

GMB NEWHAM BULLETIN

Survey and Campaign:

In August, we sent a survey to Newham Council members about bullying. This served the dual purpose of communicating to members about what bullying is and what to do when experiencing/witnessing it, as well as gauging the feeling of members.

The results showed that our members had grave concerns about bullying at LBN and felt that the procedures available to address these issues internally were not sufficient.

Detailed feedback found that many members of staff worked in environments of fear, with managers able to act largely with impunity.

Following the results of this survey, the GMB met with the HR director and deputy providing them with some aims and objectives that we wanted to see implemented in the council to help strengthen the reporting systems and make the help available to staff easier to access.

Our position was clear; there should be a zero-tolerance approach to bullying in the workplace, which needs to be practised as well as preached.

In addition, we have put anti-bullying posters up around Newham Dockside and other sites.

Following an FOI request, the GMB found that there had been a £2.8 million cost to taxpayers on 63 non-disclosure agreements at Newham Council, and a press release was issued.

ONALS:

Our recent work with our members in Our Newham Adults Learning Service (ONALS) reported cases and allegations of bullying, harassment, nepotism, discrimination and victimisation. Our work triggered a cultural review that recommended a strategic review and the restructure of the service among other recommendations.

We have made some gains for our members and are still working on other issues.

Among the gains are:

- Permanent work contracts and continuity of service for our members who were sessional staff some for over 20 years.
- Increase of pay and pay for preparation time for especially tutors
- Better terms and conditions of service
- Change of service structure from the one that was not fit for purpose and encouraged bullying and nepotism by some managers and their cronies to a centralised system.

Moving forward:

We encourage our members to speak up and not to suffer in silence!

If you have some evidence of systematic and endemic bullying culture in your service or workplace, and would like us to work with you, please let us know.

If you are not a member and wish to do so you can join at www.gmb.org.uk/join-gmb

GMB Newham