

BRANCH LINES

UNISON West Sussex Branch newsletter • www.unisonwestsussex.org.uk



MARCHING IN SUPPORT OF SCHOOLS!

Branch joins SOS
rally in Worthing
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**ADULTS'
SERVICES
SPECIAL
FEATURE**
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Photo: Sam Pharaoh photography

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This edition brings you reports of more school restructures and redundancies, but also

includes an analysis of the latest developments in Adults' Services. Following

a recent peer review, recommendations were made to improve the service, but the branch has been quick to put across members' views. We include features on the union's national delegate conference and the county council's evolving policy on increments and appraisals. We also highlight

the difficulties of Capita's pensions service and the council's inability to provide an alternative of its own as the service is proposed to be transferred to Hampshire County Council.

*Dan Sartin,
Branch Secretary*

LABOUR GROUP BOYCOTT STAFF APPEALS PANEL

Changes to the staff appeals panel at WSCC were debated in July at full council. Unfortunately, the votes of the Conservative group combined with those of Lib Dems meant that some damaging changes went through.

The staff appeals panel will now include the chief executive or his nominated representative from the executive leadership team. Both UNISON and FBU, the fire fighters' union, have warned that the changes will make it more difficult for justice to be done for staff. You can read the detail of our concerns on our website.

The trade unions no longer have faith in the staff appeals panel, and nor does the Labour Group, which has indicated to WSCC that its group of councillors will no longer serve on the panel.

Leader of the Labour Group, Cllr Sue Mullins, spoke brilliantly in the debate, reminding councillors that chief

executives come and go, and it is dangerous to make far-reaching constitutional changes due to the preference of one person. Cllr Mullins also raised 'lanyardgate' as she was concerned how justice would be done for staff when such strong views are held and could be brought inappropriately to the panel.

Rest assured that UNISON will, despite this setback, continue to support its members in full and can support members at employment tribunals so that justice is obtained. WSCC maintained schools' members have an appeal panel made up of their school governors and this remains unchanged.

NJC PAY: 2019/20

As we reported in our Branch Lines in May, the two-year NJC pay deal was settled and has since been implemented for Year 1. 2018/19 saw rises of between 9.2% at WSCC Grade 1 and 3.7% at the top of WSCC Grade 5. After Grade 5 the deal was worth 2%.

Year 2 of the deal will run from April 2019 and will see members get pay rises from 7.3% to around 3% dependent on spinal point up to the middle of Grade 8. After this point the uplift is worth 2% again.

The two-year pay deal is complex and the second year cannot simply be overlaid onto the WSCC grading structure, so the branch will be discussing the award with the council in the autumn to decide on the best approach. The branch is taking advice from the UNISON national office. We will report back when progress has been made.

PENSION ADMIN SERVICE TO GO TO HAMPSHIRE



The West Sussex Capita contract has been beset with problems since it started in 2012. Recently we have seen a series of insourcings of key 'back office' admin services returning from Capita to WSCC.

The latest service to be moved away from Capita is however, planned to go to Hampshire County Council (HCC) no later than 1 April 2019. This is the administration service Capita provide supporting the West Sussex Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). Some members will have directly encountered problems with this Capita service. It has twice missed statutory deadlines for the provision of annual pension statements. Many members will therefore welcome this move, from profit-making Capita to a county council, and hope to see an improvement in service reliability.

However, this move will be problematic for pension admin service staff. Our branch recently supported a small group of WSCC workers providing the West Sussex audit function who TUPE-transferred to HCC. They were able to stay located within County Hall, Chichester. The problem for our members working



for Capita in the pension admin service is that it's anticipated the work will move to Winchester. This would be too far for most of our members to travel, and so redundancy would apply.

Also, due to the disruption of the anticipated change of employer, some staff – especially those with less than two years' service who would not qualify for a

redundancy payment – are leaving, which puts extra pressure on the service.

UNISON's Capita reps have met with Capita to seek urgent solutions. They have also met with our pension admin team members and have approached HCC in order to discuss their plans and seek clarity.

Whilst it is good news that WSCC finally has a long-term plan to improve the under-performing service it commissioned in 2012, it is of major regret and deeply unfair if the workers involved are made to pay the ultimate price of losing their jobs for historic failures not of their making.

The episode also illustrates the dangers of outsourcing and WSCC's strategic failures: once you outsource a service, you can quickly lose the ability to run it yourself again. You are then beholden to others in perpetuity. WSCC decided it was no longer viable to take back responsibility for its own pension admin service for the West Sussex LGPS.

We will be defending our members' interests during this period of change and will keep you up-to-date as matters progress.

UNISON's national delegate conference took place in Brighton in June. Here we explain some of the important issues debated.

NATIONAL CONFERENCE JUNE 2018

The branch sent its full delegation of six to the National Delegate Conference in Brighton in June. This is the main opportunity for members to democratically decide how the union should change and what its priorities should be for the future.

The branch put forward a motion which would have changed the way the union distributes members' subscription income to branches. The West Sussex branch committee has believed for some time that because the work done to support members has shifted from the national and regional tiers of the union to branches, the resources should follow this.

Our motion, submitted with a number of other branches, was not debated due



to lack of time. However, it did have a role in ensuring that another motion – the set piece Composite A on the future of the union was defeated. Members voting at conference did not think that 'Comp A' would meet the needs of branches, and so defeated it, some in the hope they would get a chance to discuss the West Sussex motion instead. It may sound dry but it was an exciting debate, full of drama and passion.

The branch did not achieve its aims this year, but will likely try again in Liverpool in 2019. Branch chair Ian Harvey got to speak in the debate on Comp A, and with little notice ad-libbed successfully from the rostrum to 2,000 delegates. Even his jokes went down well! Congratulations Ian – all in all it was a good conference for the West Sussex branch.

SUPPORTING PRIVATE SECTOR MEMBERS

Conference approved a motion protecting members who work for private contractors.

The union committed to campaign for the following:

- to make the case against privatisation and for services to be brought back in-house;
- for it to be a legal requirement for an in-house bid to be fully considered prior to any decision to outsource or retender;
- for union recognition to be part of any outsourced contract and for the 'real living wage' and pay uplifts to be funded;
- Requirements for facility time to be transferred and protected;
- to support branches in identifying and targeting private employers for recruitment and activist development; and
- to promote recruitment and build activism in the social care sector.



Angela Rayner
speaking at the
conference

NATIONAL PAY IN EDUCATION

Speaking at conference, shadow secretary of state for education and UNISON member Angela Rayner MP said:

"I became who I am today thanks to this union. I know our public services are better when staff have a collective voice. That is why I want to announce today that the Labour Party will bring back genuine national pay in education. Not just for the teachers but for other educators too. We will reinstate the School Support Staff Negotiating Body.

"National pay settlements will apply to every school funded through our National Education Service. There will be no more race to the bottom in our schools: we will end the scandal of teaching assistants on the minimum wage."

"On the Composite A debate, it was fascinating to see the mood of the hall change when the 'penny dropped' with the delegates. It was fascinating to be part of it."

(Clare Snoad, Record Office rep)

CRISIS IN HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

Conference voted to enact a detailed plan to fight for social care and the NHS.

One speaker said, "Services have been repeatedly run down by a government that prefers tax cuts for the wealthy to a well-funded NHS...workloads and stress loads have gone through the roof for many members."

Many members spoke of how critical it is to address the issues of health and social care together, and that problems in one affect the other.

One member pointed out that one of the many problems with the privatisation of much of social care is that the recently-won pay rise for NHS workers will not apply to social care workers who work for private companies.

F.E. COLLEGES IN CRISIS

UNISON vowed to continue to fight for further education jobs and to negotiate the best conditions for its 30,000 FE members in the face of drastic and on-going cuts.

A recent National Audit Office report revealed that more than half of all colleges are in deficit and could face an uncertain future.

Conference voted to expand UNISON regional forums and to develop a regional network of further education reps to expand the fight against cuts.

A photograph of a man in a dark suit and tie sitting at a table. He has his right hand raised with the palm facing forward, in a universal gesture for 'stop' or 'no'. The background is blurred, showing what appears to be an office setting with another person partially visible.

PAY AND INCREMENTS AT WSCC — A MAJOR THREAT

In our last edition of Branch Lines we reported that the council's chief executive (CEX) had written to all staff to tell them that from April 2019 incremental progression would be dependent on a performance-assessment. The CEX had done this despite having made no such agreement with UNISON. It looked as though meaningful consultation with UNISON was not on the agenda. We clarified to members that we had made no such agreement and expected discussions in Autumn 2018.

Performance-related pay

The CEX had wanted to make this change from April 2018, but UNISON made clear our opposition and that we believed the changes – if implemented in 2018 in the way proposed – would be unlawful. The proposals then changed to start from April 2019. All members should be concerned about the lack of due process in collectively agreeing these matters with UNISON for

April 2018. All members should be concerned too about the introduction of performance-related pay (PRP) at the council. There is no evidence available that PRP is effective in the public sector. Older, disabled and black workers tend to do less well out of such systems. PRP can be used to save the employer money if they set the 'bar' for progression too high. And such schemes are notoriously difficult, if not impossible, to make fair and equitable.

Senior management pay

Since then there has been a major development on the local pay award UNISON West Sussex negotiates for council managers on HAY, SMG4 and AfC pay rates. We agreed in writing with the council in May that an offer of 2% would be made to these staff groups, to reflect the NJC pay award. Without informing us, the council changed its mind and launched a consultation with staff – for two weeks only during August – where members were asked to make a variation to their contracts of employment. This variation of contract would have derecognised UNISON on pay matters, and introduced PRP for both incremental progression **and** the cost of living pay award. Members were rightly outraged. A huge amount of

damage has been done to the trust council managers have in their executive leadership. UNISON submitted an interim consultation response to the council. You can read what managers said on our website.

Contract variation suspended

The council responded by extending the consultation period and U-turning on the way the proposals would be implemented. PRP would now be implemented for everyone if 50% of staff agreed to it – with non-responders being counted as 'Yes' voters!

The formal contract variation was suspended, probably because the council found out it would be both unworkable and unlawful. More haste, less speed?

We would have hoped that the council would have learnt it is good to talk to UNISON after the parking consultation last summer. We could have helped them to avoid using unworkable and unlawful approaches.

Reject proposals!

At time of writing, UNISON is advising members during the extended consultation period to reject the proposals. You can read more detail on our website. All members – managers and NJC grade staff – need to be watching this closely.

WSSC state that the way performance will be assessed for HAY staff (to be agreed with a group of staff volunteers from the HAY group) will then be the same as for the NJC group.

If members want to avoid all the negative

repercussions of a PRP and grading system (none of which have yet been addressed by the employer), members will have to work closely with the branch. This is not just about ensuring that you are paid fairly for your job – it is about what type of council you want to work for.

UNISON has arranged a number of member meetings, and has seen a huge growth in its membership within the managers' group. We will be using all legal, campaigning and industrial options at our disposal to protect members' vital interests and to return to normalised pay bargaining at WSSC.

BUSINESS MILEAGE RATES AND CLAIMS AT WSSC

The council has approached UNISON to discuss changes to both the mileage rate paid for travel (currently 46.9p as per national rates), and the system staff use to calculate the mileage they can claim.

There is currently a mix of approaches used by different teams for claiming, and there is an argument that the 'triangular travel' method for working out mileage is less relevant now due to different patterns of work and flexible working opportunities which have evolved.



Dan Sartin (branch secretary), Karen Daubney (deputy branch secretary) and Sarah Cawston (branch vice-chair) have led on discussions with the council. If changes are to take place, a 'collective agreement' should be entered into with UNISON.

When we have a final set of proposals, before signing a collective agreement on your behalf, we will ask you for your views. We will do this via an electronic survey, explain the proposals and make a recommendation to you on whether you should accept the council's offer or not.

Membership Form

Please fill in the form and send to UNISON West Sussex,
Central Attic, County Hall, Chichester, PO19 1RQ

We use this address to send you information core to your membership such as your membership pack, UNISON election information and any information relating to ballots if relevant

We use this to contact you about trade union activities and services

This information helps us find the best UNISON branch to support and represent your needs

This information helps your employer and us confirm your identity

Your subscription rate is determined by how much you earn

1 Tell us about you

Title	First name	
Last name		
Home address		
		Postcode
Email		
Phone		Date of birth

2 Tell us about your job

Employer's name	
Your job title or occupation	
Workplace name and address	
	Postcode
Payroll number	NI number

3 What you will pay each month

Please tick the appropriate box for your earnings before deductions

Annual pay	Core subscription	£14,001 – £17,000	£9.70	<input type="checkbox"/>
£0,000 – £2,000	£1.30	£17,001 – £20,000	£11.50	<input type="checkbox"/>
£2,001 – £5,000	£3.50	£20,001 – £25,000	£14.00	<input type="checkbox"/>
£5,001 – £8,000	£5.30	£25,001 – £30,000	£17.25	<input type="checkbox"/>
£8,001 – £11,000	£6.60	£30,001 – £35,000	£20.30	<input type="checkbox"/>
£11,001 – £14,000	£7.85	£35,001 – and over	£22.50	<input type="checkbox"/>

Instruction to deduct the subscription from my salary

By signing the below I wish to join UNISON and authorise deduction of subscriptions from my pay by my employer

Signature	Date
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This information tells us whether you wish to contribute an additional 5% toward UNISON's campaign fund. This voluntary contribution will be taken annually in October as a single deduction by Direct Debit. Further information is available at www.unison.org.uk/changes

This information is standard direct debit mandate information

Please go to unison.org.uk/privacy-policy to see how we will protect and use your personal information

We are legally required to keep your information up to date. You can amend your details via My UNISON at www.unison.org.uk/my-unison

Email Text Phone

By ticking these boxes, you are giving your consent for UNISON to contact you by these means about how we campaign on your behalf.

4 Campaign fund contribution

UNISON stands up for its members and speaks out publicly on the issues that affect them. To continue this work we ask for a voluntary 5% campaign contribution by Direct Debit when you join. Please tick your preference below:

Campaign Fund

The campaign fund promotes better public services, enables the union to talk with politicians of any party about the work our members do and supports the union's equalities work.

UNISON Labour Link

Labour Link campaigns for UNISON policy on the NHS, your employment rights and for quality public services within the Labour Party locally and in Parliament.

No thank you

I do not wish to contribute to campaigning at the moment. Those who choose not to opt in will not be disadvantaged in any way as compared with members who do opt in.

If you selected 'No thank you' – by ticking this box you are giving consent for UNISON to contact you in future about our campaign funds. We will do this using the contact details you provided on this form.

Instruction to your bank or building society to pay by Direct Debit



To the manager bank / building society

Address

Postcode

Name(s) of account holder(s)

Account number

Branch sort code

Office use only

Service user no.

Office use only

Membership number

Please pay UNISON Direct Debits from the account detailed in this Instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this Instruction may remain with UNISON and, if so, details will be passed electronically to my bank/building society.

Signature

Date

MANAGERS DISPUTE

CHILDREN'S RESIDENTIAL CARE

Members in WSCC children's residential care homes contacted UNISON when presented with proposals to change on-call and stand-by arrangements. This would involve them having to provide on-call cover for other homes. Staff would only be granted TOIL arrangements and would receive a lower rate of on-call payment.

Under the new proposals, staff would have to deal with incidents in homes they'd been 'paired' with, so staff would need to also have knowledge of the young people and staffing in other homes. It would result in fewer managers on stand-by but covering more homes, which staff believe could create more safeguarding issues. Initially too many assumptions had been made without talking to staff, particularly because stand-by staff potentially could be called to respond to incidents in any home across the county miles from their current workplace.

Members rejected the proposals as they feel they are unsafe and a way of saving money rather than improving the service. Although the loss of pay is a factor, our members' main concern is they feel the new arrangements would be unsafe for both staff and the young people who use WSCC services.

UNISON has supported affected members and made representations to the service. UNISON advised members to 'work under protest'. This has resulted in the new arrangements being paused as the service wants to work with staff to find a resolution. Discussions are due to start again this month.



SOS march & rally in Worthing
Photo: Sam Pharaoh photography

BRANCH SUPPORTS SOS CAMPAIGN

The Save Our Schools (SOS) West Sussex last protest march and rally in Worthing went with a swing, with over 400 people turning out, including many UNISON members.

The government's unforgivable cuts agenda for our schools continues apace with the supposedly 'extra' £1.3 billion doing nothing to meet the real funding challenge in schools.

The event received high profile coverage on BBC TV South Today. There was a deadly serious message behind the colourful protest: our schools are being defunded and education is suffering.

Branch secretary Dan Sartin was asked to speak following the march (see photo above). The branch highlighted the shocking lost jobs proposed for the Summer term: 83.75 full-time equivalent (fte) teaching assistants and 45.8 fte teachers.

UNISON has dealt with 34 redundancy situations in West Sussex schools and academies since January 2018.

UNISON supports our members through these processes and often secures concessions and improvements to the original proposals. Of course, virtually all schools are making cuts though this can often be done without the need to make redundancies, e.g. by not replacing staff who leave.

Please keep supporting the branch and Save Our Schools West Sussex with its campaigning.

• FOCUS ON LEARNING AND SCHOOLS •

STRIKES SUSPENDED AT THOMAS BENNETT

We reported in May's Branch Lines about TKAT-chain academy Thomas Bennett Community College.

Proposals from TKAT would have decimated education at the college, cutting 32% of support staff positions, closing the sixth form provision and drastically cutting special

educational needs work.

UNISON ran a consultative ballot and the NEU also balloted its members. The NEU set strike days and TKAT returned to negotiations with drastically improved

proposals. Original proposals were for 35 redundancies, but by the end of the summer term 5 support staff and 2 teachers were in fact made redundant. The need for redundancies was however substantially lessened by an unusually high number of resignations amongst teachers.

Both UNISON and NEU will be monitoring member workloads and stress levels.

20% PENSION DEAL STRUCK AT GLEBE

The branch supported a group of members at Glebe primary school in Southwick in the summer term. Most of the members affected were teaching assistants who had additional jobs in the after-school club.

The school management decided to outsource the after-school club as they were struggling to provide the service the parents wanted. UNISON advised against this but school management insisted it should proceed.

Because the after-school club was being handed over as a 'going concern' to the company that won the tender ('Class Of Their Own', COTO), there was no ongoing service contract between the school and COTO. This led to a unique

legal situation where COTO was unable to offer the staff continued access to their local government pensions, as would be normal in a standard TUPE process. UNISON officers and our local rep Gary Stepney negotiated with COTO and in the end it was agreed that COTO would make a 20% employer contribution rate to government-backed NEST pensions for the transferred staff. COTO provide the statutory minimum contribution of just 2% for their other staff.

Members were content with this outcome and the TUPE transfer proceeded on 1st September.

A further issue with this TUPE process was the absence of HR support to the school. UNISON ended up as the de facto legal advisers to the school, and the school thanked UNISON officers for their support to navigate the process. This is not a situation UNISON welcomes and we have raised the shortcomings of the Capita contract with the council's director of education & skills. However, it was essential that we protected members' interests at this time of change.



• FOCUS ON LEARNING AND SCHOOLS •

BRANTRIDGE SCHOOL

Brantridge is a residential special school between Crawley and Haywards Heath, catering for boys with social, emotional and mental health difficulties, including those with Asperger's Syndrome and ADHD. Most pupils have also exhibited challenging behaviour in their previous schools.

It is part of the Orchard Hill College Academy Trust (OHCAT) and has experienced a falling roll in recent years. This and spending cuts have led school managers into a restructure focusing on the complete closure of its residential facilities.

Therefore, any staff whose job concentrated on this area of school life were at risk of being made redundant, including some staff whose own accommodation was

provided as part of their employment package.

Managers wanted to move all residential care workers onto teaching assistant profiles, with a significant drop in salary. Though staff could have elected for redeployments within the trust, most other schools were outside the county.

UNISON officers examined the proposals. After our intervention, two new job descriptions were negotiated and agreed.



These profiles would be paid at a higher rate than a teaching assistant. The union also negotiated a one-year pay protection arrangement, not part of the original management proposals.

No staff have been made compulsorily redundant and others have accepted voluntary redundancy packages. However, managers wanted staff to sign settlement agreements which the union advised against, eventually winning the argument.

HAWTHORN INFANTS SCHOOL

A falling roll and funding cuts have led to a restructure at this school. Initial proposals – not originally shared with the union – estimated four full-time equivalent (fte) job losses. However, once the union had clarified the agreed consultation process, it became apparent that fewer redundancies would have to be made.

School managers felt unsupported by Capita HR, having no formal guidance from them and with none of their representatives attending meetings. UNISON believes this is primarily because WSCC is not resourcing the contract properly and has not insourced it. UNISON has raised our

concerns with the director of education and skills. In the absence of HR, the union defaulted to be the main source of advice, having to explain the formal process to ensure our members were treated fairly.

The preliminary result was that only one fte job would have to go but following discussions with UNISON and the school, it is now looking very likely that this role can be slotted in after all, resulting in no compulsory redundancies required at all – quite a turnaround!

Anecdotal feedback tells us that very few heads are happy with the level of HR support now offered to schools by WSCC through Capita.

SCHOOLS' FORUM: HIGH NEEDS MUST BE ADEQUATELY FUNDED

The impact of cuts is one of the fundamental issues discussed at schools' forum (SF). Our representative Keith Manville gives us an overview.



Keith Manville

"We have a flawed national education system that measures school success based on league table position and exam results. This forces schools to drop challenging pupils to maintain or improve their position. The greatest number of exclusions come from academies, creating an additional burden on the high needs block. We should be encouraging inclusion in our schools, not exclusion. How we treat the most vulnerable in our society is a measure of how civilised our society is.

"We should challenge the preoccupation with target attainment levels and accept that some pupils will show progress at a slower rate, but with more support would

be more successful in mainstream schools.

"Changes to teacher training would help build more resilience to manage students who are struggling rather than forcing them into special needs schools because the school didn't understand the student's needs, usually perceived as disruption or bad behaviour.

"There's a £4.5m funding shortfall for 2018/19, projected to be a total of £16.3m by the end of 2021. The council could choose to write this off by using reserves, but at some point local tax payers might be faced with the choice of having to pay more to support local schools or for example, to fix potholes."

KEITH INVITED ONTO HIGHER NEEDS GROUP

UNISON West Sussex workplace rep Keith Manville (Oak Grove College, Worthing) has been invited to become a member of the high needs block funding working group, a sub-group of the schools' forum, of which Keith is also a member.

Keith is one of the very few people actually working within the high needs field to sit on the group, so uniquely placed to provide insight into group discussions on the impact of funding cuts in this sector.

"This is a rare opportunity for the union to directly

influence decisions, to have an input and challenge any strategy that concentrates solely on looking for further efficiency measures resulting in staff cuts," said Keith.

"Our voice has more impact in this smaller group as we can really question it, hold it to account and

have early insight into the direction any proposals might be heading.

"For example, the County Council is looking to increase local therapy provision to reduce the costs of having to send high needs children outside the county (often to expensive private providers) to get the support they need. This is something I feel we should support if we wish to see a long-term improvement in the high needs block budget."



ADULTS' SERVICES PEER REVIEW

“At West Sussex County Council there is a history over recent years of change at senior leadership level which has led to inconsistent leadership and management approaches and communication.”

This is one of the main findings of the peer review recently completed by the Local Government Association (LGA) on behalf of WSCC adults' services.

As an example, one service partner interviewed by LGA researchers said that over a period of just four and a half years, they had spoken to four different chief executives, three directors of children's services, five directors of public health and three directors of adults' services.

In UNISON's view, it's hardly surprising staff find it very hard to develop good management relationships, trust and service improvements when the goalposts set by senior managers constantly change. When new managers come into the service, impose their views, change working practice and then walk away without having to deal

with the consequences, it's difficult for our members to follow these inconsistent messages from the top. The council's recent practice of appointing senior managers on an 'interim' basis has exacerbated this trend. The review found that service leadership behaviours do not even reflect the corporate values of the council.

To fill the vacuum and address the lack of consistency, the LGA found many managers had imposed their own styles and values in the areas they were responsible for. This has reinforced the inconsistency of approach across the service.

UNISON believes the 'top-down' approach to service management has not been addressed by the review and could in fact reinforce poor practice. It's fair to say the review did find examples of both excellent and poor

practice in many areas. It also found that processes did not make it easy for managers to clearly hear the voice of service users.

Among its key findings, it stated some basics needed to be put in place rapidly. It recommended introducing recording of practice, improvements in data quality, implementation of a performance management and development framework, and a review of policies and procedures but it says little about directly addressing the fundamental issue of service culture and inconsistent management.

We believe with the right leaders, right managers and the right culture, all other issues can be successfully addressed, but if this is not tackled WSCC adults' services cannot become a high-performing organisation.

UNISON did submit its concerns to the LGA peer review team after discussion with members in the service. Go to our website to see the full list.

ADULTS' SERVICES: THE 100-DAY PLAN

The LGA peer review has led to the '100-day plan'. It has been implemented at short notice from 2 July via six workstreams: 1. Practice; 2. Safeguarding; 3. Backlog and access; 4. Leadership and culture; 5. Performance and systems; and 6. Longer term and transformational.

Communication of the plan was disjointed in its distribution to staff and lacked detail and the implications of the recommendations. The branch spoke to its members around the county, and responded immediately outlining our members' concerns to senior managers, such as:

1. Risks to 'business-as-usual' with managers co-opted to work on the workstreams. This would reduce both staff access to managers and time available for effective team management.
2. Will the plan actually address the performance management issues of the Capita contract, especially with access to admin support?
3. Does the top-heavy nature of the plan fall into the trap of not meaningfully involving practitioners at lower levels to help inform service improvement?

Though there are a small number of staff reps on the workstreams, UNISON

members believe the plan still promotes the view that 'managers know best' and will simply cascade findings for staff to implement.

The plan would have been received more positively had it been developed more collaboratively with staff. Members are again concerned about the repeated overuse of consultants.

Some social workers tell us it feels like an 'unsafe' place to work and fear performance management systems being introduced

to punish staff for what are systemic faults. There is too much current emphasis on the need to close cases and quickly move on to the next without enough regard for social work values.

There is nothing in the plan we have seen yet addressing the fundamental issue of top-level instability and inconsistency: get this right and the values and communications will hugely improve. But which workstream will have the authority to address this?

UNISON has regular meetings with the director for adults' services and will monitor progress. In July we met with service members around the county and gathered their views on the 100-day plan. These were presented to the director. Go to our website to see the full report of members' concerns.





F.E. PAY CLAIM AND LOCAL MERGER

Branch rep at Greater Brighton Metropolitan College (GBMET – Northbrook) Karen Fisher reports.

“The latest meeting with the Association of Colleges (AoC - representing employers and who decide pay, terms and conditions), discussed the latest joint union pay claim for academic year 2018/19. Unexpectedly, the AoC agreed with us to award a pay increase of 5%.

“Once we had picked ourselves up off of the floor the ‘on condition’ came in. The AoC requested we join them in lobbying the

government for additional funding so we could be paid an additional 5% over two years. No other offer was made.

“Representatives from all unions stressed this was totally unacceptable.

“As a comparison, would I pay the guy currently working on my kitchen the rate I paid 10 years ago, not the current going rate? And if he wanted more he should accompany me

to my employer and help me get a pay rise. This is effectively what the AoC are asking the unions to do.

“The college union UCU has already made plans for industrial action ballots. For now, FE college staff remain the poor relation in the public sector.

“Also, GBMET recently lost out in a bid to Chichester College to merge with Worthing College. Great news for Chichester College, but it could mean problems for the Northbrook side of GBMET. Watch this space.”

FREE FINANCIAL ADVICE SURGERIES

Lighthouse Financial Advice will be available in October to give advice on all aspects of financial planning. Surgeries are free to UNISON members. Dates available are:

- **Tuesday 2 October** 10am–3pm
County Hall, Chichester, PO19 1RQ; and
- **Wednesday 3 October** 10am–3pm
County Hall North, Horsham, RH12 1XA

To take advantage of this invaluable opportunity and book your initial 30-minute consultation with an adviser please contact Hilary Thomson by email [hilary.thomson@](mailto:hilary.thomson@lighthousegroup.plc.uk)

lighthousegroup.plc.uk or phone 01273 523717.

Our Professional Financial Advisers use researched solutions drawn from a wide range of products to find the most appropriate products for you such as:

- Financial protection for you and your family
- Pension advice and planning for retirement
- Savings and investments
- Tax planning
- Mortgages

If you are interested but unable to attend, we will arrange for the adviser to contact you.