

# EQUALITY MATTERS



**Issue 12 - October 2018**

What a hot, hot, hot summer! Best in donkey's years. Remember it really did happen, when icy winter comes. Well, another bumper issue for you this quarter, as so much has taken place.

Your articles and comments are always welcome.

Sonia Stewart  
Branch Equality Officer

**General Data  
Protection  
Regulations  
(GDPR)**

**Rise in Subject  
Access  
Requests  
(SARS).**

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**Special points  
of interest in  
Issue 12:**

**Self-Organised  
Groups**

**Mental Health**

**Festival of  
Manchester**

**Anniversary  
Special 2018  
Newsletter**

## News

### Caring and Disability

Due to caring responsibilities for disabled children, many parents are not taking up promotional opportunities at work.

They often find it difficult, due to lack of support and flexibility at work to hold down a job, according to the report 'Off Balance – parents of disabled children and paid work'.

“.....We urgently need sufficient and affordable childcare for disabled children underpinned by flexibility as the norm, rather than the exception, in the workplace. And parents of disabled children should be entitled to a period of paid 'adjustment leave' so they can put care arrangements in place without losing their job.”  
(Sarah Jackson, Chief Executive, Working Families)

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### Not at Work – Are you Sure?

Research carried out reveals that many workers travelling to and from work (54% of those studied) are actually sending work emails during their journeys. This is regarded as work/life imbalance, as people are not switching off from work.

Although seen as a leadership/senior management issue, it can impact on others at lower grades, if they are expected to behave in the same way and respond to early morning/late night emails.

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## News

### General Data Protection Regulations

There's been a rise in Subject Access Requests (SARS), since the General Data Protection Regulations came into effect in May.

More workers want to know what data their employer holds on them and how that data is processed.

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### Interview Discrimination

Discrimination is still taking place in interviews with questions put to candidates including future family planning and age. Panel members believe such questions are not illegal, but accept they could be inappropriate. Lack of interview training is thought to be responsible for this.

Feedback from candidates, include walking out of such interviews and/or challenging panel members.

“There will always be rogue managers who will ignore any training given to them and, they should be dealt with. But it should be taken incredibly seriously. The consequences can be astronomical, and employees who have been discriminated against are entitled to unlimited compensation.”

“You can always do more training. It's not enough to sit managers in front of a ...expert for an hour; there has to be a cultural change where everyone buys in.” (Tim Goodwood, Winckworth Sherwood)

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## Trans Workers

Trans workers are being discriminated against in the workplace. A particular case resulted in the victim being awarded almost £50,000 by an Employment Tribunal, due to the level of harassment suffered.

Employers are advised to:

- Demonstrate zero tolerance policy on trans phobic bullying and harassment.
  - Provide a safe working environment.
  - Training.
- 

## Working from Home

Working from home is said to offer greater work/life balance and is particularly beneficial to working parents.

On the flip side, however, employers are advised to look further than their policy relating to flexibility and try to understand the organisation's culture, eg why some people feel self-conscious about where they deliver their work from. This is according to Working Families.

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## Mental Health

A revised Mental Health guide for managers is now available, that looks at supports for stress and mental health issues at work.

Mental health has been found to be the primary cause of long-term sickness absences for more than 1 in 5 organisations.

The CIPD has been working with MIND and research carried out shows that less than 1 in 3 organisations train their line managers to support direct reports with poor mental health.

## Keeping Quiet

Openly talking about mental health is still seen as taboo in some workplaces and people are afraid to voice their concerns.

According to a government report entitled 'Thriving at Work', 15% of working people have symptoms of an existing mental health condition.

Better support mechanisms are needed including well-being programmes, staff training, staff surveys and having a top down approach.

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## Sexual Harassment

A survey by Young Women's Trust has found that 32% of women still don't know how to report sexual harassment at work. In addition, 25% don't want to report it because they fear losing their job.

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## Parental Leave

Organisations with more than 250 employees are being encouraged to publish their parental leave policies. Santander UK, is one of the 10 organisations agreeing to publish online.

"Encouraging businesses to be transparent about their parental leave policies will help increase equality in the workplace and at home."

Nathan Bostock, CEO, Santander UK

## Discrimination

### Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Some companies, although having a diversity and inclusion policy in place, don't do enough to ensure the policy is effectively adhered to.

For example, according to research by Learnlight “..one in three employees (30%) said their organisation's policy was ‘usually’ adhered to but that sometimes senior managers get around it and HR doesn't prevent this from happening..”

“Diversity and inclusion is a huge issue for HR teams to tackle. Businesses increasingly understand that diverse and inclusive organisations are not only doing the right thing but are also reducing their reputational risks and building a work environment that is more likely to result in greater profitability”. Benjamin Joseph, co-founder and CEO, Learnlight

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### Age

The Centre for Better Ageing believes employers could face skills shortages if they overlook the skills of older workers.

Older workers are said to believe they get turned down for roles in the workplace and are offered fewer opportunities for training and progression due to age.

Although under the Equality Act, Age is one of the protected characteristics, almost 47% of older workers surveyed believed this didn't make any difference,

## Discrimination

even though there was a policy in the workplace aimed at preventing age discrimination.

“Employers risk losing their most experienced people and face labour and skills shortages. Every employer needs to become more age-friendly and take steps today to ensure they have a workforce for the future.”

Patrick Thomson, Senior Programme Manager, Centre for Ageing Better

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### Pay Gaps

The Equality and Human Rights Commission has found that measurement of ethnicity and disability pay gaps is only carried out by 3% of organisations.

Mandatory reporting in relation to recruitment, retention and promotion by ethnicity and disability is being called for, with barriers to progression and representation in the workplace being removed.

“We've seen how mandatory reporting has led to employers redoubling efforts to address their gender pay gaps. We need the same level of scrutiny and focused action on opportunities for disabled and ethnic minority staff in the workplace.”

“By not identifying and taking action to tackle unfairness in recruitment, retention and progression, employers are putting the careers of their ethnic minority and disabled staff at a disadvantage.”

Caroline Waters, Deputy Chair, EHRC

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## **Women's SOG Annual General Meeting**

The Women's SOG Annual General Meeting will be held on 18 October 2018, 5.30pm-7.30pm, Meeting Room 1, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Manchester Central Library.

## **Women's SOG Banner**

The Group is also ready to launch its new banner – see below.



Now for the science bit: Colours on the banner are the suffragette colours. Unity is Strength (UNISON motto). The buildings in the middle, chosen for being iconic, represent: The Town Hall (seat of democratic power in the City); Central Library, symbol of civic pride and learning and first public lending library in the UK;

Manchester Conference Centre was formerly known as GMEX and way back was Central railway station, a symbol of industrial past, but now a place where people can gather and is on the site of Peterloo (approximately where St Peter's Fields were).

The beehive and bee are traditional union banner symbols for industry and working together as well as being symbols of Manchester, but also, Worker Bees are all female.

In the honey bee world, drones (boys) make up a small percentage of the hive and they do not forage, clean or defend the hive. They simply mate with queens - no other role, so the Manchester worker bee is a symbol of female industry really...which is apt for the women's group.

## **National Women's Conference**

The next National Women's Conference will be held on 14-16 February 2019 in Bournemouth.

### **Contacts**

If you would like to join the Women's SOG or have any queries about the AGM or conference contact:

Marion Doherty  
[m.doherty@manchester.gov.uk](mailto:m.doherty@manchester.gov.uk)

or

Dawn Warriner  
[d.warriner@manchester.gov.uk](mailto:d.warriner@manchester.gov.uk)



## **Black Senior Managers**

One of the key areas on the Group's work programme is the lack of visible Black senior managers in the organisation. Concerns about the slow progress to address this over the years have been raised.

## **Development**

Another important area is not only being afforded opportunities to develop, but being allowed to develop and grow. It's important that new skills when gained, are not only recognised but allowed to be utilised, leading to a better chance of real progression and long term retention.

## **Meetings/Conference**

Next Black Members SOG meeting:

17 October, 12.30pm, Room 1009 Morris, Level 1, Town Hall Extension.

Black Members SOG Annual General Meeting:

16 January 2019, 12.30pm, Room 1003 Wilson, Level 1, Town Hall Extension. Speakers

National Black Members Conference:

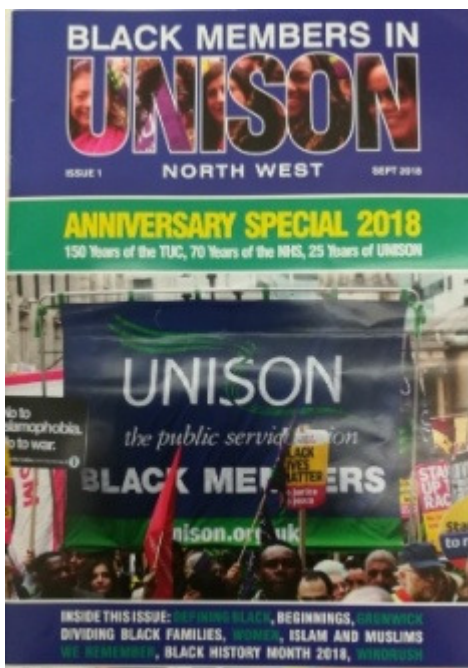
18-20 January 2019, Llandudno

## **Anniversary Special 2018 Newsletter**

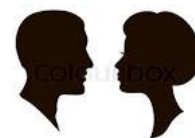
The North West Regional Black Members Anniversary Special 2018 newsletter is now available.

The newsletter is in recognition of 150 Years of the TUC, 70 Years of the NHS and 25 Years of UNISON, particularly regarding challenges and achievements of Black people.

Black History Month events are also included within this Issue. There is a 'Windrush and Beyond Cultural Day' event on 27 October and 'How our Schools Fail Black Children' forum on 2 October.



Contact: Sonia Stewart. Email  
[s.stewart1@manchester.gov.uk](mailto:s.stewart1@manchester.gov.uk)





**City Council volunteers (on the road), including representatives of the MCC Choir (on the float), together with friends and family supporting the event.**

Thousands of spectators turned out to support this year's Manchester Pride parade. City Council volunteers worked really hard to entertain the crowd on the day, as well as hand out information en route during the very long parade through the City Centre. The face painting went down well – thanks to Gill and Kay.

Proudly wearing eye-catching Manchester Bee t-shirts promoting equalities, there was a hive (get it?!) of activity as we buzzed around on the road and on the Manchester City Council float singing at the top of our voices and throwing some shapes. We're so competitive. The choir, apparently, was a big success.

The event was ablaze with colour, the atmosphere lively and there were some amazing costumes on show. Dj's on the various floats were also very competitive with music choices, but all in good fun.

The sun shone and a great day was had by all.

## **UNISON National LGBT Conference**

The next UNISON National LGBT Conference will be held on 16-18 November 2018 in Harrogate.

## **What is Disability Leave?**

Disability Leave is time off work for a reason that is related to a person's disability or impairment.

A person's impairment includes individuals who have mental health issues or learning difficulties, as well as members of staff who have a physical or sensory impairment.

Disability leave can be taken by disabled employees who need to be absent during their normal working day for physiotherapy, hospital appointments, rehabilitation or treatment.

Your immediate line manager is only able to grant disability leave for a specific period of time. Any more than this has to be approved by a more senior member of staff.

If someone is asked to make up the time, he or she has lost in order to attend a hospital appointment, he or she should first raise this with their line manager.

If necessary, a disabled employee could ask their line manager to discuss this with Human Resources.

Disability leave exists as a reasonable adjustment, so that disabled members of staff can receive paid leave for hospital appointments, rehabilitation, assessment or training.

Disabled staff should not be asked to make the time back up.

Although there is no limit on the amount of times disability leave can be used, this needs to be reasonable. However, as there is no definition of what 'reasonable' is, this would depend upon the individual's particular circumstances.

If there is a disagreement about how much disability leave could be considered to be reasonable, can a member of staff appeal their manager's decision?

What if different managers have different views about how much special leave can be taken?

The policy about disability leave is meant to be applied in a consistent way, but take into account an individual's particular circumstances.

However, managers do have to take into account the needs of the service. Although there is no right of appeal, the best course of action might be to speak to your manager on an informal basis. If you still cannot reach a decision, you could appeal formally by using the Employee Dispute Resolution Policy.

## **Managing Attendance**

What is the difference between a disability related absence and a non disability related absence?

Managers can give sanctions if absences hit a threshold for non-disability related absences. However, sanctions are not given in the case of disability related absences. Sanctions could eventually lead to dismissal.



This does not mean that disability related absences could not eventually lead to a hearing but the manager would have to demonstrate that all reasonable adjustments have been put into place. Once adjustments have been put in place they need to be monitored to see if they are having a positive effect.

What is the policy when somebody is taken ill during the working day?

There is no policy about this. In a case like this, the manager could suggest that the employee could go home early using flexi time or record it as sickness for the whole day. Any flexitime would have to be made up another day. The manager would decide what to do under these circumstances.

What if the person has not told their manager that they are disabled?

The employee should tell their line manager that they are disabled in order to get the reasonable adjustments that are needed by the member of staff.

Next Disabled Members SOG meeting: 10 October, 12.30pm, Room 5006, Level 5, Town Hall Extension

Contacts:

Paul Mittler  
([p.mittler@manchester.gov.uk](mailto:p.mittler@manchester.gov.uk)) or

Ruth Burnham  
([r.burnham@manchester.gov.uk](mailto:r.burnham@manchester.gov.uk))

The widely publicised Bee in the City Trail of over 200 super-sized and little Bees has sadly come to an end.

This initiative was so popular, attracting many individuals, groups of school children, college students, family groups etc to look for the different Bee sculptures on display in Manchester. Selfies with Bees were in abundance.

It also provided an opportunity for visitors to the City to go to various venues they might otherwise not have visited before.

A farewell weekend will take place in October.

## **UNISON Bee**

Did you know UNISON Manchester and UNISON North West sponsored a Bee?

'Sylvia', below, was located at The People's History Museum.



## M-four Translations - Annual Consultation – September 2018

This year's annual consultation meeting was held on 13 September and highlighted an analysis of service provision, achievements and objectives of the past year.

The event was attended by Councillors, officers, customers, interpreters, stakeholders, representatives of the Multilingual Manchester Project of the University of Manchester and Manchester Deaf Centre. To further enhance the services offered by M-four, links have been forged with Manchester Deaf Centre.



**Briefing by Atul Ramanuj, Service Manager, on half yearly performance.**



Sonia Stewart took us down memory lane to a time when M-four Translations was established to provide services to residents of Manchester who spoke little or no English, how the service has developed over the years and the professionalism of the team.

Manchester, being in the heart of the country, has established itself as a multi-racial, multi-cultural and multi-lingual City. Manchester has and will always welcome everyone without prejudice and barriers.

M-four Translations' role in making Manchester accessible to all the linguistic community is noteworthy.

The team continues to harness the talent of local bilingual community members. Local bilingual workers are recruited, trained and provided with paid work in the area of interpreting and translation.

This has resulted in the development of a network of interpreters and translators, who are available on a sessional basis, which means that many residents of the City are benefiting financially from the service, both in terms of employment and in their ability to access the services required.

M-four has organised well attended training sessions for officers from the City Council and partner organisations on:

- Language
- Culture
- Ethnicity
- Equality
- Race and
- Interpreting

Further training sessions are currently being planned.

The team continues to provide a high quality service, engaging with and meeting the needs of customers, knowing communities, acting on feedback and generating income for the City.

If you would like to know more about the Council's translations service or the training offered, please contact Mr Atul Ramanuj.

Email [a.ramanuj@manchester.gov.uk](mailto:a.ramanuj@manchester.gov.uk)



## Festival of Manchester 2018

## Festival of Manchester 2018

The City Council's first Festival of Manchester event was held on 1 September at Platt Fields Park. After a fairly quiet start to the day, the park came alive as more and more residents and visitors turned up for the event, curious to see what was going on.



**Sofia Higgins from HROD and volunteer colleague on the day**

There were stages with a variety of diverse performers from different cultures, food and non-food stalls including arts and crafts, face painting, sporting activities and small parades by the lake. A family-friendly atmosphere prevailed throughout the day.

Event volunteers were kept busy with their various roles which included stage management, production, meet and greet, distributing helpful event information, as well as liaising with artistes expected to perform on the day.



**Dr Erimna Bell managed the Festival stage**



**Some of the stunning costumes paraded lakeside**



Below: One of the cultural performances enjoyed by captivated audiences during the festival.



Below: Putting the finishing touches to one of the many displays on the day.



The spectacular swan on the lake!



Image courtesy of Mark Waugh

**Events 2018-2019****OCTOBER**

**2:** Black History Month Forum: 'How Our Schools Fail Black Children', 6pm, Central Library, St Peter's Square, Manchester

**9:** Navaratri

**10:** World Mental Health Day

**11:** World Sight Day

**17:** Love Our Colleges: March, rally and lobby for FE funding London

**19:** UNISON celebrates Black Trade Unionism and the history and impact of music. London

**27:** Black History Month: 'Windrush and Beyond—Cultural Day', 11am-5pm, West Indian Sports and Social Club, Moss Side, M14 4SW

**27-29:** National Disabled Members Conference. Brighton

**NOVEMBER**

**5:** Brexit: The last mile citizen's Lobby. London

**7:** Diwali

**11:** Armistice Day

**14:** World Diabetes Day

**16-18:** National LGBT Conference Harrogate

**19:** International Men's Day

**20:** Transgender Day of Remembrance

**Events 2018-2019****NOVEMBER**

**21:** Mawlid al-Nabi

**23:** Stars in Our Schools UK wide

**DECEMBER**

**1:** World Aids Day

**8:** Bodhi Day

**10:** International Human Rights Day

**2019****JANUARY**

**18-20**

National Black Members Conference Llandudno

**FEBRUARY**

**14-16**

National Women's Conference Bournemouth

**JUNE**

**16-17**

Local Government Conference Liverpool

**18-21**

National Delegates Conference Liverpool

**EQUALITY MATTERS is also at**

**[www.unisonmanchester.org](http://www.unisonmanchester.org)**

**Deadline for comments and articles to be submitted for Issue 13 of this Newsletter is Friday, 7 December 2018. Comments and articles to be emailed to:**

**[s.stewart1@manchester.gov.uk](mailto:s.stewart1@manchester.gov.uk)**