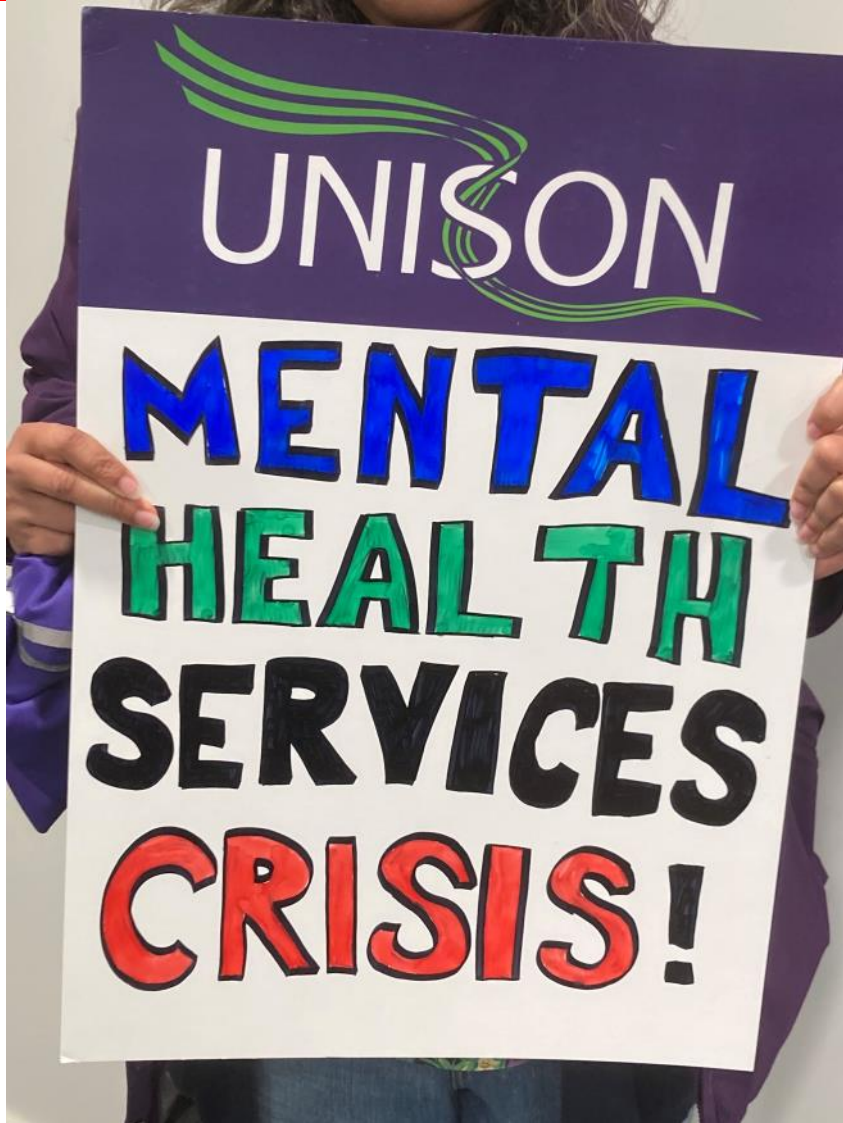


Day 48

Mental Health services on verge of collapse!



Why doesn't the Council settle this dispute rather than risk an expensive legal challenge using agency labour to break the strike?

Barnet Council has told us, “**It’s not about the money.**” So, it must be about a principle?

Publicly the Council says it’s about “**sticking to the policy.**” Yet in negotiations the Council told us the policy is discretionary. Presumably this is their attempt to cover decisions such as paying recruitment and retention payments on the 16 posts in Adult Services already receiving one?

If it’s about “**sticking to the policy**” then why is the Council offering to pay **5%** to sections of Adult Services where no evidence has been provided of a recruitment and retention problem – an offer which would cost far more than the demand of the mental health social workers?

We can only conclude the Council does not want the Mental Health Social Workers to “win” and is absolutely prepared to risk a catastrophic collapse of the Mental Health Service which would put service users, their families, and the public at risk. Once the service has collapsed it will take years for the service to recover. UNISON does not believe this is a game, which is why our members have reduced their demand from **20% to 10%**. Less than **10%** will not recruit nor retain social workers in this service as agency staff and the NHS pay much more than **5%** (in some cases even more than **10%!**)

These are the facts.

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