

<b>Health in Hackney Scrutiny Commission</b>  9 <sup>th</sup> July 2020  <b>Homerton Hospital and its contract for ‘soft facilities’ services</b>	Item No  <b>4</b>
---	-------------------------

## **PURPOSE OF ITEM**

To discuss with HUHFT and with representatives of the union concerns brought to the Commission’s attention about the broader implications of the extension of the soft services contract at the Trust.

## **OUTLINE**

At its meeting on 29 January 2020 the Commission discussed an employment dispute which had been taking place at Homerton University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust (HUHFT) with the Chief Executive. This issue had arisen because of concerns by residents, UNISON and Members about the pay and conditions of staff who work in catering, cleaning, security and portering functions, collectively known as “soft services”, at Homerton Hospital and who are employed by a sub-contractor called ISS.

The minutes of that item are here and the relevant section begins at item 5.5 <http://mginternet.hackney.gov.uk/mgAi.aspx?ID=35921>

Following the discussion the Chief Executive undertook to report back as follows:

<b>ACTION:</b>	<b>Chief Executive of HUHFT to report back to the Commission in c. 3 months on the response from ISS on the pay and conditions issues raised by them and on the possibility of the Trust making a formal commitment to becoming a London Living Wage employer.</b>
----------------	--

Since then the Commission learnt that the Board of HUHFT had announced its intention to renew its contract with ISS on 30 June for a period of 5 years and HUHFT UNISON, in a letter to the Commission on 8 June, has raised their concerns, as have others. Critics of the decision have complained about its haste and a lack of, what they see, as a proper consultation.

In response the Chair wrote to HUHFT requesting that the decision to renew the contract be postponed subject to further consultation. The Chief Executive has responded.

Attached please find:

- 1) Letter from UNISON to the Commission dated 8 June
- 2) Letter from the Chair to the Chief Executive of HUHFT dated 15 June
- 3) Response from Chief Executive of HUHFT dated 26 June

The purpose of the item is to hear from both sides on the current status of this issue and about possible next steps.

The Covid-19 crisis has brought another dimension to the issue it that it has highlighted the vulnerability of frontline support staff in the NHS particularly those from ethnic minority backgrounds, who make up the majority of support staff, and who are disproportionately affected by the virus.

The Chair has invited the following for this item:

Tracey Fletcher, Chief Executive, HUHFT  
Lorna Solomon, Homerton UNISON

## **ACTION**

Members are asked to give consideration to issue and make any recommendations as necessary.