



tubeworker

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FIGHT THE FUNDING CUT

The Tory government has savagely cut Transport for London's funding, to the tune of £700m per year over the next five years. From this coming year onwards, it will receive no public grants towards its operations.

This will make London's one of the only transport systems in the world that receives no government funding. Aside from a small income from advertising and rent, public transport systems have only two sources of income: grants and fares. Scrapping the operating grant means that the whole cost will fall on farepayers.

Other cities do not run their transport like this

In France, employers pay a tax – a percentage of their total wages – which goes straight to the transport system.

Some rural areas have used this to make public transport free; urban areas like Paris use it as a funding base which is then supplemented by fares, which are considerably lower than in London.

New York and other US cities fund their transport systems through a variety of taxes – on petrol, on business, on sales – as well as issuing bonds secured against future revenues.

From Bucharest to Berlin, urban public transport gets public subsidy. Similar funding could operate in London.

Better ways of funding the Tube

Millions of pounds change hands in the City every day. Landlords charge a fortune for premises that boast decent transport links.



Companies make money from the labours of their workers and the spending of their customers – both brought to them by our public transport system. Why not make them pay?

Because the Conservatives are the party of the City, the landlords and of big business. And they don't want their mates to foot the bill.

What will result?

Unless we turn back this funding cut, we face cuts to jobs, services and standards.

We can expect further reductions in staffing levels and cuts to the frequency of maintenance checks; tightening the screw on discipline and attendance; and maybe a shot at our pensions. Projects that could have improved the service and created jobs will be scrapped.

And in 2019, management will not be generous with our pay offer – we will have to fight for every penny.

Where is the Mayor?

Londoners elected a Labour Mayor because they did not want cuts. And yet Sadiq Khan is implementing these cuts with barely a protest.

TfL has already ordered a review of London Overground, with the intended outcome of closing ticket offices and cutting staff numbers and conditions.

Political protest

The Labour Party's grassroots membership will not be happy with this capitulation to cuts.

Three-quarters of London members have joined Labour since Jeremy Corbyn became leader, indicating that they want a more left-wing, pro-working-class party.

Where Tube workers have raised the issue of cuts within the Labour Party, they have received enthusiastic support. For example, Hackney South and Shoreditch Constituency Labour Party agreed unanimously to campaign against the London Overground cuts.

If you are a Labour member, raise the issue at your next meeting. *Tubeworker* is happy to help you with this. If not, then join! If you are in a Labour-affiliated union – TSSA, Aslef or Unite – then get your union to raise this issue within the Labour Party. If you are in RMT, then this is just one more reason for the union to re-affiliate to Labour.

We can also ally with passenger groups, communities, and disabled people's campaigns.

Fighting back

TfL workers have great potential power to stop these cuts.

If we wait to be attacked, and battle each attack as it comes, then we will be sliced off salami-style, and although we may win some, we will lose some too. We will be much stronger if we pull together a united, co-ordinated plan of action – all grades, all TfL companies, all unions.

Tubeworker is pleased to see that RMT's London Transport Regional Council has agreed to host a rank-and-file conference in the new year to plan its fightback.

This could be the launch of a movement that can stop the cuts.

FESTIVE STRUGGLES SPECIAL

Workers across London transport were involved in a range of different disputes across the festive period. Here's *Tubeworker*'s round-up:

DLR ISS STAFF

Workers employed by contractor ISS on the DLR contract struck on New Year's Eve.

ISS refused to respond to the RMT's latest pay claim or enter into any meaningful negotiations.



ASSET OPERATIONS WORKERS

Asset Operations workers balloted for strikes to secure the same Boxing Day bonus other engineering workers get.

After RMT balloted its members, management agreed to pay the bonus. Unfortunately, however, the ballot failed to meet the turnout threshold required by the new anti-union laws.

So, two important lessons: one, sometimes even the threat of action will force concessions. And two, it's vital every member votes in industrial action ballots!

ABM QR CODES NOT QUITE RIGHT

ABM's new QR-code sign-in system is, predictably, causing problems.

The app is unreliable, often failing to read the codes, and sometimes simply not working at all. Cleaners are worried about being short-paid as a consequence.

ABM can expect a glut of Employment Tribunals for illegal deduction of wages if cleaners lose out because of failures in the system.

NIGHT OVERGROUND

Spare a thought for staff affected by London Overground's night service.

Overground stations will be staffed by security guards, if at all. And the affected LU stations? Who knows? There has been little consultation with our unions about how stations will deal with the extra demand.

Management are fast running out of time to get sorted for when night coverage expands in the Spring.

We may have to make them wake up and smell the coffee.

TRANSPLANT DEPOT WORKERS

RMT members at the ex-AP JNP Transplant Depot at Ruislip planned a work-to-rule from 20 December, in a dispute to win pay parity with Engineering Train Operators and others, who'd recently secured a 6.1% pay increase.

Perhaps knowing that an effective work-to-rule could stop the job, management came back to the table, and have agreed a "roadmap" to pay parity.

They'll need holding to this commitment; industrial action may still be necessary in future.

UNAPPEALING

Station Area Managers seem to be training Customer Service Managers (CSMs) to treat the attendance process as automatic.

Breach the attendance standard, an LDI is automatically convened, a 26-week warning is automatically issued. No discretion, no actual investigation into the circumstances.

It makes a mockery of the appeal stage, which will be heard by these same AMs, if the decision is essentially a product of Area Manager "advice" (read: instruction) in the first place.

Tubeworker encourages CSMs to retain their critical, independent faculties.

CLEANERS LEFT BEHIND

ABM cleaners across the network are still waiting on vital uniform and PPE.

With ex-ISS staff due to formally transfer over to ABM in February, these issues must be resolved. If they're not, RMT should consider action.

TRAIN PREP FIGHT STILL BREWING

Management are still spoiling for a fight over their planned cuts to train prep.

They want to reduce frequency from 24 to 96 hours, meaning some trains will be running for 3-4 days without having basic safety checks performed.

Unions are discussing the issue with senior bosses. *Tubeworker* says that if LU doesn't back down pronto, unions declare a dispute.

GREEN PARKLIFE

Union activists are planning a new campaign on the Green Park Area, after RMT reps received numerous reports of management bullying.

From telling staff they can't talk to each other on the gateline to attempting to prevent staff from carrying water bottles, the horror stories are building up. Some workers have said the management style seems more fitting to a military boot camp than a Tube station.

The Area Manager in question should remember whose labour actually makes the stations run.

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.

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