

Branch Secretary Statement

Dear Middlesex UNISON Member

This year has seen unprecedented change at the University.

The programme of restructurings and centralisation undertaken over the summer alongside the closure of the Trent Park campus has presented numerous significant challenges for the branch.

As members will know the Branch maintains a mandate to oppose the use of Compulsory Redundancies.

The Middlesex University UNISON Branch has held a strong line in negotiations with the University and has successfully achieved a position where **no UNISON member has been made compulsory redundant** during the period since March. This issue contains a first hand account by one of our members Helen Hayward on the difference UNISON made to what looked like a certain compulsory redundancy.

This represents an enormous achievement for the Branch and shows that UNISON can make a huge difference to members and their working lives.

The negotiating position of the Branch during this period has undoubtedly been helped by the industrial action and organisation of the Branch during the dispute during October 2011.

The Branch has negotiated a new deal on shift and overtime arrangements. Voted for by members at the SGM. The Branch was able to secure a 5% shift allowance and an allowance of £25 for non-shift workers (below grade 6) who work sundays, Bank Holidays and Uni-Days.

Whilst these changes are not good news for all our members they are a considerable shift away from the pro-

posal to provide NO allowances for members undertaking new ways of working.

A three year pay protection deal was agreed for members who faced a reduction in shift pay, and negotiations are continuing on overtime payments for members, including members on grades 6 to 9.

The Branch was also able to negotiate an alternative arrangement to the outsourcing of the University maintenance department.

For staff in the contribution and red circled zones, the Branch has secured for those staff a one year extension of the pay protection. Saving some 21% of staff from a potential 6—8 % pay cut. **We have also undertaken negotiation on a meaningful contribution point policy for staff in the white contribution zone to consolidate their pay points and the chance of pay progression for all staff.** Again this success is based on the negotiating strength of the Branch.

The Branch has also organised during this period to mount a pro active recruitment campaign **“lets get our own back”** which saw Branch Activists “meet and greet” non-members on the doorstep of their workplaces with 5 local reasons to join **UNISON**. This proactive approach to recruitment is something that will be further developed in the new year.

Every member has a vital role to play in helping to recruit members. Our successes are hugely important and all UNISON members should proudly tell their non unionised colleagues about them.

The Branch Committee is mindful of the challenges we continue to face.

UNISON@MIDDLESEX

Issue 5 : Dec 2012

Ongoing issues around the UniHelp model need to be resolved to the Branch's satisfaction, the technicians review and Archway Closures loom large on the local agenda, as do re-organisations within the admissions process.

Nationally the wider issues of austerity and changes in the Higher Education sector represent significant challenges for the Branch. However as the Pensions dispute has shown well organised trade unions can still win concessions and victories.

Together we are Stronger

Trevor Alexander:Branch Secretary



LET'S GET OUR OWN BACK

- NO COMPULSORY REDUNDANCIES
- PROTECTION : COVER YOUR BACK
- UNITY : STRENGTH IN NUMBERS

Branch Message of Support :

London Met UNISON Branch has been involved in a long fight against plans to outsource all support and administrative staff.

The Branch has also had to deal with the UKBA decision to suspend their VISA license and the threat to the viability of the University.

The London Met UNISON Branch has also run a cam-

paign to secure the future of the much loved Womens Library.

Middlesex University UNISON Branch sent a message of support as well as Branch representatives to the demonstrations in support of the international students.

The message can be read here:

<http://mdxbranchlines.blogspot.co.uk/2012/10/message-of-support-to-london-met-unison.html>

To Be In The Redeployment Pool

Below is a personal account of UNISON member Helen Hayward about her experiences in the redeployment pool and the support she received from the Middlesex UNISON Branch.

In May the University announced that it would be shifting resources away from Support Staff towards academics. As a result of the restructuring my permanent IT Advisor post in LR did not appear in the new structure, and on the 8th May 2012 I was given notice, along with others that I was at risk of redundancy.

I was put in the redeployment pool. In the weeks that followed I began the stressful and anxious process of applying for jobs and going for interviews. Many other staff were in the same position and as the weeks went on I was unsuccessful in securing a position and stayed on the at risk list and in the redeployment pool. I became increasingly demoralised and was left feeling like a spare part.

Whilst at Middlesex I have built up ten years of skills and experience in the area of IT that I felt confident these would be transferable to other areas. Despite feeling increasingly demoralised many colleagues and UNISON members urged me to hang on in there, to keep applying and not to give up. The University sent me my voluntary redundancy figures and increasingly **I felt as if I was being edged out of employment and my options were limited.**

I was anxious and worried as my personal circumstances meant I couldn't be without work or consider VR as a practical alternative. I was determined to stay in employment. As a **UNISON** member I went to see Trevor Alexander, the **UNISON** Branch Secretary on several occasions. He offered advice and support, and recommended I apply for any position I was eligible for, even temporary fixed term contract jobs as a 'bridging' contract. I really did not want to do this as I wanted a permanent post, but beggars can't be choosers.

During this period I had a pre booked holiday in June - slap bang in the middle of the redeployment interview! I was placed in the slightly ridiculous situation of being interviewed for positions whilst on holiday in Cyprus on Skype. Which involved slow internet connections, internet crashes and the cost, along with more anxiety and stress. With hind-

sight it was probably not the best decision to have scheduled 3 interviews whilst on holiday, but I wanted to demonstrate to the University that I was determined to gain a job and work. As you can imagine it wasn't my best holiday!

I applied for a temporary job at Archway even though the campus is closing next July (2013). I was successful, and I am now at the Library, learning new skills and gradually regaining my confidence and self esteem. I have made lots of friends at Archway and everyone is supportive, helpful and very pleasant. **I have been encouraged by the UNISON Branch Secretary to expect that suitable alternative work is likely to emerge over the coming months.**

I am particularly thankful for the support I received from the UNISON Branch - I was pointed in the right direction for help and given support and advice. I feel that UNISON's negotiations with the University helped me immeasurably in securing alternative work at the University. It should be noted that not a **single** Union member who wanted to remain with the University was made compulsorily redundant this year, and that is, without question, a massive achievement.

I would urge all UNISON members to tell non-union colleagues that with the economic situation as it is, and with further attacks on our jobs and Higher Education, they cannot afford to bury their heads in the sand, **the support UNISON can provide individually and collectively is invaluable.**

Being in UNISON cannot guarantee you a job, but it can provide support and expert advice when you most need it. Ultimately you have to help yourself but it is good to know what to do, when you feel like a rabbit caught in the headlights. **The experience has shown me the value of having UNISON representing and advising its members and negotiating on our behalf** - let's not forget that: **"Together We Are Stronger"**

Helen Hayward October 2012
Edited by MDXBranchlines : 2012

Times are Hard UNISON There For You

UNISON welfare has now changed its name to **"There for You"** The service offers: Financial assistance, Debt advice, Wellbeing breaks, Support and information

If you are struggling through an unexpected crisis, or if the pressures of every day life are getting to you, There for You can help.

There For You offers a confidential advice and support service to its members and their families supporting **UNISON** members when life gets tough.

Any **UNISON** member can access the services, if a member wants to enquire about services information is available here : <http://www.unison.org.uk/welfare/> or you can contact **Nikoletta Chardaloupa** the Local Branch Officer for these services in confidentiality : N.Chardaloupa@mdx.ac.uk

UNISON Negotiates Outsourcing Deal

One of the key successes of the Branch over the last year has been the negotiation of a deal to keep the University maintenance department as part of the University.

In March 2012 the University tabled a proposal to Outsource the maintenance department to a private contractor. The proposal was based on making cost savings to the University and provide flexibility for out of hours call outs and support to the changing demands of campus opening etc.

This would have involved private contractors bidding for the contract and the current maintenance staff being TUPE'd across to the company.

UNISON and Trade Unions organise against the outsourcing of services as we believe that given the chance in-house services offer better value for money. In many cases services are outsourced on the assumption that private companies will save an insti-

tution money. The audit commission report "For Better, For Worse" has identified this as a false assumption. Often a re-organised service kept in house can deliver greater savings and value.

Outsourcing also presents a risk to the institution as any problems with the service providers delivery is not blamed on the private company but on the host institution. This has been the case in numerous public sector contracts whether it is NHS cleaning contracts or local authority parking enforcement.

It isn't the case that private means better, in house services, well managed and run, offer a viable, flexible and efficient model for the University.

In the case of the Maintenance department Middlesex University **UNISON** was able to present a proposal that successfully argued that an in-house model was able to deliver the service the University demanded. This proposal was accepted as a six month pilot.



UNISON app now available.

Your Rights at work

<http://www.unison.org.uk/app/>



Campaign for public services

<http://www.unison.org.uk/million/>

Add Your name to the campaign

The Battle for Barnet Council

Many **UNISON** members at Middlesex University will have been following events at Barnet Council. The Conservative led council has been pursuing an aggressive policy of outsourcing council services and functions under the "One Barnet Partnership" scheme. Popularly known as "Easy Council" the One Barnet Partnership poses a massive risk for local services and local democracy in Barnet.

Barnet Council on the 6th of December awarded the the £1 billion contract for council services to Capita. This threatens 540 jobs at Barnet as services are outsourced to Banstead, Belfast, Blackburn, Bromley, Carlisle, Darwen, Sheffield, Swindon, Southampton. Damaging the local economy.

UNISON has produced research that shows the scheme is unlikely to deliver the financial savings it claims. Similar schemes in Somerset and Suffolk have resulted in poor services and legal actions. Concern has even been expressed by Conservative councillors about the procurement process and the research behind the scheme.

John Burgess **UNISON** Branch Secretary for Barnet

said "The council is gambling on a high-risk strategy which has not worked elsewhere. Other councils are bringing services back in-house in order to have more control over their spend."

The local opposition to the plans has been vocal and high profile with pieces featured in the Guardian <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2012/nov/11/local-government-democracy-outsourcing-barnet> and culminated in the occupation of the councils cabinet meeting by angry residents. If **UNISON** members wish to become active in the campaign, the Barnet Alliance for Public services is an excellent place to start. Email UNISON1@mdx.ac.uk if you want more information.

Barnet alliance for public services



Our libraries, our NHS, our schools, our homes, our wardens
our streets, our land, our old, our young, our past, our future

Hands off our Barnet!

For a Future That Works

Branch activists and members took part in the TUC organised march against austerity on the 20th October 2012. The march was organised by the TUC to highlight the failure of the coalition governments Austerity measures and raise arguments for alternative economic policies based on providing jobs and growth.

Following the Autumn budget statement and with the economy teetering on the brink of a third "triple dip" recession according to the Business Secretary, an alternative to the current policies is clearly needed.

A crisis that was created by the banks, and a failure of governments to regulate them, has now become an attack on public services and a crisis of public spending. The role of Trade Unions such as **UNISON** and the TUC is to put alternatives and organise to defend public services that our communities and we rely on.

The "austerity" measures directly impact on the most vulnerable in society whether its disabled workers at Remploy, closure of surestart centres, NHS cuts, privatisation of schools and public services which impact on all our communities whether it is our library services, community nursing care or access to Higher Education for all not just the privileged. We are all affected



The TUC has a long history of supporting progressive change in the UK, TUC research and campaigns were instrumental in the setting up of the welfare state after the post war settlement. The current government policies threaten these advances.

The TUC has produced a booklet "Austerity is Failing : We need a future that works" that outlines an alternative based on redistributive taxation (robin hood taxes etc), support for a green economy and investment into key economic areas more information:

<http://afuturethatworks.org/why-we-are-marching/>

And <http://falseeconomy.org.uk/>

Marches and Demonstrations such as the 20th offer organisational opportunities for UNISON Branches. Unions rely on people acting collectively in how we decide on policy, negotiate or take action.

The current round of cuts seek to turn each individual interest against the other, private against public, those in work against those on benefits, Students against the employed, the able against the disabled. Trade Unions



organise to present alternative arguments and support each other collectively.

The march on the 20th October was well attended in general with 150 000 people from across the country taking to the streets to protest the governments austerity measures. Branch Activist Helen Hayward has contributed this article to the Branchlines blog on her experiences of the day:

<http://mdxbranchlines.blogspot.co.uk/2012/12/marching-for-change-helen-hayward.html>

Further activities and campaigns can be expected and the Branch will inform members of key dates. The Branch will be looking to organise on the motions voted on at the Branch AGM in March, many of these motions are likely to be shaped by the impact of national policies to our jobs.

The impact of the austerity on Higher Education has already been felt at Middlesex. None of us can afford to ignore the consequences of allowing these policies to go unchecked. This Branch has a proud history of protecting its members and negotiating on their behalf. We can only continue with your support and maintaining our collective strength :

TOGETHER WE ARE STRONGER

NOT A MEMBER? JOIN UNISON TODAY: <https://join.unison.org.uk>

Why I joined UNISON: Sam Cerovich

This summer I was offered a position at Middlesex University as an International Student Liaison Administrator, my first job. The stressful application and interview process were over and I looked forward to contributing to the University and learning new skills.

I found myself having joined a workplace that was undergoing a lot of restructuring and I had a lot of questions.

Being my first job I wanted to speak to someone about what I should expect with these changes and if the uneasiness I was feeling was normal.

In my office, **UNISON** members are the majority. They spoke positively about their experience of being part of **UNISON** and offered me advice about the lingering questions that I had. Being a **UNISON** member, and training to be a steward, is not just about having strength in numbers. It allows me to be there for my co-workers and vice versa. Having joined **UNISON** I am now a part of a group that I feel comfortable talking about employment and changes in the workplace.

I heard that **UNISON** is Britain's largest trade union. At first this did not resonate with me until I heard from colleagues who had lost members from their team and feel over worked and under valued. **UNISON** has a seat at the negotiation table to help its members in cases such as this.

Coming into the role of **UNISON** steward I am eager to learn as much as possible. A big part of why I joined **UNISON** was the amount of training **UNISON** offers its reps and its members through the Life Long Learning (Maggie Walkowska) and Education Officer (Helen Hayward).

Your Branch Committee

Branch Officers

Branch Secretary : Trevor Alexander
 Joint Chair : Sara Wright
 Joint Chair : Clive Anthony
 Treasurer : Michael Greener
 Equality Officer : Thespina Brothwell
 Health and Safety Organiser : Claire Mitham
 Education Officer : Helen Hayward
 Life Long Learning : Maggie Walkowska
 Membership Officer : Rhiannon Barber
 Welfare Officer : Nikoletta Chardaloupa
 International Officer : Amanda Adnyana-Roberts
 Black Members S.O.G. : Shirland McKoy
 Equality Rep : Winsome Townsend
 Young Members Officer : Vacancy
 Labour Link Officer : Kevin Ward
 Publicity and Communication : Paul Howell

Branch Stewards

Louis Amaefuna : x14540
 Kevin Ward : x16589
 Brian McDaid : x15810
 Kathryn McAnulty : x15766
 Martin Rush : x14207
 Winsome Townsend : x15117
 Trevor Williams : x14643
 Jeremy Powell-Pritchett : x15004
 Simon Beale : 15125
 Bernadette Lea : x16410
 Karen Ridout : x15018
 Sam Cerovich : x16360

Contact your workplace in the first instance for help and advice. If you are interested in joining the Branch Committee

email unison1@mdx.ac.uk

<http://mdxbranchlines.blogspot.co.uk/>

Join UNISON – your friend at work



Please fill in this form in BLOCK CAPITALS using black ink and give it to your UNISON rep or steward or post to the address below

1. YOUR PERSONAL DETAILS Please tick or fill in the boxes below

Mrs	Ms	Miss	Mr	Other
First name				
Surname/family name				
				Other initial(s)
Home address				
Postcode				
National Insurance number (from your payslip)				
How would you describe your ethnic origin? <input type="checkbox"/> Bangladeshi <input type="checkbox"/> Asian <input type="checkbox"/> Black UK <input type="checkbox"/> Black other <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese other <input type="checkbox"/> Black other <input type="checkbox"/> Indian <input type="checkbox"/> Black <input type="checkbox"/> White UK <input type="checkbox"/> Pakistani <input type="checkbox"/> African <input type="checkbox"/> Irish <input type="checkbox"/> Asian UK <input type="checkbox"/> Black <input type="checkbox"/> White other <input type="checkbox"/> Caribbean				
<input type="checkbox"/> Please tick this box if you require materials in a different format (eg large print or Braille) – be sure to supply contact details below. Please give a telephone number/voice/text/email address for UNISON to contact you – indicate if work or home Contact tel/voice/text/email				

2. YOUR EMPLOYMENT DETAILS

Employer's name

Your job title/occupation

Department/section

Workplace name and address

Postcode

Payroll number (from your payslip)

3. WHAT YOU WILL PAY – FROM 1 October 2003

Please tick the appropriate box for your earnings before deductions. YOUR SUBSCRIPTION – WHAT YOU PAY

Weekly pay	Annual pay	per week	per month	Band
Up to £38.47	Up to £2,000	£0.30	£1.30	A
£38.48–£96.16	£2,001–£5,000	£0.81	£3.50	B
£96.17–£153.84	£5,001–£8,000	£1.22	£5.30	C
£153.85–£211.53	£8,001–£11,000	£1.52	£6.60	D
£211.54–£269.23	£11,001–£14,000	£1.81	£7.85	E
£269.24–£326.92	£14,001–£17,000	£2.24	£9.70	F
£326.93–£384.61	£17,001–£20,000	£2.65	£11.50	G
£384.62–£480.76	£20,001–£25,000	£3.23	£14.00	H
£480.77–£576.92	£25,001–£30,000	£3.98	£17.25	I
£576.93–£673.08	£30,001–£35,000	£4.68	£20.30	J
£673.08+	over £35,000	£5.19	£22.50	K

Please tick the appropriate box to indicate how often you are paid:
 Weekly
 Fortnightly
 Four Weekly
 Monthly

Please tick this box if you are a student member in full-time education (including student nurses or Modern Apprentices). Your subscription is £10 per year.

4. POLITICAL FUND

UNISON's Affiliated Political Fund (APF) is used to campaign for and promote UNISON policy and the need for quality public services within the Labour Party, locally and nationally, in Parliament and Europe. UNISON APF affiliates to the Labour Party.

UNISON's General Political Fund (GPF) is used to pay for campaigning at branch, regional and national levels of the union and for research and lobbying in Parliament and Europe. It is independent of support for any political party.

Its important that you indicate a choice of fund by ticking one of the boxes below. Your subscription shown above includes a political fund payment so you do not pay any more by being in one of the funds.

5. YOUR AUTHORISATION

- I wish to join UNISON and accept its rules and constitution.
- I authorise deduction of UNISON subscriptions from my salary/wages at the rate determined by UNISON in accordance with its rules to be paid over to them on my behalf and I authorise my employer to provide information to UNISON to keep my records up to date
- I authorise deduction of the following Political Fund payment as part of my subscription: Tick one box only
 - Affiliated Political Fund
 - General Political Fund

Now please sign and date below

Signature

Date

OTHER WAYS TO PAY
 direct debit cheque

PLEASE RETURN YOUR COMPLETED FORM TO:
UNISON, FREEPOST RSKU-RRCA-HHSJ
UNISON Centre, 130 Euston Road NW1 2AY

If you do not wish to receive such information please tick this box.

DATA PROTECTION

UNISON will process your membership information together with other information for administration, statistical analysis, conducting ballots and other statutory requirement purposes.

We may also send you newsletters, journals and surveys and let you know about educational and campaigning matters. We will disclose your information to our service providers and agents for these purposes.

If you do not want any mailings from UNISON besides those required by statute as shown in bold above, please tick this box.

We may share your information with organisations with whom we have a business relationship for your benefit. We, or they, may contact you by mail, telephone, SMS, fax or e-mail to let you know about goods, services or promotions which we think may be of interest to you.