

**Inside this issue:**

Care workers for Change	
Staying warm this winter	
Message from the	
Environment Officer .....	2
Standing up for	
Pensioners' rights	
LGPS – Why to be in it .....	3
Hampshire County Council	
cuts explained .....	4

Contact Hampshire UNISON at  
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01962 842094

When you have finished reading,  
please pass on to a colleague

## In difficult times, Unity is Strength

Workers in the public services and beyond face challenging times ahead, and this is no different for workers in our branch.

Our members face a continued pay-squeeze, increasing workloads and worsening conditions. In local government, further massive cuts have been proposed which will be to the detriment of members and the communities which they serve. As a result of ongoing cuts we see an increase in the number of sickness absence, grievance and disciplinary cases, as people in workplaces across the county begin to buckle under the pressure. In such times, we have to stick together.

The branch is committed to holding employers to account, scrutinising their actions, and engaging with them constructively to find mutually agreeable solutions where possible. We remain opposed to the austerity agenda and will be led by you, our members, in taking action to defend public services and public service workers.

Hampshire UNISON has no shortage of members, but to use our strength to improve people's lives and workplaces we need people to



step up and become workplace representatives. We are also in need of Health and Safety reps, Learning reps, and workplace contacts. If you're interested in taking on a role in the branch, or want to find out more, contact [unison@hants.gov.uk](mailto:unison@hants.gov.uk)

The trade union movement has brought about massive changes which have improved the lives of millions. It is easy to become disheartened by national and international events, by the setbacks that working people always face in times like this, but we should not forget that we have each other and that history is on the side of those who fight for a more just and equal world.

**Callum Williamson**  
Deputy Branch Secretary

Make sure you get down to our **Annual General Meeting** at the **Discovery Centre, Winchester** on **4th March 2020** at 18:00, and have your say on how the branch is run.



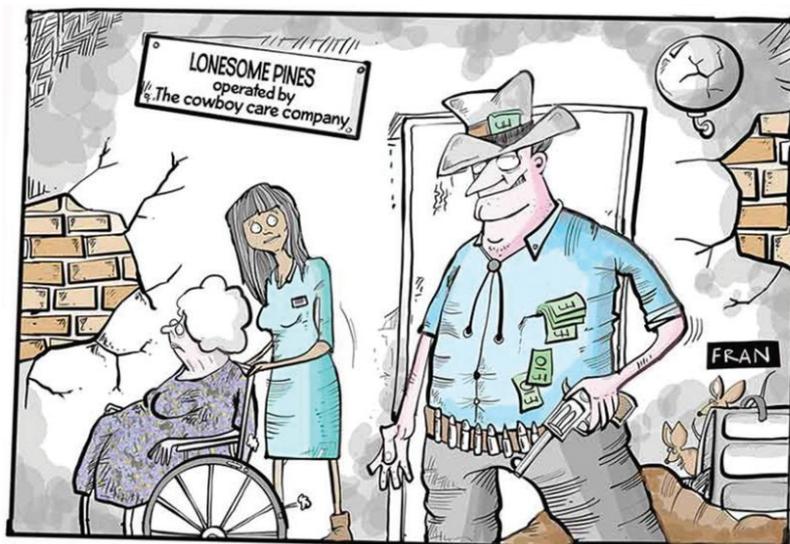
# Campaign: Care Workers for Change

The job care workers do is vital. Entrusted to look after the people that we love – to care for them, while they are vulnerable, elderly or sick. It is honourable work. But care workers are not treated fairly.

Their incredible contribution is not valued by many of their employers or our government. Big care companies are acting like cowboys. And the government have chronically underfunded the sector for years. Care is in crisis. But it is care workers, and the people that they care for, that are paying the price. Care workers are some of the lowest paid workers in the UK and the quality of care that vulnerable people receive is not good enough – one in five care homes in the UK is rated inadequate or in need of improvement.

That's why we are campaigning for change. We are fighting to win care workers:

- A real living wage – as an absolute minimum
- Full pay for sleep-in's and travel time



- Fair contracts, no zero hours
- Enough time to care
- Safe working environments

Care workers deserve good jobs. And the sector urgently needs sustainable funding and reform. We are going to win change. But we need your help to do it.

Pledge your support to the campaign online here:

[www.unison.org.uk/our-campaigns/care-workers-change/](http://www.unison.org.uk/our-campaigns/care-workers-change/)

## Get help staying warm this winter

UNISON has set up a limited fund to help members on low income. If your net income is £18,000 or less you may be eligible to receive a grant of £40 from the union.

Visit [unison.org.uk/thereforyou](http://unison.org.uk/thereforyou) to download the application form or call 0800 0857 857

Closing date is Friday 14th February 2020

## Hampshire UNISON — New Environment Officer

Hi, my name is Ilina Todorovska and besides being a UNISON steward for the Economy, Transport and Environment Department, I have recently volunteered to be the Environment Officer as well! My background is in environmental engineering, I currently work as a minerals and waste planner and at home I am a keen recycler and general worrier about the environment. I am looking to raise awareness of environmental issues with both

UNISON members and non-members, and hope we can come up with some good ideas of how to push forward the environmental agenda in Hampshire County Council and beyond.

While progress is being made, for example Hampshire County Council has recently declared a Climate Change emergency, there's much more that we can do as individuals, professionals and UNISON members.

If anyone would like to get in touch (and please do) you can reach me on [envnit@hants.gov.uk](mailto:envnit@hants.gov.uk)



# Standing up for pensioners' rights

*"Always laugh when you can,  
it is cheap medicine" – Lord Byron*

The roots of austerity, fed by incompetence and greed, stretch back to the years 2007-8, with the bursting of an \$8 trillion housing bubble in the USA. The subsequent 'demand shock' led to a financial crisis which gradually enveloped the whole world.

Since 2008 we have been subjected to a barrage of cuts to public services instigated by both central and local government. The consequences for pensioners of many of these service reductions have been disastrous both for our welfare and safety.

Over this period all pensioners' rights have been under assault. State Pensions,

Winter Fuel Allowance, Bus Pass, TV licences etc, often using the pathetic and inaccurate banner of inter-generational fairness as a justification.

The result has been that your Retired Members Section Management Committee has waged a ceaseless defence of pensioners' rights, engaging with our political leaders, the media, and the wider trade union community and taking part in street protests and demonstrations. Much of this activity is recorded on our branch website: <https://hampshireunison.org/>

Suddenly, due to the turmoil caused by Brexit, we were faced with a General Election. Promises have been made by the major parties of vast expenditure and corrections to past failed policies.

Reading the various manifestos it seems that the incessant attacks on pensioner rights by government and elements of the media may stop, which we cautiously welcome, as it allows us to turn our attention to other pensioner-related issues.

The Retired Members Section are an industrious and happy group. We invite you as members to become involved in our activities. In addition to our direct action, a programme of social activities runs throughout the year in which you are welcome to join. Details of events for 2020 will soon be circulated.

**Chris O'Neill**  
*Chairman, Hampshire UNISON  
Retired Members Section*

## Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) – why you should be in it if your employer offers it

Pensions are deferred pay and are seen as part of the whole reward package.

The LGPS is a 'defined benefit' (DB) scheme that will give you a specific income on your retirement. It is fundamentally different from the majority of employer schemes, which are 'defined contribution' (DC) schemes, where you and your employer pay in specific amounts.

The LGPS is:

- a "CARE" (Career Average Revalued Earnings Scheme) for membership from 1/4/14
- a "Final Salary" Scheme for membership to 31/3/14 based on Membership and Final Pay depending on how much you are paid you contribute between 5.5% of your pensionable pay including non contractual overtime (up to £14,400) up to 12.5% (over £161,501).

There is a 50/50 option for those who can't afford the main section

various additional benefits such as survivor benefits if you die in service.

Many DB schemes have now closed – staff were either moved on to DC schemes or the DB scheme was closed to new members. The reason for this is cost – DB schemes are more expensive for the employer.

With a DC scheme you and your employer pay in set amounts of money and you build up a pot of money that you can use to provide an income in retirement. The income you might get from a DC scheme depends on factors including the amount you pay in, the fund's investment performance and the choices you make at retirement.

Employers who participate in the Hampshire Pension Fund, which is part of the LGPS, on average have to contribute 17.1% of pensionable pay (2017 figure). This is in addition to the employee's contribution.

Compare this with the employer contribution to DC schemes - according to the Office for National Statistics, in 2017, for private sector defined contribution schemes, the average total (member plus employer) contribution rate was 3.4%, falling from 4.2% in 2016. From April 2019 the employer must pay at least 3% into your pension but many choose to pay more.

If you are encouraged by your employer to move into a different scheme from the LGPS think long and hard about it. If you are finding finances difficult you could opt for the 50/50 option for a time – you would accrue less service in the scheme but your costs would reduce and you could opt back into the main section when you want.

If you are paying into the LGPS in Hampshire and would like more information you can access Hampshire Pension Services on [www3.hants.gov.uk/pensions.htm](http://www3.hants.gov.uk/pensions.htm)

# Hampshire County Council cuts explained

**'Transformation to 2021' looks set to be the most painful round of cuts yet at Hampshire County Council.**

Here's what the Council says:

*"The financial outlook remains very challenging"*

*"39% of savings come from service reductions, highlighting the impact of successive savings programmes on the ability of all departments to protect services"*

*"The sheer size of the 13% target, coming on top of previous reductions, requires a complete "re-look"; with previously discounted options and more radical changes having to be considered."*

The future programme including the new £80m target will increase the cumulative total of savings to £560m. At the same time as cuts to budgets have been made, so too has the need for services expanded, notably in Adults Health and Care and Children's Services. What does this mean in practice?

In brief, it means cutting services and moving the costs to elsewhere in the system. Increasingly the County Council is looking to its core services, that is, those it is statutorily obliged to provide.

That means preventative work will be reduced. While there are improvements that can result in efficiencies without service reductions these have become increasingly difficult to achieve. HCC is also looking at charges for some services beyond those it is allowed to charge for, that is, seeking legislative change.

The Council's cumulative Equality Impact Assessment (EIA), pulling together all the individual EIAs done by September, shows the key characteristics most likely to be negatively impacted are age, disability and poverty, which mirrors the key service users within the high spend departments (Adults' Health and Care and Children's Services), which together account for nearly ¾

of the County Council's total annual budget. Gender is the characteristic with the next highest number of reported negative impacts.

The savings target is just too high to be met without service cuts. Although HCC uses reserves sensibly these cannot make up for the loss of government funding.

**The cuts in numbers:**

**Adults' Health & Care:** £43,100,000

**Children's Services:** £17,202,000

**Economy, Transport and**

**Environment:** £11,748,000

**Corporate Services:** £4,568,000

**Culture, Communities & Business**

**Services:** £3,382,000

**Job cuts:** up to a total of 277 FTE (full time equivalent) redundancies. The number may well be much higher as many staff, especially women, are part time workers.

**What does this mean for staff and service users? A few examples from a lengthy list are below:**

**Adults' Health and Care** has to save an additional £43m+ per year. This means for the Domestic Abuse Service and Mental Health "(s)ervices would only be able to focus on high risk clients...(p)erpetrator services would also reduce" – that is, more risk for the vulnerable, both in reduced services and less likelihood of perpetrator behaviour changing.

**Substance misuse:** alcohol nurse service to be decommissioned, specialist substance misuse service reduced – in other words, the cuts are likely to end up elsewhere in the system, eg the health service or police.

**Learning disability and physical disability:** 'greater proportion of clients in a lower cost service whilst also enabling a greater level of independence for individuals' – cuts to services likely to increase isolation, possibly cause deterioration in physical and mental health.

**Younger adults – Learning disability:** increased use of volunteers – job cuts for staff.

**Older Adults Purchased Care – Domiciliary Care:** 'eligible needs met through a more personalised approach which would include family and friends, local community and voluntary sector organisations...' – depending on a network of volunteers may be an ask too much, and could result in reductions in physical and mental health as well as an increase in hospital admissions.

**Home to School Transport:** review of some areas with the aim of saving £3m a year – that is, cutting services/eligibility which is likely to lead to more children not attending school with an impact on their futures and the futures of generations of children to come.

**Youth Offending Team Efficiencies:** cuts to services, could end up with additional costs to the police and justice system.

**Library Service:** possible cessation of services or increased or additional charging. Possible library relocation, reduction of library opening hours and review of Community Libraries – clear impact on service users especially as 40-50 FTE posts will be lost.

**Countryside – Car Parking Strategy:** implementation/increase of charges – likely to impact on the health of those who are least able to pay, but also likely to lead to nuisance parking affecting rural communities.

These are uncomfortable cuts for Hampshire County Council. They are driven by the need to save money imposed by central government. They will have a real impact on people's lives. They will be felt particularly by the most vulnerable. At the same time many of the costs will emerge elsewhere, in a more costly way, elsewhere in the system.

**Sarah O'Donoghue**  
Regional Organiser