



# tubeworker

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## TfL Board's "independent review" demands cuts: WE WILL NOT PAY FOR THE CRISIS



**The "Independent Review" into transport funding commissioned by the Mayor and the TfL Board has now been published.**

Remember, this was the "independent" alternative to the KPMG-led review commissioned by the Department for Transport, which - although we can't know for sure, as it hasn't been made public - we assume is driving the DfT's demands for cuts and "workplace reforms".

The hopeful (or, perhaps, naïve) amongst us might've anticipated TfL's own review standing up for workers and passengers, and demanding more public funding for public transport. Such hopes would sadly have been misplaced.

The review strongly recommends attacks on workers' pensions, and says cuts to services can't be ruled out either. In summary, it's one long argument for workers and passengers - rather than bosses, big business, and the rich (i.e., the people with money and power) - being made to pay for the funding crisis.

The review strongly recommends "reforms", meaning cuts, to the TfL staff pension scheme (p31).

Our pension scheme is a good one, something that's been fought for and defended over the years. But we should make no apologies

for having good pension arrangements, or concede to the claim that it's a privilege we should be made to give up in order to plug holes in the bosses' budget. Pensions are deferred wages, money set aside so we can have a decent life in retirement.

The pension scheme is already discriminatory, as it excludes outsourced workers. The review suggests closing it to new entrants, which would create further inequality between workers.

### TWO-TIER

**This two-tier system would not only disadvantage new workers, whose new scheme would have worse terms than the existing one, it disadvantages members of the existing scheme, too.**

If the scheme is not gaining new members, it becomes less robust. It's in everyone's interests to defend a single pension scheme, accessible to all, on at least the existing terms and ratio of employer to employee contribution.

Cuts to staffing levels and services, including Night Tube, are also considered (p28). Staffing levels on stations have already been cut substantially in recent years. Although the review doesn't explicitly recommend service cuts, it wants to keep things "under review", and suggests "smaller scale service reductions could be justifiable." (p29)

Fare increases are explicitly recommended (p34), as is the continued withdrawal of the 60+ Freedom Pass from use in the morning peak (p37). The review explicitly opposes sourcing ring-fenced transport funding from taxation of businesses which profit

from the functioning of public transport, a relatively mild form of which already operates in Paris (p48).

The report rules out lobbying the government to permanently reinstated a fix central government subsidy (p52), and propose regressive forms of taxation, such as VAT (p49) and council tax models (p44), to fund transport.

While TfL and LU bosses are under no obligation to implement the recommendations of the review, there's absolutely no question that the review will embolden and encourage them to launch attacks on our terms and conditions.

**Let's not wait for those attacks to come... let's make positive demands for the changes we want to see, including no detrimental changes to terms and conditions, including pensions, and if the bosses won't commit to that, let's ballot for action.**

• **Read the report in full:**  
[bit.ly/tfl-review](http://bit.ly/tfl-review)



**John Leach for GS!**  
Tubeworker is backing John Leach in the election for RMT General Secretary.

**For info, see**  
[facebook.com/RMTJohnLeach](https://facebook.com/RMTJohnLeach)  
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# Keep your badges, we want equality!



Risk your life carrying out essential, frontline work during a deadly global pandemic... how does your employer reward you? Well, if you're a cleaner on London Underground... it's with a small badge.

There's widespread anger amongst ABM staff at what's seen as a slap in the face. Rather than meaningfully improving cleaners' conditions, bosses have distributed "Champion" badges to staff, in a move widely seen as an insult.

Let's remember, this is an employer that wouldn't even pay its staff full sick pay until it was forced to, and then tried to renege on the agreement. Even short of direct employment, ABM could improve cleaners' conditions by increasing pay, guaranteeing full occupational sick pay as a contractual right (not just a Covid emergency agreement), improving pension arrangements, and increasing staffing levels. Cleaners also need the same staff travel passes that directly-employed workers get.

**Cleaners are tired of being treated as second-class citizens. It's time for in-house employment and full equality with LU staff!**

## MAKE MITIE FEEL WELCOME

Outsourcing firm Mitie has absorbed Interserve, which held the contract for office, depot, and sidings security on LU, meaning Interserve workers are now Mitie workers.

This is a common experience for outsourced staff, being transferred from one employer to another like servants.

Mitie has a pretty grim record when it comes to workers' rights, and there have been numerous strikes and protests in recent years, including action by Mitie cleaners last year at St. George's Hospital in Tooting.

Security staff on LU have gone through cuts and restructures recently, but for many, that's only strengthened their resolve to organise and fightback. Hopefully RMT can ensure the new Mitie bosses are made to feel welcome...

## ISOLATION UNPAID?

**Tubeworker HQ has received reports of some station staff having Company Sick Pay withdrawn for periods of self-isolation, for extremely spurious reasons.**

Although there's only a handful of cases of this type at the moment, they set a dangerous precedent. If workers can't be absolutely confident they'll be paid in full for periods of self-isolation, they may come to work rather than risk losing wages, putting themselves and those they come into contact with at risk.

LU's existing policy on sick pay also states that Company Sick Pay can only be permanently withdrawn following a Local Disciplinary Interview, which doesn't appear to have happened in these cases, so LU has breached its own policy as well as Covid best practise.



**BLM BADGE BANNED?** Staff on Victoria Central stations are appalled at a diktat from local management that they are not to wear RMT Black Lives Matter badges at work. But they are not just appalled, they are not giving in.

While senior management blog about the importance of BLM, and staff across all other locations are wearing these badges without a problem, it seems that this one manager has decided that staff may not show their solidarity with the struggle against racism, even with an official union badge.

The local RMT branch has responded by ordering hundreds more of the badges to distribute to members. That's the way to do it.

## FULL ROSTERS? STILL NO THANKS!

The ink had hardly dried on the assurance from senior management that St Paul's would keep their pandemic roster when local management had another punt at imposing full rosters again.

With passenger numbers still well down, there is absolutely no need for staff to be put at additional risk of infection by being at work when they are not needed, and cramming into mess facilities where social distancing is impossible.

Staff have had enough of being given the runaround, so the local RMT branch discussed a call for industrial action. As of 7 December, the local manager has confirmed in writing that the reduced roster will be reinstated. If there's any further management shenanigans, staff need to pull the trigger on a formal dispute and ballot.

Area Managers elsewhere, including Green Park/Euston, have made moves to junk their pandemic rosters - just as infection rates are spiking! Station staff everywhere must stand firm to defend safe working arrangements.

## What is Tubeworker?

*Tubeworker* is a rank-and-file socialist bulletin, published at least monthly, written by Tube workers, for Tube workers. It is published by the socialist group Workers' Liberty, but is produced in editorial meetings open to all workers.

Supporters from outside London Underground can help with public distribution.

Email us at [tubeworker@workersliberty.org](mailto:tubeworker@workersliberty.org)



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