

EQUALITY MATTERS



Issue 13 – January 2019

Another year, new aspirations and opportunities. Be positive, keep strong and let us work together to make things better, because equality really does matter. We are entitled to be treated with dignity and respect.

Your articles and comments are always welcome.

Sonia Stewart
Branch Equality Officer

Branch AGM 19 March

**Friends
Meeting House
Mount Street
Manchester**

**12.30pm
Main Hall**

**5.15pm
Meeting Room
G1**

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Special points of interest in Issue 13:

GDPR

**Domestic
abuse**

**Self-Organised
Groups**

**Statue
Unveiling**

**International
Visitor**

News

GDPR

Results of a survey by CIPHR, found that only a third of the HR professionals who responded "... had enabled self-service access to personal data for employees in response to the GDPR.." The rest appeared to have ignored the ICO's recommendation of enabling such access. In addition, only 65% of HR teams had actually requested consent from employees, leavers and applicants to hold their personal data.

According to Claire Williams from the CIPHR "...While the majority of organisations have done the necessary work to write policies, create new procedures and train staff, there remains a question over whether data protection principles have actually been built into the design of the organisation."

Workplace Bullying and Harassment

Bullying "... is a form of abuse where the person is submissive to the perpetrator. It is deliberate, consistent attempts to humiliate, intimidate, offend and undermine someone." (Chantal Gautier, Chartered Psychologist and academic).

Harassment (prohibited conduct) is covered under the Equality Act 2010. Bullying and harassment are said to be among the biggest issues of poor mental health. Other factors include loneliness and bereavement. A culture change in the organisation and zero tolerance may be required in order to prevent bullying and

News

harassment, which must be implemented and monitored from senior management level.

Loneliness and Technology

One of the factors contributing to loneliness is technology, according to Dan Schawbel who is a Research Director at Future Workplace.

"Technology is giving employees "the great illusion of connection"

Pensions

6 November 2018 saw women and men receiving their pension from the same age.

This applies if they were aged 65 between 6 November 2018 and 5 December 2018. After that, it increases from 66 to 67 years.

Ethnicity Pay Reporting

Proposals to introduce regulations requiring employers to publish ethnicity pay information has been welcomed by the TUC.

The following are what the TUC believe should be reported on by employers:

- "An overall figure, comparing average hourly earnings of BME employees as a percentage of white employees' earnings. The average gap should be required on both a mean and median basis, since both calculation figures have pros and cons as indicators

- The pay gap between full-time and part-time BME and white employees
- The pay gap between BME women and white male employees
- The distribution of BME employees by quartiles of full-time equivalent earnings.
- The proportion of BME and white employees doing part-time and full-time work and those employed on a permanent, fixed term or casual basis.
- The pay gaps in basic pay and in additional payments such as bonuses, commission, overtime, recruitment and retention supplements between BME and white employees.
- The percentage of employees who have shared information relating to their ethnicity to inform the calculation of the information listed above”

In the words of Ruby McGregor-Smith “...the time for talking is over.”

Mental Health – High on Employers’ Agendas

The challenges said to be influencing employers to keep mental health high on their agendas include:

- Helping people to cope with uncertainty
 - Reducing the risk of suicide
 - Creating belonging to tackle loneliness
 - Supporting new parents
-

Flexible Working

A campaign has been launched by a multi-agency Flexible Working Task Force, said to include trade unions.

The aim of the campaign is to make flexible working the norm by encouraging employers to advertise jobs as flexible.

Changing Expectations

According to an Aon survey about benefits and trends, the top priorities of workers are:

- Flexible working hours
- Agile working
- Mental health
- Diversity and inclusion
- Parental leave

Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse victims could soon be protected under new laws being debated.

This would include a new domestic abuse commissioner, legal definition of domestic abuse and victims not having to be cross-examined by their abusers, a contentious issue for many years.

Victims of domestic abuse are often left without adequate support and changes in the law would mean more support being made available for them.

Abusers will have to take part in rehabilitation programmes.

The Disabled Members Self Organised Group will be having a networking event on 30 January.

The group provides members with peer support and a safe environment to share openly and freely, including experiences and views.

The SOG is a place for disabled members to raise issues to take to the UNISON Branch for support.

How the SOG operates

- Meets 4 times a year
- Provides a safe environment for disabled members to express themselves freely and openly
- Takes the needs and issues of disabled members to the Branch for support
- Provides a forum for members to feel valued in the workplace
- Uses the social model of disability as the standard.

If you are interested in being involved in the group and would like more details about the event on 30 January please contact:

Paul Mittler
(p.mittler@manchester.gov.uk)

or

Ruth Burnham
(r.burnham@manchester.gov.uk)

A 'Manchester Disability Rocks' event was held at Central Library on 3 December to celebrate International Day of Disabled People, during UK Disability History Month. Attendees were entertained with a variety of performances, view an exhibition and an opportunity to network.

National Black Members Conference 2019

This year's conference was held on 18-20 January in Llandudno, with over 600 attendees. Two new delegates to Conference, Veronica Johnson and Leverne Thompson (below) summed up their first time experience:



"I will get more involved. Inspired to be more active and possibly become a rep" (Veronica Johnson)

"Wonderful and uplifting experience and feel inspired to get more involved in UNISON" (Leverne Thompson)

See page 6 for conference motions. Detailed feedback on the conference will be in the next issue of Equality Matters.

Branch Women's Self Organised Group

This year the Women's SOG will particularly focus on promoting women's health at work. If you are interested in becoming involved in the Women's SOG or have any queries regarding the group's activities, please contact:

Marion Doherty, email
m.doherty@manchester.gov.uk

or

Dawn Warriner, email
d.warriner@manchester.gov.uk

Emmeline Pankhurst Statue Unveiling

The statue of Emmeline Pankhurst who led the suffragette movement, was unveiled in St Peter's Square, Manchester, in December 2018. Scores of people, some marching from various locations to the City Centre, including members of our Women's SOG, turned out to see the unveiling, with many more having a bird's eye view from office windows.



Emmeline Pankhurst Statue Unveiling



Even the weather held out – although cold, the sun shone on this momentous occasion.



Since the unveiling, in addition to visits by local residents, including schoolchildren, the statue has become a very popular tourist attraction, with many people proudly posing for photographs alongside the statue.

The on-going work of the Black Members SOG in meeting the various challenges presented involves:

- Engagement with members and potential members
- Engagement and being an active presence in the community
- Representing UNISON as an effective union and UNISON's Black members as being an integral part of the union

Key priorities for 2019

1. Black Staff Progression

This will be a continuation of work from 2018, with a view to visible increase in the number of Black senior managers within the organisation.

2. Challenging Racism in the Workplace (CRiW)

This is part of UNISON's core work on race equality nationally. The union is working to identify key issues, including racism and discrimination in the workplace.

"Black members have the same concerns as any other member about jobs, fair pay and conditions of service, promotion and progression. But their experience of the workplace is too often also marked by racism and discrimination."

3. Supporting, empowering and confidence building

Contacts:

Sonia Stewart email
s.stewart1@manchester.gov.uk
or Damian Daley email
d.daley@manchester.gov.uk

National Black Members Conference 2019

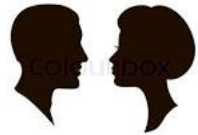
Motions Carried at this year's conference include:

- Local government cuts and impact on Black staff
- Advancing the union's work on race equality
- Breaking the barriers: Black women in senior positions in the workplace
- Black members mentoring scheme-young Black members to be paired with more experienced activists
- The Windrush papers, generations and their descendants – a hostile environment and what next
- Knife crime-gangs, knives and the killing of young Black people

North West Region Black Members Committee

Key priorities for 2019:

- Continue to support Black workers who suffer discrimination in the workplace
- Support the development of Black activists in the North West Region
- Continue to fight against the Government's hostile environment and growth of the far right



Nicaraguan Member of Parliament Visits Manchester

A community event was organised by Sonia Stewart, Branch Equality Officer and Eddy Redmond, Vice Chair of the Regional International Committee, on behalf of the Region, to welcome Dr Florence Levy Wilson, Member of the Nicaraguan Parliament to Manchester during her UK speaking tour. Supported by UNISON Manchester.



Dr Wilson is also Head of Health Union FETSALUD and President of Commission Indigenous Peoples, African Caribbean descendants and autonomic issues National Assembly of Nicaragua.

Florence gave a graphic and moving account of what's happening in Nicaragua and steps being taken to help build peace and stability in the country. She said serious problems have been experienced on the Caribbean side and they were also left out of the national development.

“We want to live in peace”

People in Nicaragua have suffered so much, but especially in the North. They were displaced and some leaders were imprisoned. People said to be political prisoners are in in jail, but they are not all political prisoners. They are dedicated to developing the country. Examples of improvements since work began includes:

- Schools nutrition programme
- Work on a 250 bed hospital in a building that used to be a refuge centre
- Free Universities (families don't have to pay). Government subsidises cost
- Water and sanitation programme in place
- Work goes on with children (to teach them that we don't need to be violent to solve our differences)
- Social protective programme eg social housing, women accessing loans etc
- The infrastructure area has received a lot of support
- Consultation takes place at national level
- New policy in place - based on all the learnings of certain areas

“Everybody deserves to live good”

Florence has two years in the National Parliament and said she doesn't forget where she comes from and what for. She also monitors if things have been implemented. They want to build a culture that's sustainable in time – a culture of peace. They are supported by the younger generation, who are teaching them about social media and monitoring what's going on.

“Everybody deserves to live good.” “We want to live in peace. No Nicaraguan has to die”
“We have to change.”

Windrush and Beyond - Cultural Day

This event, sponsored by UNISON Regional Black Members Committee and Manchester City Council, included shared experiences of people from the Windrush Generation, shared cultures, awareness raising of legal implications/support, trade union campaigns/support, motivation, entrepreneurial encouragement and the importance of our young people going forward. A 'Legacy of Excellence' young people's section will be launched in 2019.

Speakers



**Margaret Greer, UNISON
National Race Equality Officer**



Olive Strachan, MBE



**Richard Alleyne, Chair
Barbados Overseas
Association, Manchester**

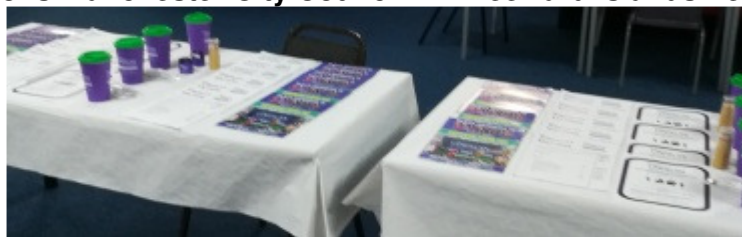
Stalls



M-Four Translations-Manchester City Council



Leeward Islands Peoples Association



UNISON Manchester Branch

Windrush and Beyond – Cultural Day

Performers and Speaker



Jamaica Folk Ensemble (Manchester)



St Kitts and Nevis Clowns



Speaker: Washington Alcott 'Back in the Day'



Pete Campbell



Lunnetta Dean – Anyone for jazz?



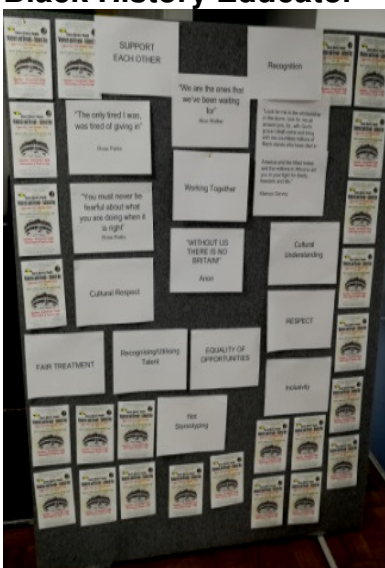
WeR1 Dance Tribe (young people on board)



Performer: Basil Otis



Speaker: Linford Sweeney
Black History Educator

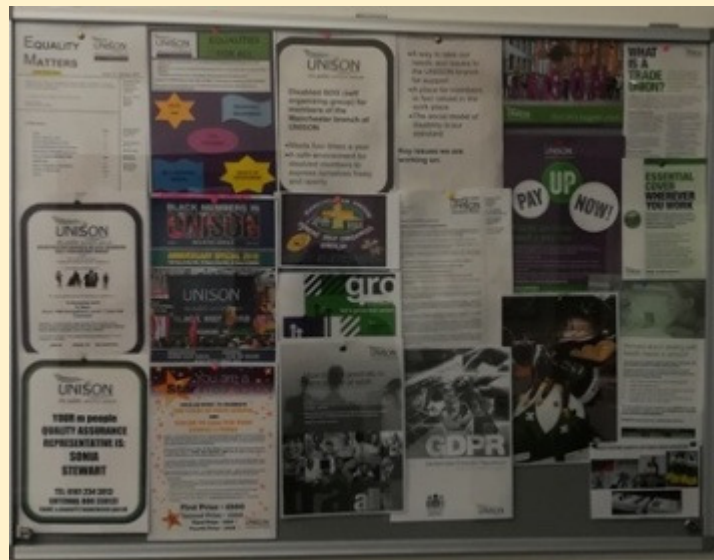


Quotes and Inspiration

Congratulations Manchester Branch!

UNISON ran a national noticeboard competition during November 2018, as part of its growing the union campaign, to find the best noticeboard.

50 entries were received and 11 shortlisted. Our very own Manchester Branch has won a runner-up prize of £150 for the noticeboard below:



The feedback on our entry was that it demonstrated:

“A colourful and lively board packed with information.

Includes local contact details and lots of encouragement to get more involved in UNISON through the branch and through self-organisation.

No doubt that this branch is well organised and active.”

First prize of £500 went to London Ambulance Service UNISON (Battersea Ambulance Station)

January**18-20**

National Black Members
Conference
Llandudno

February**14-16**

National Women's Conference
Bournemouth

23

Stand Up to Racism Trade Union
Conference, London

March**1-3**

Community Conference
Southport

15-17

UNISON International
Seminar, Coventry

16

Skills for Strength Convention
Manchester

16

UN Anti-Racism Day
London

20

Ambition for Ageing Seminar
on Resilience
Manchester

April**5-6**

UNISON National Further
Education Seminar
'Further Education Rising to the
Challenge'
Newcastle upon Tyne

8-10

Health Conference
Belfast

May**10-12**

National Young Members Weekend
Belfast

June**16-17**

Local Government Conference
Liverpool

18-21

National Delegates Conference
Liverpool

26

National Deaf (BSL) Members
Network Meeting
London

26

National Disabled Members LGBT
Caucus Network meeting
London

July**12**

National Bisexual Members Meeting
London

12

National Transgender Members
Meeting
London

EQUALITY MATTERS is also at
www.unisonmanchester.org
Deadline for comments and articles to
be submitted for Issue 14 of this
Newsletter is Friday, 8 March 2019.
Comments and articles to be emailed
to: s.stewart1@manchester.gov.uk