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**Regional Secretary**  
**Peter Kavanagh**



## **LONDON & EASTERN REGION**

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23<sup>rd</sup> November 2022

Terrie Alafat  
Chair of Trustees, Hestia  
Maya House  
134-138 Borough High Street  
London  
SE1 1LB

Dear Terrie,

### **Hounslow LIFE Dispute**

I am taking the unusual step of writing to you as the Chair of Trustees at Hestia about the ongoing dispute in Hounslow LIFE primarily caused by your managements refusal to engage with Unite or the conciliation service ACAS.

You will be aware that your staff have voted to take strike action. I believe it is quite possible to resolve their issues and to avert a damaging strike, but the first step must be negotiation.

Our members believe that your management have taken a bullying and arrogant approach to them over a period of years. You will be aware that your staff were angered that Hestia continued to pay some of them less than the London Living Wage despite publicly claiming to be a London Living Wage employer. Only after a Unite campaign involving publicity, the intervention of local authorities funding your schemes and the Living Wage Foundation was this matter resolved.

Earlier this year, following the submission of our pay claim, your senior managers issued threatening letters to Unite members telling them if they discussed union business this could be a disciplinary matter.

We are now faced with a refusal to engage and the prospect of strike action. You should be aware that Unite will give total backing to our members in their reasonable demand for negotiation and we are already in discussion with Hounslow council.

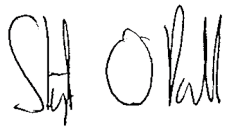
Hounslow LIFE is one of Hestia's larger services and supports over 600 of the borough's vulnerable adults. Hestia has a deeply committed workforce in Hounslow and it is your responsibility to engage with it to avoid damage to this important service.

The refusal of management to listen and meet members and their chosen representatives to discuss their reasonable concerns has angered the workers to the extent that they have voted to take action.

ACAS approached both parties to facilitate a meeting to discuss the issues, we were happy to meet yet your management again refused to any such meeting.

I would ask that you urgently instruct your managers to engage with Unite as representatives if the workers in the LIFE project. A refusal to engage can only lead to escalation. I would be happy to discuss the matter further on a formal or informal basis with any board members.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'SH O'DONNELL'.

**Steve O'Donnell**  
**Regional Officer**  
**Unite the Union**

Cc     **Hestia Trustees**