right-wing in the Labour Party as an opportunity to challenge the Jeremy Corbyn leadership. We defend Corbyn. The huge democratic mandate on which he stood for and won the leadership of the Labour Party

stands. We stand by our union’s decision to support Corbyn for leader of the Labour Party and congratulate our General Secretary for signing the letter from all the Labour Link Unions warning MPs against a “manufactured leadership row”. Whatever the shortcomings of Labour’s campaign on the referendum, Corbyn was right not to join Tory’s big business message on Europe, was right not to appeal to traditional Labour voters on the basis of prejudice against migrants. Nobody is better placed than Corbyn, to win back Labour heartlands to our party and a politics of solidarity socialism and anti-racism.

Trade unionists organised action to defend migrants rights in Lambeth

Lambeth UNISON and Unite Community branch organised an action outside Olive Morris House on 4 July to call for migrant rights and for our communities in Lambeth to stand together.

Lambeth has one of the largest Portuguese communities outside Portugal, and a large Polish community, alongside many other nationalities of people effected by the vote to leave the EU. An organiser from a Polish community organisation came along to thank us for the action and plans are afoot for more events in the near future. Please get in touch to help.

Unity and solidarity in the months and days ahead will be essential.



# What does the referendum result mean for EU citizens?

The result of the referendum per se cannot instantly change the laws of the UK. All proposed changes have to go through the Parliament and are subject to approval.

Following the resignation of PM David Cameron the Conservative party MPs will have to appoint a new PM and/or call general elections. He or she will start the procedure of Brexit by activating the Article 50 of the European Convention.

## What happens next

One of the basic principles of the EU has been the so-called freedom of movement, which guarantees that all EU citizens are free to relocate and work in all member countries of the EU.

For citizens who already live and work in the UK the immigration laws will have to change in order to establish the new rules for permanent residency, work permits, etc.

All these will be discussed during the negotiations that will follow the parliamentary approval of Brexit, if that is the case, between the UK and the EU official bodies.

## The situation in Lambeth Council

Lambeth Council Leader Cllr Lib Peck has reassured Lambeth employees that the council wishes to preserve community cohesion with a message sent to all staff:

"... Resolving our future EU membership is likely to take several years



to complete. With the resignation of the Prime Minister and an imminent leadership contest, central government is unlikely to trigger the process of leaving the EU until after a general election. It is unlikely this could happen before the Autumn at the very earliest. The process then runs for two years. Nevertheless there will be implications for Lambeth that we do need to consider. There will be residents and businesses who are nervous about the future and we need to reassure them and seek to address their issues where we can. We also need to ensure that all communities continue to enjoy living in our diverse borough and that community cohesion continues to be a strength."

The Local Government Association stayed neutral during the referendum campaign in order to avoid confrontation with the councils it

represents; it issued the following statement:

"Councils in England need a seat around the table when decisions are taken over how to replace EU laws as part of the UK's exit negotiations." The LGA will continue to represent the interests of councils in Brussels as the UK's exit from the EU is negotiated.

"EU laws and regulations impact on many council services, such as waste, employment, health and safety, consumer protection and trading and environmental standards.

"There cannot be an assumption that power over these services is simply transferred from Brussels to Westminster. If services are delivered locally, then the power over how to run them should rest locally too. Decades of centralised control

over funding and services has distanced our residents from the decisions that affect their everyday lives. With greater control in our areas we can improve services and save money.

"Communities in England have been allocated £5.3 billion of EU regeneration funding up to 2020. It is important for the Government to guarantee it will protect this vital funding to avoid essential growth-boosting projects stalling and local economies across England being stifled.

"The LGA will continue to represent the interests of English councils in Brussels as the UK's exit from the EU is negotiated."

### The Unison point of view:

Jon Rodgers, Unison branch secretary said:

"Outside the European Union there will be no *legal barrier to a Government legislating to create a labour market whose predominant feature is "freedom of contract" – this was the traditional British approach (but in a time when 80% plus of all workers were covered by collective agreements, whereas now that figure is around 25%). With weak trade unions this would give employers the whip hand. It is up to us to build strong trade unions, and to campaign for a Government which will not attack workers' rights.*

" ... a future Government could use various legislative devices to remove workers' rights which have been intro-

duced to implement European Directives. Of course whether or not any of these rights will be removed is a question that can only now be resolved by a political struggle over the future of the country. None of the rights would be removed automatically and – importantly – all of them still apply right now."

To summarise:

- Discrimination of all types, especially against pregnant women and young workers, may increase. Legal protections for part-time and fixed-term contract workers may be reduced.
- Various legal rights to collective consultation, in the event of redundancies are also vulnerable after they lose the protection of European law.
- Health and safety at work regulations (enjoying cross-party support and implementing EU law) could be removed. All these under the pretext that they are "red tape".

The UNISON secretary concludes:

"It is still early days and we have some time to consider how to respond to these threats. Obviously it is more important than ever that we try to elect a UK Government which will respect worker's rights – but we also need to build the strength, membership and organisation of our trade union if we are to protect our members in future."

By Maria Athini

## Step forward on local government pay

*We helped score a major victory over pay at the Local Government Conference in June, reports Jon Rodgers*

Lambeth branch scored a significant victory at Local Government Conference on Sunday and Monday, as our Emergency Composite motion to censure the National Joint Council Committee for having accepted a pay offer which members had voted to reject was carried in a card vote with a majority of over 60,000.

This was a good result. We had good support from many other branches in particular the Manchester branch who were part of the composite with us along with Southwark and Tower Hamlets.

We have, as a result, agreed that – notwithstanding that the employers have made a two year pay offer which has been accepted – UNISON will make a pay claim for an increase from April 2017 and the national union will start consulting branches on this claim after Conference.

Next month's Branch Committee, on Tuesday 19 July will receive a full report.

**Won't be missed! A list of the right wing MPs we are glad to see the back of...**



**Won't be Prime Minister...**



**And will we see the back of Gideon "job slasher" Osborne?**







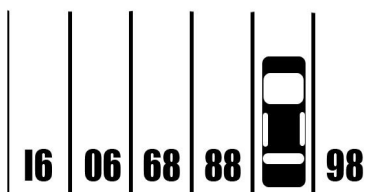
**Next Branch Committee is on Tuesday 19 July at Olive Morris House room 02-05. Open to all stewards and officers of the branch. If you would like to attend as an observer please get in touch with JABlake@Lambeth.gov.uk**

**Wyvil school restructuring**

**Plans by management to reduce the number of Support staff at Wyvil Primary school were challenged by UNISON and the GMB. UNISON held meetings with most support staff to answer questions and relay concerns to the head teacher over the cuts. Thanks to responses from UNISON the number of HLTAs and Early Years Learner assistance was increased.**

**BRAINTEASE**

What number is covered up by the car?



**After the referendum unite to demand...  
No More Austerity  
No To Racism  
Tories Must Go  
Demonstrate: Saturday 16 July 2016  
Assemble 12pm, BBC HQ, Portland Place, London W1**

**Gipsy Hill Federation threatens to turn to a Multi -Academy Trust by the end of term!**

UNISON, NUT and Joint Council unions have expressed their disappointment and anger that the Executive Head Teacher and Governors at Gipsy Hill Federation of Schools wish to become a Multi-Academy Trust with the Mayflower Federation of Schools (Southwark).

Their proposals for a MAT seem to have been written in the context of the Tory Governments previous plan of "forced academisation" by 2020. However, the Government abandoned that plan in May 2016 under immense public pressure so there is even less political reason why Gipsy Hill Federation should rush to become a MAT. There is no imminent threat of a financial crisis and the OFSTED results across the Federation are very high. We see no reason why the Federations would 'lose out' in funding in any future event where they may be forced to become an academy and believe the process is being rushed in order to push it through without opposition.

Gipsy Hill/Mayflower put the proposals on the table in late May and want to convert by the end of term in mid-July 2016!

This ridiculous timetable is far too short for proper consultation with staff, parent and Unions. Going Academy is a huge decision and could have a huge potential impact on staff terms and conditions and the education of pupils, why the rush?

National Union of Teachers (NUT) members are so concerned that they have balloted for industrial action on the 13<sup>th</sup> July. UNISON and other teaching Unions must support this action and also ballot for industrial action if necessary. UNISON policy opposes Academy Schools which we see as a move towards the privatisation and marketization of children's education. Withdrawing from national agreements inevitably weakens Union rights and bargaining rights over time and TUPE transfers give no lasting guarantees that staff contacts (and wages) can't be changed during future restructures.

Incidentally, becoming a MAT does not somehow 'future proof' Academy Chains against financial crisis and UNISON cite the example of the ATT schools chain in East England 2016:

*This year the Academies*

*Transformation Trust (ATT) announced jobs cuts and a major restructuring across its secondary and primary schools in the East and West Midlands, and the East of England. The severe cuts of £500,000 a year mean school support staff face either losing their jobs, or having to apply for new ones, some on much less pay. While the top two highest paid executives at ATT earned £360,000 a year between them...*

UNISON also believes that becoming Academies puts pressures on other local schools become Academies in order to compete for pupil places. Increasing competition between Academy Schools could eventually undermine strategic planning across the borough and could be a recipe for chaos. There is no evidence that academies create more equality of education or higher pupil attainment.

Gipsy Hill Federation have a previous history of resisting Academisation and of listening to staff and parents on this issue. Now is the time to stand firm and send out the message that Academies are not good for children's education and not wanted.

*By Andy Tulls*