

Tower Rewards



Your choice. Accept or reject?



UNISON is consulting all our LBTH members on management's final "Tower Rewards" proposals. Key changes are summarised inside.

Tower Hamlets management want Trade Unions to enter into a collective agreement.

If members vote to **ACCEPT** it will mean accepting the proposed changes for the *entire* workforce.

If members vote to **REJECT** management have said they will seek to impose the changes by sacking and re-engaging the whole workforce. UNISON will then be asking members to vote for industrial action in a formal legal ballot to prevent this.

Our Branch Committee

recommends that members vote to **REJECT**.

Real progress made

Our strong and united union response has led to the withdrawal of a number of the original proposals, and changes to others.

- Retention of 35 hour week
- Retention of automatic incremental progression
- Removal of proposed performance related pay
- Retention of two years pay protection
- Retention of minimum 12 weeks' notice on redundancy
- Limited 40% severance where redundancy pay is below £25,000
- Retention of (significantly reduced) flexi scheme
- Reinstatement of special leave for hospital appointments

- Withdrawal of proposals on shift and premium payments

These changes undermine management's key contention – that the whole package of changes was needed to "modernise" contracts.

But real detriment remains

Mass joint union meetings of over 1,000 staff gave unions a clear mandate – the withdrawal of detrimental changes. But many remain in the final proposal.

- Severance still cut by at least 80%, with limited 40% severance payment applicable only to payments below £25,000
- Entry point for Scales 6 to SO2 cut by one increment instead of using new

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What's changed

Original proposals

Hours and Leave

- Leave increased for Scale 1–4 by 2 days. 1 day for Scale 5.
- Working week increased by 1 hour from 35 hours to minimum 36 hours.

Pay

- Increased increments for Principal Officer grades
- Grades Scale 6 – SO2 extended backwards. New starter or promotees lose at least £1500
- Performance Related Pay – some increments dependent on “excellent” performance
- End to automatic incremental progression

Redundancy terms and pay protection in restructures

- End to 120% contractual severance pay. A 55% cut in redundancy pay.
- Pay protection reduced from 2 years to 1 year
- Notice period cut from minimum 12 weeks for all to statutory or contractual minimum

Flexible working

- End to Flexi Scheme.
- Reduction in special leave

Cuts to Allowances

- Travel Allowance – cut by £596 per year
- ECUA – new threshold to qualify, £1000 standard payment, HMRC mileage rates

Premium Payments

- Overtime Saturday and Sunday time and a quarter instead of time and a half. Bank Holidays time and a half instead of double time.
- Night work supplements start at 9pm instead of 8pm.
- Cuts to shift and premium payments

Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures non contractual

- Making them easier to change and less protected if TUPE transferred.

Mobility Clause

- Staff can be forced to work outside Tower Hamlets with partners or otherwise. Minimal financial compensation for excess travel over 10 miles each way – no allowance for extra travel time.

Market Supplements

- Existing supplements subsumed into any pay increases. Future supplements can be paid to new starters only

- Retention of 35 hour week
- Retention of automatic incremental progression
- Removal of proposed performance related pay
- Retention of two years pay protection
- Retention of minimum 12 weeks' notice on redundancy
- Limited 40% severance where redundancy pay is below £25,000
- Retention of (significantly reduced) flexi scheme
- Withdrawal of proposals on shift and premium payments
- Reinstatement of special leave for hospital appointments

What detrimental changes remain

- Entry point for Scales 6 to SO2 cut by one increment instead of using new NJC increments to extend grades upward from Scale 4 to SO2
- Severance payments on redundancy still to be cut by at least 80%, with a limited 40% severance payment applicable to payments below £25,000 (and capped at £25,000)
- Substantially reduced flexi scheme – allowing a maximum of one day per

- calendar month; maximum seven hours credit or debit; loss of credit not used in following month
- Review of Special Leave entitlement
- Travel Allowances will still be cut by £596; more restrictive criteria for ECUA
- Night work supplements to start at 9pm instead of 8pm
- Disciplinary and grievance procedures to be made non-contractual making them easier to change and offering

- less protection in TUPE transfers
- Mobility clause to work outside Tower Hamlets with limited compensation for excess travel cost over 10 miles and none for travel time
- Market Supplements subsumed into normal pay if pay increases – and potentially only paid to new starters in future

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increments to extend grades upward.

- Substantially reduced flexi scheme – allowing a maximum of one day per calendar month; maximum seven hours credit or debit; loss of credit not used in following month.

- Travel Allowances cut by £596; more restrictive ECUA criteria

- Night work supplements start at 9pm instead of 8pm

- Market Supplements subsumed into normal pay if pay increases – and potentially only paid to new starters in future

- Review of Special Leave entitlement

- Disciplinary and grievance procedures non-contractual making them easier to change and offering less protection in TUPE transfers

- Mobility clause to work outside Tower Hamlets with limited compensation for excess travel cost and none for travel time

Unequal Rewards will widen Gender and Race pay gap

Despite numerous requests the Council have refused to provide adequate data on the equalities impact of these proposals. Staff below SO2 get no pay increase – but do suffer detrimental changes. Staff in these grades are more likely to be women or BME and more likely to live locally. They are in front line roles keeping services going. Management say they are already well paid – despite real pay having been cut by 23% in the last decade. They could have used new increments to extend these grades upwards – as UNISON has proposed.

Instead they are starting the grades at a lower pay point, concentrating increases at Principal Officer grades only.

Cuts to Severance means workforce cull?

Our contractual severance offers a reasonable cushion

to staff who through no fault of their own face redundancy, often after years of loyal service. Management claim they need to cut severance pay to invest in the workforce.

A simpler answer would be to invest in all staff by cutting the massive spend on consultants (over £50 million in recent years). More worryingly you only save on severance if you plan to make a lot of staff redundant.

Increasing Rights at work?

Ironically the final proposals coincide with Labour calling for increased rights at work. Why should a Labour authority seek to push through detrimental changes at this time?

Politicians tell us that austerity is over. It's time to end the race to the bottom for conditions at work. That's why we say reject these proposals.

Get ballot ready:

- Check your union details are up to date – so that we are ballot ready
- If you're not yet in a union – join now
- Ask others to join the union now – together we are stronger
- Elect a steward or rep in your workplace

Tower Hamlets **UNISON**

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You will receive a voting form by email or post if UNISON doesn't have an email address for you. If you haven't received one by Friday 30 November 2019 contact the Branch Office 020 7364 5302.