NEW WEBSITE

A website is being developed for the three UNISON branches in Barts Health (unisonbarts.wordpress.com). You can read all our newsletters there and access other UNISON information most relevant to the developments at Barts Health. We wish you a successful 2018.

SERCO

Serco has imposed the pay deal they unilaterally negotiated with Unite. As we have explained in our past issues, UNISON has consistently argued for the full implementation of the Agenda for Change 2017/18 pay award, and the inclusion of all soft FM staff into AfC.

We are dismayed that Serco decided to turn the money intended for the full implementation of 17/18 AfC (a pay rise which would stay in the staff’s pay) which they agreed with UNISON to pay in late July 2017 into a one-off “bonus”.

We also object to Serco’s statements that UNISON was responsible for their delay in paying the one-off bonus which they decided to impose in the first place. Readers should know that UNISON was never obliged to ballot our members to accept this “bonus” because a) we were never involved in its negotiation and b) it is funded from the potential deal we had with Serco back in July 2017.

We would like to remind the reader that close to 90% of the staff in soft FM have been on Agenda for Change. Serco would like to see the flat-rate London Living Wage replace the vastly better (and much more expensive) AfC package over the course of their contract.

Trying to exploit the unfortunate division between UNISON and Unite in the last few months, Serco is now telling UNISON that it intends to impose their own way on the staff which had transferred to them with the Barts Health human resource policies and procedures as part of their contracts.
Serco’s HR procedures have 48-hour notice for formal hearings, longer lasting sanctions for disciplinary issues and a faster dismissal process for sickness. We believe Serco will be in breach of TUPE and is seeking legal advice. Serco is also trying to impose a 3-month pay protection period for soft FM staff who are losing fixed unsocial hours/weekend shifts as a result of the Service Review consultation at St Barts and Royal London hospitals. This is also worse than what the staff were entitled to before Serco arrived.

The leading full-time officers covering Barts Health for UNISON and Unite have been having constructive discussions on working together to address these serious issues. We aim to bring our work at Barts in sync with that of the NHS unions nationally, where we form a joint front to defend, improve and extend hard-won terms and conditions for all workers in the NHS.

**SOFT FM CONTRACT: WHY THIS MATTERS TO ALL STAFF**

At the end of September, the Trust responded to the appeal UNISON presented to the Trust Chair before the Trust AGM seeking clarification on staff pay in the soft FM contract. In their response, the Trust claims the Staff Side trade unions were fully involved in looking at the bids and deciding the terms and conditions of the staff in the contract with Serco. This of course concerns us gravely.

UNISON reviewed the documentation and discussed with our colleagues in the other Staff Side trade unions, who confirmed that the Trust’s claims are at best grossly inaccurate. In fact, the Trust never meaningfully consulted the Staff Side on the contract with Serco, none of the reps named in their response had ever attended the meetings where decisions over bids and their T&Cs were made which the Trust claims has happened.

At the lead of UNISON, at the November 2017 Staff Partnership Forum (the main collective bargaining mechanism at Barts Health), the Staff Side trade unions have formally requested the Trust to provide copies of a) meetings of the Trust bodies where the bids for the soft FM contract were scrutinised and the decision to award Serco the contract were made and b) the contract between Barts Health and Serco, especially the clauses on staff pay and terms & conditions.