

The money's there for decent pay...

# NORTH WEST STRIKES SHOW HOW TO FIGHT

**A**RRIVA BOSSES IN THE NORTH West have offered drivers and engineers an insulting 1p per hour extra in their latest offer in the current dispute over pay.

And drivers have now voted by 83 percent on an 85 percent turnout to reject that offer.

Two thousand drivers and engineers across eleven depots in the North West have so far held seven days of strikes, including strikes called for every Monday in November.

Unite and GMB members also coordinated their strikes with RMT members on the railways striking back over Driver Only Operation on Merseyrail and Northern Rail on Wednesday 8 November.

Now, the drivers have announced a further serious escalation. The new dates for strikes include a three-day strike and a four-day strike in the build up to Christmas.

Strikes are scheduled for 4, 7, 12, 13, 14, 20, 21, 22 and 23 December.

The strikes are in response to their below inflation pay offer and pay disparity between garages.

Arriva drivers and engineers are showing how to fight. The strikes are having a big impact across the North West. These bus workers are doing exactly the right thing—hitting the company hard!

At First buses in Rusholme, Manchester bus workers have also just escalated their dispute so that they will strike Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays up until 15 December.

## London

While the bus companies keep their profits rolling in, our bus drivers are getting a rough deal.

Arriva for example made £25 million profit last year and paid its highest paid director £4.4 million.

Unite has huge potential strength at bus companies across the country. Coordinated strikes across companies and throughout the country could really stack



the pressure up on the bus bosses.

In London, the election of Sadiq Khan brought with it some hope that things would change. While it's good that there's now a universal starter rate for bus drivers in London—promises of one rate for the job have failed to materialise.

London bus workers have launched a Bus Workers' Bill of Rights (see box right). It's a good initiative which to be truly effective the campaign needs to reach down into every garage, mobilise big numbers and target the bus operators themselves.

## Garage

Unite is the biggest union in the country. Len McCluskey boasts proudly of a £35 million war chest for strikes—let's use it! Drivers need to push the union to take up their case. In garage after garage there are reports of attacks coming thick and fast.

There needs to be a strategy to win. Pay should be the focus. Bus workers should push for reps that will deliver a fight.

The bill of rights could be turned into serious garage meetings, escalating

protests and a push towards strikes. Bus drivers have the power!

The strikes in the North West are showing how to fight, bus workers should organise solidarity. But more importantly union members across the country should push for the kind of action that will really give the rich bus bosses a fright!

## Bus workers' Bill of Rights

- The right to a safe work schedule without forced overtime or loss of pay.
- The right to a decent and proper rest break in the working day.
- The right to drive a safe and well-maintained vehicle.
- The right to clean, serviced toilet and rest facilities on all bus routes.
- The right to report safety concerns without fear of retribution from TfL or employers.
- The right when seriously ill and covered by a doctor's note to not be harassed into coming into work until fit to do so.
- The right to relevant and timely safety training.
- The right to drive without being forced to answer radio messages and texts from controllers whilst in motion.
- The right to have all company rules in writing and clearly displayed.
- The right to be treated with dignity and respect by our employers, TfL and the public.

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