

Unite Press Release

For immediate use: 21 June 2012

London bus strike still on as Unite brands injunction an 'affront to democracy'

London bus workers in seventeen bus companies will still be on strike tomorrow (Friday 22 June) despite a high court injunction which Britain's largest union, Unite branded an 'affront to democracy.'

The union accused the employers and outside influences of ambushing the court which saw the unprecedented injunction granted without any reasons given. The injunction suspends strike action in just three of the capital's twenty bus companies.

Tomorrow's strike will see bus workers in over 70 of the capital's bus garages walkout bringing buses across London to a halt causing travel chaos. The union blamed tomorrow's disruption on the refusal by TfL and the bus operators to negotiate a meaningful settlement.

Unite vowed to appeal the unprecedented ruling in a dispute over a failure by London bus operators to award an Olympic payment.

The union went on to warn that the injunction struck at the heart of ordinary people's democratic right to take industrial action.

The three companies where strike action is suspended because of the injunction are: Metroline, Arriva the Shires, London General.

Strikes will go ahead at: London United, London Sovereign, Stagecoach East, Stagecoach Rainham, Stagecoach Selkent, Arriva North, Arriva South, First Capital, First Centre West, London Central, Abellio West, Abellio South, Metrobus, Docklands, Blue Triangle, CT Plus and Arriva Southern Counties.

Earlier in the day Unite had entered Acas talks in good faith following yesterday's call on London bus operators to pay an Olympic bonus by the Mayor of London.

Commenting, London regional secretary, Peter Kavanagh, said: ***"Bus workers across the vast majority of London's bus network will be on strike tomorrow. This comes despite an injunction which was given without any proper explanation. It begs the question of whether the court has come under any external pressure in making the ruling. Granting an injunction in the face of a massive vote for strike action is an affront to democracy. We are fast becoming a country where justice rules in favour of big business and tramples on the rights of ordinary working men and women."***

“We will appeal this anti-democratic decision. It will only serve to deepen the resolve of London bus workers. The failure by the bus companies to negotiate seriously and their desire to run to the courts will only heighten tensions. The decision by these three bus companies runs contrary to the Mayor’s call to pay London bus workers an Olympic bonus.”

ENDS

Notes to editors

- Unite is Britain and Ireland’s largest trade union with 1.5 million members working across all sectors of the economy. The general secretary is Len McCluskey.