



AGM BOOKLET 2021

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UNISON is the UK's largest union, serving more than 1.3 million members. We represent full-time and part-time staff who provide public services, although they may be employed in both the public and private sectors.

Lambeth UNISON was formed in 1993, a merger of NALGO, COHSE and NUPE, three unions that covered local government and health workers.

Nationally UNISON is affiliated to the Labour Party and through our parallel Labour Link structures we have input into Labour Party policy and campaigns.

Our branch prides itself on being very active and fighting hard for our members. We can't always win all everything we want but we know that when we organise together and are willing to take action we can have a good shot at defending our members jobs, terms and conditions and public services.

If your workmates aren't in the union yet then sign them up, we have strength in numbers.

Branch Secretary Report

Ruth Cashman and Simon Hannah

Last year has been a difficult one for lots of people across the world. A global pandemic, of the kind not seen since the Spanish Flu crisis after World War One. Thousands of people have died, including staff in our workplaces. Our thoughts go out to everyone who has lost loved ones.

The trade unions have played a crucial role in safe guarding lives during the pandemic. There has been a constant struggle over the “needs of the economy” versus the public health of the population, which shows you how strange our society is that the two are some how in contradiction since the economy is just made up of people.

Trade Unions have been fighting for

- The right to self-isolate on full pay for all. Public provision of alternative accommodation for people in crowded housing who need to self-isolate.
- To take social care into public ownership and reorganise it as a free, well-funded public service, with its staff on public-sector pay and conditions
- Private hospitals to be taken into emergency public ownership and integrated into the NHS. A 15% pay rise for NHS workers.
- Workers’ control over workplace safety. Re-working of all workplace risk assessments to deal with new virus variants
- Extension and strengthening of the furlough and self-employed support schemes.
- We have vaccines but they are patented and different companies won’t share data, surely this is a case for a requisition of Big Pharma to allow maximum production of vaccines to meet world-wide need; requisition industry to secure adequate supplies of PPE; take NHS logistics and supply in-house

The pandemic has shown how precarious things

can be in our society, and so many people are struggling with poverty, unemployment, domestic violence and mental health issues. Trade unions and pro-working class politics are more important than ever at a time like this.

Lambeth Council

As soon as lock down begun in late March your branch secretaries were in weekly meetings with the strategic director and head of HR as well as the head of Public Health to ensure the safety of staff as many of the council operations rapidly shifted to working from home. We went through over sixty Risk Assessments for those members of staff still working out at about (librarians, parks, social workers, neighbourhood housing officers, hostel staff, technical support officers and so on).

Our members were more quickly alert to safety at work than our employer – we salute the library workers who took the first section 44 action of the pandemic which closed our libraries until they could be made safe, an example to workers across the country!

Despite some problems the councils response to COVID was better than many employers, nearly all back office staff were sent home and stayed home for most of the year when at other councils they instructed most of their staff to return to their office buildings during the summer. We argued consistently throughout that only workers carrying out essential functions should have to leave home and even then, after extensive risk assessments of buildings, work functions and people were carried out.

The Council continued its work around equalities this year, more details of which are in the Equality officer report on page 14.

Schools

In schools there was a huge amount of work done around Health and Safety for the Teaching Assistants and admin staff what are our members. There was also an ongoing issue around unpaid wages stemming from people on Term Time Only Contracts which has been rumbling on for nearly 2 years and is only just being resolved now. There were huge delays but the hard work of the unions paid off and our members are getting the backpay owed to them.

In January, alongside the NEU we issued Section 44 letters for staff to refuse to work in unsafe conditions. These were effective and the government backed down on unsafe early return of all school children. Read more about fantastic Schools organising on page 10.

Private Sector

We quickly moved to demand full sick and isolation pay for all Lambeth agency staff and Contractors, Lambeth was the first Council in the country to do so.

Our private sector members have faced inadequate sick and isolation pay, threats of redundancy and difficulties with furlough. In the next year we have an organising campaign bringing together political and public campaigning for the rights of our private sector workers whilst building strength in the workplace so we can launch workplace campaigns. The pandemic shows that the safety of everyone depends on us reversing decades of privatisation and outsourcing and have a massive levelling up so that all workers enjoy basic rights to paid leave, guaranteed hours, trade union recognition and decent pay.

Our casework dropped off significantly at the council as well as disciplinaries, grievances and so on were all put on hold for around 6 months. The employer pushed for more virtual hearings to clear the backlog but we have been vigilant to ensure that this in no way undermined our members rights to fair representation

and an adequate defence.

Thank you to our administrator Juliet all our reps who worked through the pandemic, despite each facing personal difficulties. Particular thanks, to Paul Fitzgerald who carried on working throughout the pandemic doing casework for members in the private sector. Paul is a retired member who is very dedicated to the cause of trade unionism and volunteers his time to help out so many members every year.

Environmental issues

Despite the collapse in global tourism and plane travel, last year was still a record breaking year for global warming. The threat we face now is that the carbon in the atmosphere has already reached a point where the planet will warm up regardless of reductions in CO2.

It is tempting to think 'a warmer planet means nicer weather' – but the threat of the planet warming is very serious. We are already seeing freak weather conditions across the world – the sudden snow storm in Texas is just the latest on top of wildfires in Alaska, flooding in France, hurricanes in the Caribbean and heatwaves in China. The kind of devastating wildfires that tore through California and Australia in early 2020 will become more common. Sea levels rising as the ice caps melt threaten large parts of coastline and islands. As arable land is lost and seas become polluted food will become more scarce and expensive. No wonder the super-rich like Elon Musk are building spacecrafts to try and escape the planet!

Organisation like Extinction Rebellion and the school students walk outs have shown that people want to fight for a better world and as trade unionists we are in solidarity with and part of the environmental movement. We are affiliated with the Campaign Against Climate Change Trade Union Group which is co-ordinated trade unionists that want to make a difference.

It's been an extremely difficult year for everyone in 2020 and I would like to start by saying how difficult it has been for so many to lose colleagues, friends and family. I would like to say how much on a personal level I will miss Eamon. He was both a friend, a comrade and a someone who was a fantastic person and activist. I think of him often. I'll miss you mate, you were really one of the good ones.

Also thank you to chair and vice chair Gary and Jocelyn. Again I know you have been through a lot, and yet you still continue to help others. And thanks to the branch secretaries, officers and stewards who have done so much this year to keep the branch going and help so many people.

2020 has been so hard on so many levels but it has taught us that solidarity matters more than ever. The branch has helped loads of members through individual case work, but has also taken wider action whether it be library staff walking out to keep staff safe, or members going on Black Lives Matter demonstrations to push back

against the racism that exists in Lambeth Council, and across wider society. We have also continued to fight for the need for wider societal change, and as a life long socialist I think this pandemic has showed how much better society would be if we ran it for the for the many and not the few. We can't just keep tinkering around the edges, we need fundamental change for the better.

2021 will continue to pose challenges but we need to stick together. It's been great to see newer members on the branch committee and I would really encourage members to take the step to get active as stewards, health and safety reps and officers. You will get training, time off and support and the union is only as strong as its membership but even more so our activist base. If anyone would like to talk to me about getting more involved then please do get in touch.

Solidarity for 2021, keep safe, get active and fight for change. The union keeps us strong.



supporting UNISON members
when life gets tough

Members experiencing financial and emotional difficulties can contact our welfare charity, There for You, which provides a confidential advice and support service for members and their dependants.

<https://www.unison.org.uk/get-help/services-support/there-for-you/>

My role as Joint Lambeth Unison Assistant Branch Secretary is to focus on Policies and Procedures and any changes to them proposed by Management.

For some considerable time now, (over 2 years), we have been awaiting a comprehensive set of new Policies and Procedures that Human Resources had previously informed us they were having re written and would be presenting to us for consultation.

Lambeth commissioned a private Legal Firm to draft these and we were updated at irregular intervals by HR that they firstly had been sent back to the Legal Firm for revision and then were being subject for discussion by the Senior Management Board.

Now we have recently been informed that these revised Policies and Procedures are almost ready and we should expect to receive them shortly, possibly this month or next.

When we do receive these revised drafts, and currently we have no way of telling what they will look like, we will have a very substantial amount of very detailed work to do.

We have an agreement that we will receive the revised new drafts in sets according to priority and we will be insisting this has to be managed

regarding our resources.

I will be reporting to our Monthly Branch Committees and quarterly Branch Meetings on progress once we have received the drafts and commenced work.

However, recently we have received some new Policies including Guidance documents on these Policies which we are currently working on.

These are as follows;

- 1 Domestic Violence Policy and Guidance.
- 2 Transitioning at Work Policy and Guidance, and,
- 3 a temporary revision to the current Policies and Procedures for Disciplinary, Grievance and Stage 3 Sickness Absence Panel Hearings.

This third one is for conducting Virtual Hearings via Microsoft Teams for safe working needs due to the COVID 19 Pandemic.

We are currently in the final stages of consultation on these Policies and Procedures and Management have so far accepted most if not all of our comments and proposed additions or amendments.

We have a few areas where agreement is yet to be secured but we hope to resolve these over

the next few weeks.

I will provide an update to Branch Committee once this is done.

Finally it should be noted that agreement on these Policies and Procedures is done by Joint agreement with our sister Council Unions, GMB, Unite and the NEU.



**Trying to tell co-workers
their mic is on**



Co-workers

Resident Services and Strategic Growth and Opportunity

Hassina Malik

First, I'd like to pay tribute to former Housing Convenor, Eamon Maguire, who sadly died in 2020. He was committed to our members and was always supportive. We will remember him.

In what has been a tremendously difficult year, not just for Lambeth staff, but for people across the world, it has been a privilege to represent Unison members in Sustainability & Growth, Resident Services and across the Council.

As a shop steward my work has been far more focussed on **individual casework** relating to sickness, PPE, home working (mainly combining work with childcare problems) and other issues related to COVID19. Initially in 2020 the pandemic sent us all into uncharted territory. The Council were finding their way in the darkness in regard to who were essential services staff, sorting workplace risk assessment and individual risk assessments. **Resident Services** have the largest number of **frontline staff** and there were varying degrees of mayhem in messages staff received at the time, everything from whether they needed to physically be at work, to whether parents with young children should be permitted special leave. In March **Libraries staff walked out** because of concerns for their own safety, with other teams challenging the Council on its duty of care to staff. Trying to get these things right was a major issue but with a great deal of joint working things have mostly settled down and we are now workforce fairly well adapted to working in an international pandemic.

As most **grievances and disciplinary investigations and hearing were postponed** for many months in 2020, there are a great number of staff waiting for these formal meetings to take place. As Human Resources has far fewer staff than they did before their last restructure, they are clearly struggling to keep up with the backlog. We can of course wait for disciplinaries, but

many Unison members, and staff generally, are unhappy at the extensive delay in dealing with grievances. Nearly all investigation meetings and hearings are

now done online. This has presented new challenges for Unison members and shop stewards. It's difficult to properly support a member when that person is not seated right next to their Unison representative. However, we are becoming much better at doing this work and finding **new and imaginative ways of communicating with members** during meetings.

Perhaps unsurprisingly it is again **Housing** which has been the area with single most unpleasant and difficult employee relations and underhanded actions by senior managers. For example, over the past four years Unison has been raising issues of procedurally improper recruitment and restructures in the **Home Ownership and Rents Services (HOS)**, where a select group of managers who all arrived around the same time from Southwark, have had **meteoric career success** when compared to the majority, lower paid Black staff. After four years and denials of impropriety by senior officers, including HR, **Unison's persistence** on behalf of our members has gained a review of recruitment and restructures in HOS going back to 2016. At the time of writing this staff and UNISON await the outcome of the review. While we are hopeful it is also worth remembering that reports do not always provide the outcomes we seek.

Another area of difficulty has been **Public Protection** in the Environment Dept. These staff



are on the frontline of dealing with businesses and ensuring their compliance with safety during this pandemic. This work is essential to the overall safety of Lambeth residents and visitors. Unfortunately, limited resources, such as vehicles and PPE, have made their working environment difficult one. Unison has been on the forefront of **championing our members** rights to safety at work and have assisted members staff generally with various workplace issues. In particular Unison have asked the Council to give the officers in Public Protection 'essential car user' status so that they may use their own vehicles instead of sharing 'pool cars'.

The Council have told the unions that there will be many **restructures ahead**, with the **majority of these in Resident Services**. We know that it is likely that there will be job losses because the pandemic has placed financial burdens on the Council without the necessary and proportionate support from the Government. With increasing numbers of unemployed people in the UK and many businesses closing on a daily basis, opportunities for alternative employment are few.

In preparation for the difficulties ahead, I asked that all members

encourage colleagues to join Unison;
to contact you shop stewards and conven-

ors with concerns during restructures;
to ensure job descriptions are up-to-date;
to be vigilant about managers making
changes without consultation with the
unions;

commit to working collectively within teams
and Unison to challenge restructure proposals.

More generally I advise members to be
sensible about financial commitments
during these very unpredictable times.

It's been an unusual time to be a trade unionist because of the limited ability to campaign, demonstrate or organise, but it has certainly given me the opportunity to be more in touch with Lambeth Unison members and I've enjoyed the opportunity to get to know many of you better, even if it is on a screen over MS Teams. We continue through 2021 with uncertainty about our safety and the safety of our communities. Many of us are particularly worried about job security because we know redundancies are a likely outcome of the financial pressures on local authorities and the public sector generally. **Most importantly, together we will face the challenges ahead.**

A final word on COVID19 vaccines – Despite all the misinformation I will be first in line! I hope you will be next to me.



Anger is a gift, look back in anger

Firstly, my AGM report must pay tribute to all our members in Children's Social Care and Schools who passed away in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Social care practitioners and School support staff have worked on valiantly during the pandemic keeping services to vulnerable children and families running, often at great personal risk to themselves, as the ONS figures show. Thirty six working-age social workers were recorded as dying from COVID-19 in 2020, and the death rate from COVID among female social workers of working age was one of the highest for women of any profession.

Many of those deaths were preventable if the Tories hadn't run down and stripped the country's NHS and Laboratory facilities over the last 10 years of austerity and cuts, and that's to say nothing of the lack of PPE equipment from the start of the crisis.

As well as the governments incompetent strategy of locking down and restricting travel well after the virus was rife, their track-trace & testing programme was farcical, amounting to awarding companies owned by their rich friends lucrative contracts for which they had no ability or expertise to deliver on. High level cronyism paid for in working class lives. *Look back in anger.*

What the pandemic has really exposed is the huge inequality in our society and the inability of so called "free market" forces to *plan* resources or respond to health crisis under an ever more chaotic and volatile world capitalist system.

UNISON must demand public ownership of the pharmaceutical industry, a massive increase in funding for the NHS and a 15% pay increase for NHS and public sector staff.

Children's Social Care & YOS: The pandemic

has also exposed the myth that Social Workers and CSC staff can't work from home. The critical support teams and rotas etc. have shown it is entirely possible to deliver the service WFH and management resistance is more to do with control freakery and micro-managing than operational reasons.

During the changing phases of the pandemic, tiers and lockdowns UNISON continued to represent more individual cases than ever especially around issues of clinical vulnerability and disabilities. We have successfully defended individual members on a wide range of complex issues, suspensions, disciplinarys, sickness & returning to work etc. and secured some excellent outcomes.

UNISON continue to challenge management where necessary such as the first attempt at their Operational Policy, out of date before it was published, excessive micro-management and demanding consultation on the revised SW-Progression Scheme which we have also challenged as being potentially discriminatory.

Lambeth Schools: (*please also see Schools Convenor report*). Many thanks must go to comrade Jeremy Drinkall for his sterling work representing schools' members through the many virtual meetings he has organised.

We have held all Lambeth schools to account on Risk Assessments, bubbles, PPE and fought Boris Johnsons policy of ignoring science by invoking section 44 of the H&S Act, forcing the government into several national U-turns on Schools re-opening (and re-closing) undoubtedly limiting transmission of COVID-19 and saving lives. Representing contracted school staff such cleaners & caterers has also been a major battleground for PPE, proper risk assessments, furlough and pay issues.

Yet despite the heroic efforts of support staff Lambeth have been pushing ahead with dozens of restructures threatening many redundancies. UNISON have covered restructures at Clapham Manor, Kings Avenue, Effra, Jessop, Stockwell,

Rosendale and Livity where we balloted members for action and saved jobs. A national fight for schools funding must now be co-ordinated by UNISON and all education Unions as the only solution to the growing financial crisis in our school's system.

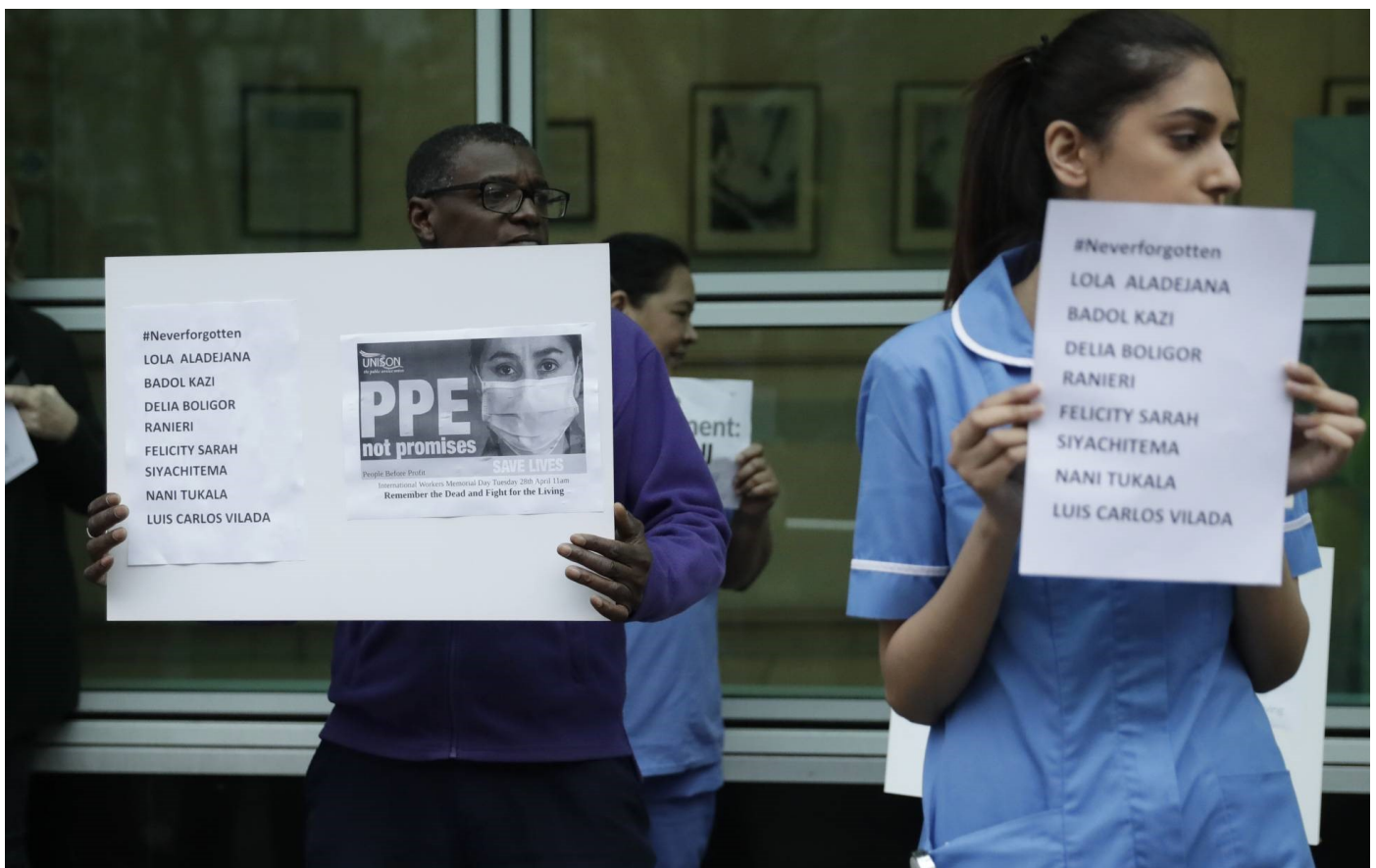
The way the government have handled the COVID crisis should be a national scandal to rival Grenfell, Windrush and MP's expenses scams but unfortunately the opposition under Starmer (he of the 2nd referendum suicide note; a policy he's now conveniently ditched) is so weak it just promises more of the same old Blairism, which in turn raises the question of a new workers party and a socialist political alternative worthy of representing our movement.

On the subject of more of the same we had a general secretary election in 2020. Our branch narrowly nominated Paul Holmes who came second. I voted for Hugo Pierre because he had a clearer socialist programme of how to transform the union into a fighting democratic organisation that can best represent public sector workers.

2021 will bring us more challenges as we emerge from the pandemic but amid the personal tragedies and inevitable economic downturn there must be no room for pessimism or defeatism, it is in anger not in sorrow that we must fight on against the bosses, bankers and Tory agenda.

Trump has been defeated but the conditions of vast inequality that gave rise to such a populist billionaire "politician" still exist, that is why the inspirational BLM movement gives us hope that an international alternative to capitalist oppression will arise. *Anger is a gift.*

Thanks also to Jocelyn, Simone and all our shop stewards in Children's Services for all their hard work, patience and dedication throughout 2020. We now must seize this years opportunities for real social change, such as our unions forthcoming NEC elections and standing independent socialist candidates in the GLA elections. *Look back in anger comrades but also look forward.*



Protest by health workers in UNISON demanding better PPE and remembering the names of colleagues who died.

As the year began, we had been advised of a pending reorganisation of Intermediate Care, which did not involve any reduction in posts, were in discussion on the pending TUPE transfer of the Careline service to Southwark, and we had received the results of the social care health check survey carried out in late 2019 and had a good discussion with management about an outline action plan. Then of course everything changed. Unsurprisingly, much of the work since has been around risk assessments, working arrangements, and advising/supporting individual members with concerns.

We made substantial comments on the first draft of the A&H overarching workforce risk assessment. The final version was circulated to staff in the staff bulletin with an invitation to staff to make comments (none were received). It has since been reviewed and updated three times.

I did a lot of work on the development of the individual risk assessment form and accompanying guidance to managers that were piloted in A+H and then used as the basic templates for those used elsewhere in the council. Managers and staff are periodically reminded of the need to review these before any change in working arrangements or if there have been any relevant changes in the circumstances of the member of staff

We had significant input into the detailed building and workforce risk assessments undertaken prior to the reopening of Lambeth's two day centres. These are reviewed every month.

Occupational Therapists and Rehabilitation Officers for the Visually Impaired are the other groups of A+H staff whose work would normally involve close physical contact with service users. The specific risk assessments for OTs and ROVs have been updated 3 times and are now being incorporated, with our agreement, into the overall A+H risk assessments rather than being done separately.

A significant number of A+H staff are based in hospitals and other buildings managed by various NHS bodies. We therefore asked management to obtain the building risk assessments for

those buildings and have been reviewing and making comments on them. Management had such difficulty in obtaining some of these (notably for the hospitals) that they had to 'escalate' their requests.

In recent weeks, there has been an increase in A+H staff unable to work due to illness or needing to self-isolate due to COVID-19 at the same time as a rise in demand on adult services. Management have therefore been putting contingency plans in place for a reduction in the available workforce. This includes seeing which members of staff would be available and willing to support areas of the service that are likely to be under the most pressure, in particular the hospital teams and duty service. Management have advised that "if the situation deteriorates still further it may be necessary to be more directional with staff regarding undertaking work that is deemed essential", and we have asked that there be discussion with us prior to a more directional approach being adopted.

On a different note, I am currently pursuing a serious issue relating to those staff who were TUPE transferred to Lambeth on NHS terms and conditions in 2016 as part of the Public Health reorganisation and have not been paid the correct (or any) pay award and not been 'progressed' on their NHS pay band since their transfer. This involves HR working through, for each person, what should have happened in terms of pay awards and incremental progression and what did happen. I anticipate receiving the first of these soon.

Finally, the current progression scheme for social workers and occupational therapists in Adults, introduced in early 2020, is based on ordinary incremental progression, with the only means for accelerated progression being a qualification-based route from PO2 to PO3. We have recently received a proposal for a change in the scheme to allow for individuals to be considered in exceptional circumstances for qualification routes prior to reaching PO2 level. This is particularly related to social workers being trained as AMHPs. We are considering this and will be discussing it further with management.

This time last year we had no idea what was about to hit us. Not only the worst pandemic in a century but the most disastrous response from any government in the world.

The incompetence and hypocrisy of Boris Johnson's government have displayed would be comical if it were not so tragic for many of our members and the wider working class.

In response, our members have risen to the challenge, with new activists stepping up to become stewards and regularly 40 or more attending zoom meetings. Some members used Section 44 or balloted for industrial action, but in almost all cases, we won concessions that may have saved lives.

In the summer we kept infections relatively low by shaming the government into opening more slowly and supported the students in their battle against the anti-working class algorithm that was downgrading grades in the state sector.

In the Autumn we fought for face masks, spacing and smaller bubbles but, with the advent of the new "Kent" variant, it wasn't enough. In Elmgreen, we established a rank & file safety committee that won local concessions. At the Five Maintained Nurseries we held an indicative ballot, unanimous in favour of strike action, before management caved in the next day and restricted access to children of the vulnerable and key worker parents.

Then came winter, when Unison and the NEU led the way, calling on all members to use Section 44, which allows members to walk out if working would place them or others in "serious and imminent danger", effectively a call for walkouts. It worked. Schools closed in January. Labour councillor Ed Davie worked constructively with us here.

But now we face a fight against mass re-opening of schools on 8 March. This is too much, too soon. We want a staggered return, a rota with no more than half in at a time and "blended learning", as well as vaccination for all school staff. But more than this, we need to fight for smaller class sizes, more support staff and bigger and better schools, renationalised into a National Education Service.

Cuts in the time of pandemic

Unfortunately funding for education is going in the other direction. Staff who have kept the schools going, dealt with the traumas of isolation, poverty and learning loss first hand in the classroom, are being subjected to "restructuring", another euphe-

mism for job and grade cuts. My thanks go to Andy Tullis, who has taken on the lion's share of assisting members here.

The financial crisis facing many schools is purely down to ten years of Tory misrule. At St Martin's, staff and students are suffering because academies have sprung up in their catchment area and a perfectly good school has lost half its intake, resulting in job and wage cuts and takeover by a multi-academy trust.

The Livity, a special school for primary age kids with multiple disabilities, has cut the wages and HLTA posts of the most experienced staff, even before they know what impact covid will have on the children placed in their care.

Clapham Manor suffered waves of cuts after its Children's Centre was cut by the council and then it lost dozens more children as families repatriated after Johnson's racist Brexit.

Staff and families were rightly angry. But although we had another successful indicative ballot at Clapham, we didn't act fast enough and morale sank, in part because members could see that the new regime, where finance rules over education, was a downgrading of the service our members pour their all into. We will always back members who want to fight cuts – and encourage them to do so.

But this is a regional and national crisis. The new funding formula, hidden budget cuts, falling rolls and the chaotic market place of academies, free schools and private schools threatens a calamity for education long after the short term damage of repeated lockdowns has passed. We must continue to work with the NEU and GMB to stop the cuts.

Back Pay At Last

Thanks to the hard work of Juliet Blake and Colin Inniss, as well as the perseverance of hundreds of members and former members, we have secured an acceptable deal on Term Time Only Holiday Back Pay. Most members are receiving offers of between £1,000 and £3,000

However, Tas librarians and technicians remain low paid (though highly skilled) workers. A one-off, partial compensation for years of underpayment does not change that. We deserve more and should get ready to join millions of other public service and private sector workers demanding an end to in-work poverty and a real pay rise.

2021 AGM

Lambeth UNISON has 2,066 members made up of 1,736 full members and 325 retired members. This is an overall decrease of 83 members since our last AGM.

Our membership also includes:

- 37 young members
- 646 black members*
- 59 disabled members*
- 1360 female members*
- 663 male members*

A comparison against previous years

	2019	2020
All	2013	2134
Black*	552	619
Female*	1319	1384
Male*	682	723
Disabled*	n/a	56
Young	29	38
Retired	405	412

We represent members across 168 employers including 77 with only one member. Our largest employer is Lambeth Council and the remainder of our membership is in schools, day centres, nurseries, and outsourced services.

Our largest
employers are:

non-school em-

Employer	Number of members
L B Lambeth	1197
South Bank Colleges	51
Excelcare	18
Ofsted	18
Pinnacle PSG	15
Veolia Environmental Services	14
Greenwich Leisure Limited	13
Elis	11
Harrison Catering Services Limited	10

Our largest schools employers are:

Employer	Number of members
Great Northwood Education Trust	17
The Dunraven Educational Trust	13
Wyvil Primary School	13

Proposed budget 2021-2

Due to COVID lock down last year UNISON did not have any of its usual conferences for Local Government or National Delegate Conference. Whilst this was a serious blow to the internal democracy of the union it does mean that the branch was able to save a considerable sum of money on not sending delegates. As such our expenditure last year was primarily on wages for the branch administrative officer. This has allowed us to save some more money than we were expecting, meaning we ended the year with £60,000 in our account.

This year we have a modest proposal for the budget based on the fact that we won't be able to do a lot of the usual campaigning (paying for leaflets, posters etc) that we would normally do due to lockdown not really ending until late spring early summer. So some expenses can realistically be reduced. We also will not have to pay for delegates again as there will not be a

NDC but instead an slimmed down online only 'special conference'.

The good news is that our branch successfully applied for funding from London Region of UNISON to pay for a part time organiser for private sector and care homes. We have a lot of members in care homes but they are often scattered in ones and twos and the industry management is not very pro trade union in general, mainly because terms and conditions are so bad there!

Thanks to that bid we have received £10,000 towards wages so the branch can put another £5000 in to cover the cost of someone on three days a week. The aim of this new organiser is to help build up our membership in the out sourced sections like waste management and to help identify and recruit stewards and workplace representatives.

Income

UNISON	£51,351.65
T-shirt sales	£399
Total	£51,750.65

Affiliations/Subscriptions

Lambeth Trades Council	£250
Lewisham Trades Council	£15
Labour Research Department	£261
Campaign Against Climate Change	£25
Zoom	£143.88

Outgoings

Expenses for Volunteers	£1,490
AGM	
Catering	£922
Booklet	£231.70
Accessibility	£800
Black Members conference	£597.20
T-shirts	£300
Affiliations/subscriptions	£694.88
Wages	£28,366.84
Stationary	£302.14
Financial fees	£1.60
Miscellaneous	£95.74
Total	£33,802

Current Account balance as of 31 December 2020

£65,234.92

Receipts

Description	Total	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Branch Funding	48000	4000	4000	4000	4000	4000	4000	4000	4000	4000	4000	4000	4000
Total	48000	4000	4000	4000	4000	4000	4000	4000	4000	4000	4000	4000	0

Payments

Description	Total	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Administration	1200	0	300	0	0	0	300	0	0	300	0	300	
Affiliations	810.74	250	0	50	0	15	245.75	0	249.99	0	0	0	0
Campaigns	40.99	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	40.99	0	0
Donations	750	750	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Education	493.57	0	0	0	0	64.57	0	0	0	117	312	0	0
Local Activities	500	0	0	0	250	0	0	250	0	0	0	0	0
Participa- tion_National	4150	650	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1000
Participa- tion_Branch	0	0	0	0	50		100	0	100	0	100	0	0
Recruitment	500	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	500	0
Staffing	37000	3109	3109	3109	3109	3109	3109	3109	3109	3109	3109	3109	3109
Other	200	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	24
Total	45645.3	4960	3168.37	3475	3425	3236.56	3770	3425	3474.99	3542	3577.99	3917.8	4133

Surplus /
Deficit

	Total	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Surplus / Deficit	2355	-960	831.63	525	575	-763.44	230	575	525.01	468	422.01	82.2	-133

Over the past year we have worked on various equalities issues and attended, on behalf of our branch, several forums dealing with Equality issues.

At the Council's **Corporate Equality Impact Assessment Panel**. This panel meets fortnightly and is made up of councillors and the trade unions. For every project or piece of work undertaken by the Council and EIA (equality impact assessment) is completed by Council officers. This is then taken to the panel for consideration and comment. While the panel may ask officers for more information or to consider further changes, the Council has no statutory obligation to adhere to recommendations by this panel. The Council's Constitution states the panel has responsibility to '*enable early collective discussions on a wide range of options and issues*'. We, of course, wish that this panel had the authority to properly challenge inequality. However, over the past year the panel has met more regularly than in 2019 and it continues to standardise its processes in an attempt to ensure consistency for each panel. The advent of virtual EIA Panels has increased attendance among councillors considerably. In addition Unison is now joined by GMB presence on the panel.

Over the past year as part of this panel we have looked at EIAs relating to (listed in chronological order starting in March 2020):

- Voluntary and Community Sector strategy – putting in place a high-level 'social contract' between the Council and the VCS in Lambeth.

- Lambeth Safeguarding Children's Partnership - key changes to multi agency safeguarding arrangements & current performance strengths and areas for development

- Lambeth Hospital - Reconfigure inpatient services and providing a greater critical mass of beds on fewer sites. Proposing new models and locations for community services.

- Homes for Lambeth – 6 Estate Regeneration projects – EIA into multiple deprivation, environmental health and fuel poverty

among others.

- Events Strategy and Events policy 2020-2025 – changes to policy including removal of the aim to deliver 8 major event days at each of the five key event sites; simplify Parks Investment Levy so it is based on percentage of total income for each event.

- Housing Service Delivery - Changes in service delivery and geographical arrangement of the contracts in Housing Repairs, Maintenance and Capital Major Works

Details and comment: creation of a Direct Labour Organisation (DLO) providing for 37 jobs; long term contracts are coming to an end; reduction in the number of new long term contracts; London Living Wage across all new contracts; all new contracts for diversity in hiring practices. apprenticeships are built into new contracts with two Apprenticeships per 1 million pound spend. UNISON challenged proposals for TUPE which was removed.

- Lambeth's Corporate Carbon Reduction Plan - become a carbon neutral council by 2030- majority of Councils carbon emissions come from the heat of buildings.

Details and comment: UNISON asked of impact on low income households and grants for home insulation.

- Growing Brixton's Rec Quarter (Redevelopment of Brixton Recreation Centre and International House)

- Lambeth Made Safer Strategy. Prevent serious youth violence through the development and implementation of this strategy.

- Skills and Employment Strategy – Creating skills and employment support system; residents upskilling, reskilling, training provision and apprenticeships; entrepreneurial activity, with focus on black, young and disabled residents.

Comment and details: UNISON comments - Lambeth needs to guard against recruiting all White managers, also replicating the experience of the WES Team. Also Council must ensure compliance and monitoring recruitment and apprenticeship. Lambeth must ensure that companies we work with are expected to employ appropriate numbers of local people from our borough represent/reflect our communities.

HRA Rent Setting - The Council has the discretion to set new rents at 1% above the relevant national index and it has chosen to do so.

Comment and detail – UNISON objected to this rent increase as many residents are suffering as a result of the pandemic. We've written to the Cabinet member stating our objections.

Lambeth's emergency transport programme - Physical changes introduced to streets across the Railton neighbourhood to reduce motor traffic

HRA Budget, Rent and Service Charge setting report – report going to Cabinet

Procurement Strategy - Waste collection and street cleansing services are currently through an outsourced contract with Veolia Environmental. Decision made to 'partially insource' this function.

how many of these complaints are upheld; when will the practice of appointing sympathetic black managers to investigate and reject complaints of racism end.

how many lower graded Black staff have gained higher graded posts;

how many Black, disabled staff have been successful in applying for secondments; what are the specific achievements of the various training initiatives for Black staff such as Black on Board;

how many staff from these training initiatives have actually progressed to a better or higher paid jobs

what evidence is there that the Council are ensuring that white managers who continually promote white staff are being challenged;

when will the Council initiate mandatory anti-racist training and

white fragility training as requested time and again by staff in BAME forum and group meetings. where is the 'independent process for staff to share experiences of racism and discrimination' (aside from a staff survey and a

NOT MUTING YOUR MIC IS THE NEW REPLY ALL

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Steering Group and the Equality Diversity & Inclusion Board

Both of these have been recently set up to address equality issues relating to each of the protected characteristics (LGBTQ+, BAME, Disability, Women).

The EDI Steering Group is made up of trade unions, Forum Chairs, senior officers. The EDI Board is made up of the trade unions, the Chief Executive and Strategic Directors. In principle both groups look at the strategic work the Council is doing on addressing inequality for staff in each of the groups listed above. UNISON has raised concerns that the targets and KPIs discussed at the Steering Group and Board do not address what really might make a difference to the staff experience at work. We asked that the Council consider:

how many Black, disabled, LGBTQ+ staff who have made complaints of racism, discrimination and racist, discriminatory bullying have had their complaints promptly looked into;

BAME forum event);

when will Black staff be given a safe space that is only for Black staff.

We have asked what will the EDI Steering Group and Board do to ensure these things happen without delay; and what times frames will be set so that staff can hope to have some hope and tangible outcomes. The Council have said they will take on board these concerns and seek to address them.

Equality Corporate Consultation Forum

This is a quarterly meeting between management, human resources and the trade unions. At this meeting we discussed all equality aspects of issues affecting staff. For instance policies and procedures, the EDI action plan; disability access; training and much more. Over the past year Unison have raised questions on all of the above issues and continue to challenge the Council to ensure that it meets and exceeds equality legislation on Council policies.

Black Workers Group Report

Lambeth UNISON Black workers group report- Branch AGM 2021

We remember: All those victims of COVID 19.

We have a long way to go in stamping out inequalities in the health and social care sector.

We remember: George Floyd, Shukri Abdi, Mo-hamud Mohammed Hassan

We have a long way to go to in stamping out police brutality.

And so we have way to go in stamping out racism, bullying and harassment in society and in the work place.

In January 2020 Unison Black Workers demand.

1. Reports and recommendations of previous institutional racism enquiries should be posted on the council's website
2. The reinstatement of Members Appeals for Grievances and Disciplinary appeals.
3. The reinstatement of Race Equalities unit / Independent referral unit for staff facing discrimination.
4. Establish a sub-committee that includes representatives from the unions & senior management. That this sub-committee should convene within one month of the meeting. The meeting should combine the various recommendations from the unions, the Patrick Vernon investigation, agree an implementation plan and be responsible to ensure its implementation. The sub-committee will report to the regular quarterly Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
5. Reinstate the independent functions of HR.
6. All members Trade Unions self-organised groups be allocated 2 hours paid time per month for members covering the 9 protected characteristics as internal self-organised groups

All I can say: The struggles continues.

George Floyd death has touched me personally as I am sure many of our members. Floods of memories of deaths at the hands of the police

surfaced. The Black lives matter movement and not a moment gave a voice to the ones that could not or not able to voice their disgrace and disgust at the death of our brother, father and dear one. Sadly, George last words: I can't breathe and a call for his mama resonated and still resonates with Black people and our allies from across the globe. I truly believe we are internationalist and our fight and struggle are against racism and inequality are not isolated but worldwide. The fight is across race and class.

Racism needs to be stamped out daily by the anti-racist movement. Black and White united on the streets of London and across the country to say no to the racist establishment.

On 25th June 2020 we had a positive and successful Black workers meeting. Our speakers were Professor Kienda Hoji, former Chair of Lambeth UNISON and former member of Lambeth UNISON Black Workers Group and Ms Reyah Stephen, student and aspiring musician on the issue of Black Lives Matter and Black Power

The Branch also financially supported Black lives matter T-shirts.

On 23rd July 2020 we had a very successful members meeting and workers/ staff were very outspoken and speaking up on the ongoing racism and inequalities in the work place. The BWG demands were once again emphasised, discussed at length and will be put to the senior leadership in the Council and Members.

On 22nd September 2020 we had our Black members AGM, speaker, Marc Wadsworth – founder of Black Sections in the Labour Party and founder of the Anti Racist Alliance. Marc brought his rich experience of Black organisation to the members.

We elected new committee members 2020/2021

We thank all the members who attended the AGM and thank the outgoing committee mem-

bers for their hard work, dedication and commitment.

Campaigns

Last year our Branch passed a motion on institutional racism in the Council. Parts of this motion is now coming to fruit. The DaWn and Streatham Hill wards Labour Party is supporting our demands and campaign.

If you are interested to speak on our demands at these ward meetings or community events please familiarise yourself with the demands and let me know via email or telephone your availability.

In January 2021 we passed a motion on the victimisation of Hassina Malik, long standing ant racist branch activities and convenor.

Children social care launched a social work progression scheme without consultation with members. The past progression scheme discriminated against Black staff and this 'new' scheme is no different. The children's social convenor held a meeting the members at the end of 2020 and will take forward the concerns raised by members.

CAMPAIGNS in 2020.

In 2021, the branch passed the motion on Stop deportation and we supported Christopher Johnson campaign. A crowd fund was set up and we continue to donate and build the STOP deportations campaign.

March 2021 the Branch supported the 60th Anniversary of the Sharpeville massacre. This year we will do the same.

And then COVID19 Lockdown hits us all. We called for the evacuation of all the detention centre thereby keeping migrants safe. The Yalswood detention closed down but as you know the government always have plans to keep and rebrand captivity. The fight is to keep borders open. We joined hands with organisations to

raise the issue of open borders and safety for migrants and refugees. We attended virtual and socially distance demonstrations for example, save the demolition of Olive Morris House.

Lambeth COVID Action group. Demolition: of OMH House, Motion: Statue of Olive

May 2021 was the murder of George Floyd. Our branch supported the Black lives matter protests. We organised Black lives matter t-shirts to support the movement.

We worked together with Stand Up to racism and Movement for Justice on the Black lives matter demonstrations in Croydon, Wandsworth, Lambeth and Central London.

The protest and demonstration took us all into the June, July, August and September

In July 2020, The stop and search demonstration in a rainy Brixton brought awareness. We attended and supported the Tower Hamlets Council workers strike.

September 2020 saw a ramp up of the Stop Trump campaign. Finally, Trump was voted out in November 2020, a sigh of relieve is an understatement.

In October 2020 We said so long to Eamon Mcquire, Housing convenor and activist. Eamon was a long standing knowledgeable 'unafraid' activist in our branch. We all miss Eamon.

In November 2020 we joined the Newham refuse workers reinstatement campaign

My message in 2021: We all MUST Protest harder, Save Jobs, Join the UNISON

Follow us on: Twitter: @lbwg3

Instagram: _lbwg_

Facebook: Lambeth UNISON Black workers Solidarity.

Jocelyn Cruywagen- UNISON Black workers convenor.

Disabled Members Group Report

2020-21 has seen our Disabled Members Self Organised Group grow substantially in membership and meeting attendance.

We now have involvement from members representing a broad range of different Impairments and across a broad sweep of the Council Directorates.

Involvement from BAME and Women members is high with well over 90% representation from both groups.

COVID 19 has obviously been the overriding issue we have needed to grapple with this year and this has kept us extremely busy,

The principal issues that have arisen have been;

- Working From Home, WFH.
- Flexible Working arrangements due to Disability related issues.
- Heightened risks of COVID 19 infection due to underlying health conditions, medication and treatment, and,
- Reasonable Adjustments in the work place and at home.
- Members have reported experiencing negative attitudes and lack of support from managers due to reasons relating to Disability. This has included attempts to make staff with underlying Health conditions attend work when it has been unsafe.
- Major problems accessing specialist and adapted equipment needed to work safely from home.
- Specialist and adapted equipment previously accessed being lost or broken.

Along with group members and Branch Committee colleagues I have worked to resolve these issues and, although far too late due to management dragging their feet and inept planning, have secured the provision of equipment needed and gained an agreement that any equipment provided at home will also be duplicated in the office as and when people return.

I have also been involved in ensuring that underlying Health conditions have been incorporated into the Council's COVID 19 Individual Risk Assessments and guidance.

Separately from COVID 19 related issues we have successfully followed through 3 Grievances relating to failures to provide reasonable adjustments and assistive equipment provided via Access to Work but which had been met with delays including in one case for over five years.

The outcomes of these grievances have been to make recommendations that if followed through by management should help to avoid or prevent these delays happening in future.

My huge appreciation goes out to the members concerned with submitting these grievances and for their perseverance in seeing them through what we know are lengthy and often frustrating processes.

During the second half of the year the group was meeting every two weeks in order to provide emotional support especially for those of us working at home in isolation.

This has been very time heavy for me and it has meant a delay in setting up an election for what will be a newly established Disabled Members Group committee with joint Conveners and Joint Chairs but this will be taking place hopefully before the end of March.

2020 has seen the Labour Party struggle to be a strong credible voice for the poor and working class. It almost felt like Labour was and still is agreeing with every single plan the Tory government has put on the table during this pandemic. I think we need a strong opposition to fight against the years of austerity, anti -union laws, the poor getting poorer and job cuts. You and I can make that opposition grow by organising, recruiting members and stewards, becoming involved in our Branch and in Labour Link.

The Labour Party needs to implement the Forde enquiry without delay and start looking after the Party's Black voters. The pandemic has highlighted the inequalities on all levels in our society. These inequalities need to be remedied to restore confidence in our voters and in the Party. As a Labour Party voter everyone should concern themselves with striving to-

wards the upliftment of the poor, working class, building a socialist society, fighting the anti- union laws and building an anti racist society.

This year we held 2 Labour Link meetings. We passed a motion to protect officers against racist victimisation.

We were welcomed to speak at Labour Party ward meetings and motions on Lambeth's institutional racism were passed at three ward meetings.

If you want to become active in Labour Link, take on the role or jobs share please get in touch with the Branch, your involvement could make a difference in developing a stronger socialist, anti- racist voice in the Labour Party.

I want to thank Dan Jeffery (former Labour link officer) for his role in holding us account to socialist and anti -racist values.

Zoom meeting, audio only



Zoom meeting with video



New Branch Committee and Stewards

We still have a number of vacancies this year, no doubt due to COVID and Working from Home so people feel a little detached from union organising. We would very much encourage people to apply for officer posts if they are interested as it helps UNISON organise more campaigns, cover more areas of work and have a higher profile as a trade union.

The Branch Committee meets on the third Tuesday of every month.

Chair – Gary Whiting

Branch Secretary - Ruth Cashman/Simon Hannah

Assistant Secretary - Jocelyn Cruywagen, Hassina Malik

Vice Chair - Dan Jeffery

Treasurer – Dominique Johnson

Publicity Officer - *No nomination received*

Health and Safety Officer - *No nomination received (three days a week facility time)*

Environmental Officer - *No nomination received*

Equality Officer - Anita Bey/Hassina Malik

International Officer - *No nomination received*

Welfare Officer - *No nomination received*

Learning Co-ordinator - *No nomination received*

Education Officer - *No nomination received*

Returning Officer - Paul Fitzgerald

Auditor - *No nomination received*

Deputy Auditor - *No nomination received*

Young Members Officer - *No nomination received*

Labour Link - *No nomination received*

Membership Officer – Erin Healy

Stewards nomination forms received this year: Amanda Andersen, Jeremy Drinkall, Tim O'Dell, Eleesha Smith, Andrew Tullis, Erin Healy, Jackie Lewis, Henry Roberts, Hassina Malik, Jocelyn Cruywagen, Dan Jeffery, Martha Levi Smythe, Bashir Miah.

If you would like to be a steward/workplace rep then please get in touch with Juliet Blake and she can forward you the form JABlake@Lambeth.gov.uk.

Remember a union is only as good as its organisation so we need trained workplace reps across all our teams and workplaces.

Being in a trade union is like signing up for the gym, you can pay your subscription every month but you only get stronger if you turn and get active.



International Workers' Memorial Day

11am - Tuesday 28 April

One minute's silence for all
key workers lost to COVID-19

**In memory of
everyone around
the world who lost
their lives due to
COVID-19**