



Under pressure, underfunded and undervalued:
UNISON members keeping communities together.

A comparative research report
for UNISON
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This report has been researched and written by Incomes Data Research on behalf of UNISON.

The authors of this report are:

Steve Glenn

Ken Mulkearn

Louisa Withers

Incomes Data Research

t: +44 (0)20 3286 7929

e: enquiries@incomesdataresearch.co.uk

w: www.incomesdataresearch.co.uk

Incomes Data Research Limited

Registered in England & Wales: 09327550 VAT Number: 201 3872 45

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Preface

This report presents the findings from the UNISON Local Government Membership Survey 2015, conducted by Incomes Data Research on behalf of UNISON. This survey was undertaken among UNISON members working in a range of local government organisations. It provides a snapshot of the current membership, focusing on their experiences and perceptions of working life in local government.

The survey follows previous research amongst the local government membership undertaken in 2008 by Incomes Data Research (IDS), in 2005 by MORI Social Research Institute and by NOP in 2000 and 2001. It allows UNISON to track changes in opinion over time on some key issues. Other issues, new to this survey, reflect the rise of living costs and the impact on members.

The report looks at views on a number of key employment issues, specifically:

- Working hours and pay levels
- Changes to pay and conditions
- Training and development
- Living costs and debts
- Workplace bullying and harassment.

The report also reflects on members' priorities for UNISON's future agenda and changes in public service delivery.

1. Introduction

These findings lay bare the experiences of over 2,200 UNISON members working in our councils and schools, delivering the local services we all rely on. UNISON last published a survey of its members working in local government in 2008, so this report provides an opportunity to assess the impact of the Government's austerity programme on the workforce that provides our local services.

Since 2010, local government has faced unprecedented cuts to funding by Westminster. Jobs have been slashed and pay and terms and conditions ripped apart as councils struggle to balance their budgets. Pay in local government is now worth 20% less in real terms, once inflation is taken into account, than it was in 2010. There has been little or no investment in the workforce.

While investment in employees is often seen as distinct from investment in services, in reality, the two are intrinsically linked. Those working in local government are on the front-line of delivering public services, face-to-face and often under difficult circumstances. They keep people safe, housed, educated and cared for. Local government workers tell us that protecting pay and conditions is the most important way to help staff provide those services. This is a message we hope comes out loud and clear from this survey.

While health and education workers have a high profile and strong public identity, the work of local government employees remains largely out of the public eye. Their work covers a variety of essential services - trading standards teams protect us from rogue traders, environmental health workers protect the health and well-being of our families, library services also support people with mental health problems. Services like building control defend vulnerable communities and householders while supporting local businesses and our youth services support the education, social and personal development of young people. Meanwhile, social workers help those with learning difficulties in residential care and older people with health, housing or benefits issues and children and young people's services keep families together. These are the people behind the statistics in this survey. Their opinions outlined here cast a spotlight on how neglecting the workforce means you also neglect the services we all rely upon.

In the current context of public sector cuts, frontline workers are also finding themselves under mounting pressure as their colleagues behind the scenes, in administrative and support services, lose their jobs. Without this vital backbone of support to frontline colleagues and service users, the quality of public

services is bound to suffer. It might not make front page news, but the public pay the price when support staff are axed.

With an estimated half a million jobs lost in local government since 2010, it is no surprise that those left behind face escalating workloads and pressure. Three-quarters of members feel that their workload and pressure have increased in the last year, up from two-thirds in 2008. Sixty per cent are working extra hours beyond their contracted hours. Nearly a quarter are working extra hours that are unrewarded or uncompensated every week.

Pay levels for the workforce are worse than in any other part of the public sector with nearly 30% paid below the level of the real UK Living Wage. This survey highlights the worrying scale of debts among the workforce and the struggle to deal with rising living costs, as wages stagnate. While 60% are finding it more difficult to pay for food, a worrying 42% tell us they have personal debt and nearly a quarter of these owe £10,000 or more.

Meanwhile, local authorities are coping with budget cuts by slashing pay and terms and conditions. Councils see this as the only option left to them to continue to deliver public services. Around three-quarters of workers tell us that terms and conditions such as payments for working outside of regular hours, unsocial hours, overtime and sick pay have all deteriorated since 2010. In the majority of cases, these changes have been imposed.

This means local government workers have been doing more and more for less and less. Over half report that stress at work has affected both their job performance and personal life. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to recognise that this has a knock-on effect upon local services.

With resources at an all time low, those working in councils and schools are overwhelmed by an increasing public demand for the services they provide and members in our survey report an increase in expectations from both service users and their employers. Seventy-six per cent report an increase in expectations from their employer in the last year, a sharp increase from 69% in 2008.

In the face of such challenges, training programmes should play an integral role in supporting and stimulating staff and enhancing the quality of public services. However, since the last survey in 2008, the

proportion of employees receiving no training in the past 12 months has increased to over a quarter. These are the same occupations - facilities, IT and school support staff - as in the previous survey. This includes 56% of school support staff, 41% of admin and clerical staff, 20% of early years educators and nearly two-fifths of teaching assistants and social work assistants. Worryingly, almost a third of respondents say they have no personal training or development plan. Our findings highlight a shameful lack of investment in employees and services.

There has also been a staggering increase in the percentage of local government workers reporting that they are subjected to abuse at work, whether bullying or harassment, verbal or physical threats, or actual violence. Reports of these incidents have risen from 44% in 2008 to 60%.

Alongside this picture of neglect, the findings highlight a sector facing the challenges of frequent reviews and reorganisations. Sixty-three per cent say that they have experienced a review or reorganisation in the last year, driven by cost-cutting exercises. This is an increase since 2008, when half of the respondents had faced workplace restructuring. It is not surprising that 63% tell us morale has worsened in the last year, again an even worse finding than in 2008.

Yet in the face of these demands, the vast majority of workers demonstrate a willingness to support the implementation of changes in the workplace if they are intended to improve the service to the public. This comes as no surprise to UNISON. The local government workforce has consistently demonstrated a willingness to adapt to workplace change since our first survey in 2001.

UNISON believes that the workforce should be at the forefront of the debate about cuts to jobs and services. While they work under the pressure of a cuts regime, they come home at the end of the day to find the services their families depend upon shredded to the core. Local government workers have a unique insight from being both service providers and users.

Local government workers in councils and schools are playing a crucial role in sustaining local communities through austerity. They deserve a better deal, not attacks on their jobs, and pay and conditions. We will be calling on key decision makers in local and central government to address the issues raised here. We welcome feedback from readers.

2. Key findings

What follows are the key findings of IDR's survey for UNISON Local Government of over 2,200 of our members working mainly in local authorities and schools. Since the last survey – which preceded the financial crash of 2008 - local government funding has been cut by an average 40% and government public sector pay policies have hit hard at basic pay. The implications for pay, conditions of work, stress, morale and job security are clear to see in the headline results which follow. Staffing, morale, job security and pay have all declined, while bullying and harassment, stress, debt and a desire to find different jobs have all increased.

Local government services and education are at the heart of a decent society and a strong economy. These results should give great cause for concern to all those who believe in their importance and recognise the strong link between the way employees are treated and trained, and the services they provide.

Work pressure and stress

- Against a background of reductions in local government funding, three-quarters of respondents feel that workload and pressure have increased in the last 12 months
- Almost three-quarters of respondents report rising stress levels. An increase from two-thirds in 2008. In some cases, this may be related to rising expectations of employers and service users, as well as increases in stress levels
- Almost half of respondents (46%) feel they have too much work to do and as a result similar proportions feel that stress at work has affected both their job performance (54%) and personal life (52%)
- Staffing shortages are a major issue, with just below three-fifths of respondents reporting frequent staff shortages

Morale and job security

- 63% of respondents believe morale has worsened over the last year, compared with just 5% who reported an increase in morale in their working area or department

- 38% report job losses in their department over the last year and 43% feel less secure in their job than they did last year
- While 38% of respondents are worried about job security in the coming 12 months, almost double that proportion (62%) are concerned about job security in the longer term. In 2008, the respective figures were lower, at 25% and 50%
- 59% of respondents have considered leaving their job in the last 12 months and 38% of these are actively looking for alternative employment (a third of whom are looking for work outside their area of work)
- Feeling undervalued, low pay and a lack of promotion prospects are the key reasons local government workers have considered leaving their current job, but they have stayed in their jobs because they continue to enjoy the job and remain committed

Pay

- Median gross pay for full-time staff is £24,000 (compared to £27,600 in the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, ONS, 2015) , for part-time staff median gross pay is £11,376, and for those working term-time only is £11,983 regardless of hours worked
- Over 50% of both part- and term-time only staff have gross annual earnings below £12,000
- The full-time gross median salary of men at £26,304 is 13% higher than the corresponding figure for women, standing at £23,268
- Topping the pay league are chief officers/senior managers, with full-time median gross annual pay of £50,889
- At the other end of the spectrum are teaching/classroom assistants and staff in facilities with full-time median annual pay of £15,534 and £15,689 respectively
- In between these extremes are eight broad occupational groups with median full-time pay of between £20,000 and £30,000 per year. These include finance professionals, IT staff and children's care workers
- Further, there are two groups with median salaries around £31,000 a year – local authority professionals and engineers/architects/surveyors
- Overall just 29% of respondents think they are fairly paid for the work they do
- Furthermore the survey shows term-time only staff are least satisfied with pay

Living costs and debts

- Some 70% of respondents report that living costs have increased over the last 12 months, while just 26% report an increase in their personal income
- Some 60% of respondents are finding both food costs and general living costs, including buying clothing and footwear, more difficult than 12 months ago
- 42% of respondents have personal debt and a worrying proportion of those (24%) owe £10,000 or more

Changes to pay and conditions

- Almost half (46%) of respondents report changes in their pay and conditions since 2010, 85% of whom report pay and conditions have worsened
- Around three-quarters of respondents report conditions for working outside of regular hours, performance-related pay, car allowances, overtime pay, sick pay, unsocial hours payments and unpaid holidays have all deteriorated
- In the majority of cases these changes have been imposed, rather than agreed

Reviews and reorganisations

- 63% of respondents have experienced a review or reorganisation since 2010, mostly driven by cost-cutting exercises
- Work reviews and reorganisations were reported to have negative consequences, with the main outcomes being reduced staffing levels, fewer resources and worse ways of working
- Employees believe that protecting pay and conditions is the most important way to help staff to provide better services, followed by job security guarantees and better funding for the sector
- The vast majority of survey respondents support the implementation of changes in the workplace if this would lead to improved service provision for the public

Working extra hours

- Just below 60% of the sample report working extra hours beyond their contracted hours. On average full-time staff work an extra 3.1 hours a week, part-timers 2 hours and term-time 2.8 hours.

- Overall 23% of respondents work extra hours that are unrewarded or uncompensated
- Two-thirds (65%) of all staff work overtime at short notice, but there are significant variations by occupational category
- The survey also shows that senior managers and homecare workers are the professions most likely to be called upon to work extra hours at short notice

Bullying and harassment

- Incidences of abuse at work have increased since 2008 with 60% of respondents having been subjected to at least one form of abuse, either bullying/harassment, or verbal or physical threats as well as actual violence
- Verbal abuse from service users is the most common form of abuse
- Occupations most at risk of threatening behaviour are children's care workers, adult care workers, library staff, professional staff and school support staff
- Survey respondents consider employers as generally effective in ensuring general health and safety, preventing violence at work, making adjustments for disabilities, preventing racial harassment and helping staff to return to work after long periods of sickness absence
- However, as in 2008, the employer's policies to prevent stress were deemed to be less effective, as, to a lesser extent, was their approach to supporting victims of violence

Training and development

- The survey shows some positive findings on training and development with almost three-quarters of respondents having undertaken some form of training in the last year
- However, the most common form of training to have been undertaken is health and safety, closely followed by job-specific training
- While 89% of respondents found the training useful in their current job, only 72% thought the training helped future career development
- 68% of respondents either have an agreed training and development plan, or have discussed and agreed training needs with their line manager
- Among some groups, relatively large proportions reported receiving no training over the past 12 months – for example some 40% of administrative/clerical staff were in this position

Contracts and working arrangements

- While the vast majority of respondents are employed on permanent contracts (98%), analysis by age shows that 71% of those aged 16 to 24 are less likely to be employed on permanent contracts
- The majority of respondents (97.9%) work defined contracted hours
- A significant minority report having more than one job – 8% provide details of a second job and 1% a third job. Multiple jobs were more common among school support staff, teaching assistants and those working in facilities
- Occupational groups with a large proportion of women show a higher prevalence of part-time working than groups with a larger proportion of men, who are more likely to work full-time hours
- Women are more than twice as likely to work term-time only, while men are twice as likely to work full-time than women
- Just over a third of respondents (37%) work a standard '9-5' work pattern, and many work 'unsocial' hours

Priorities for action by UNISON

- Out of 23 options given, 12 were marked as important by over three-quarters of respondents
- Job security emerged as the most important issue for local government workers with 98% of respondents indicating it as 'fairly' or 'very' important as a priority for action, closely followed by equal pay for work of equal value (97%), more pay (96%), a decent pension (93%) and job-related training (91%)

3. Profile of survey respondents

The survey received usable responses from 2,210 UNISON members working in local government services. Most (56%) worked for local authorities, and a further large proportion (34%) worked in schools. Some 2% worked in further education or sixth-form colleges, 1.6% in nursing or residential care homes and 0.8% worked for private contractors. All will be in 'local government' branches in UNISON.

The sample of respondents to the 2015 survey is dominated by women workers (79%) and those aged 45 and over (75%) – the same pattern as identified in previous local government membership surveys and broadly reflective of employment patterns in local government and schools. The survey achieved slightly more responses from black and other ethnic minority groups compared to previous years, however the vast majority (87%) of members responding are white.

Overall around half of respondents work full-time (56%), a quarter work part-time (27%) and 14% term-time only - with the remainder stating that they worked a combination of these patterns. In real life, part-timers make up 61% of all employees and 90% of these are women. However, once again there were significant differences in working patterns by gender, with men much more likely to work full-time rather than part-time or term-time than women. For the purposes of this survey, we have defined part-time workers as those recording themselves as part-time regardless of the number of hours they work.

Regionally responses were highest from the North West (14%), Scotland (13%) and Yorkshire and Humberside (12%) and lowest from Northern Ireland (1%)

Chart 1: Profile of respondents by gender

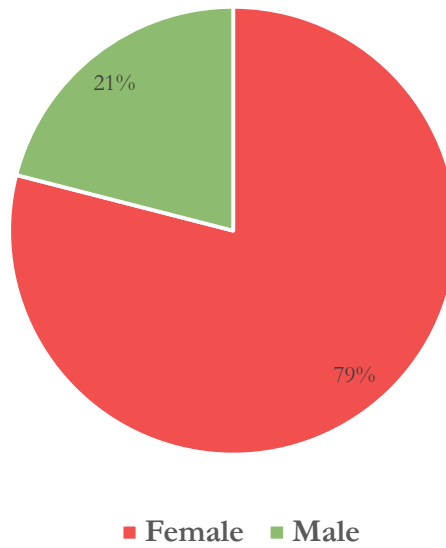


Chart 2: Profile of respondents by age

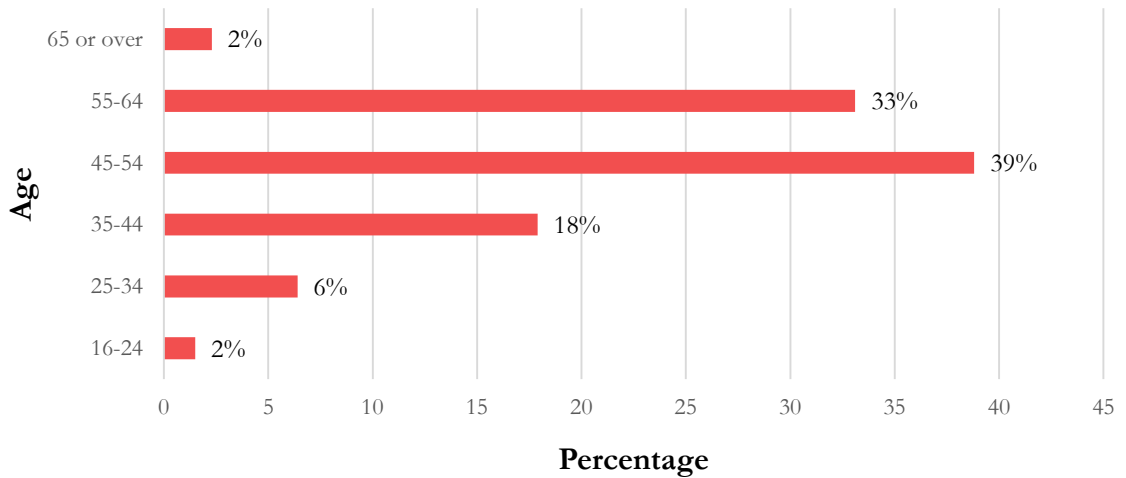


Chart 3: Profile of respondents by ethnic origin (%)

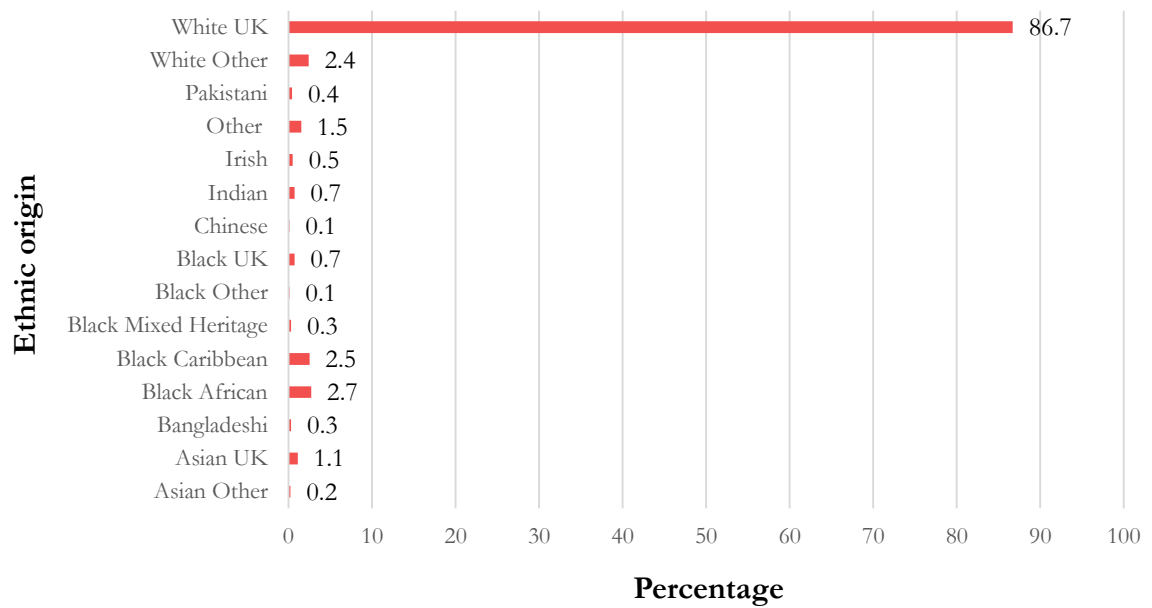


Chart 4: Profile of respondents by region

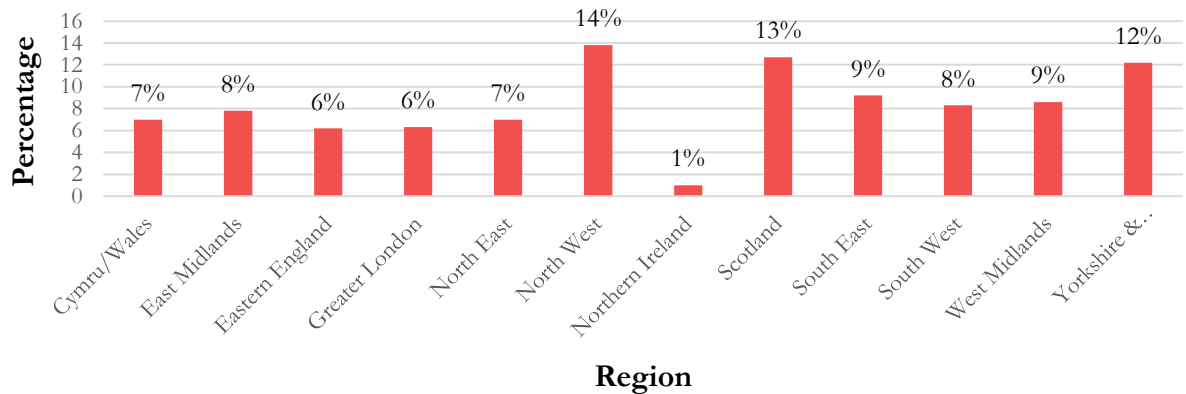


Chart 5: Profile of respondents by time in current job

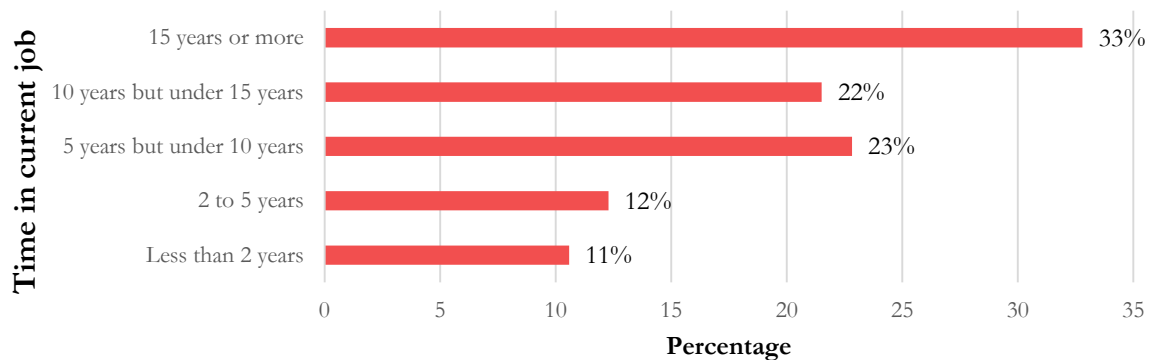


Chart 6: Profile of respondents by occupational group

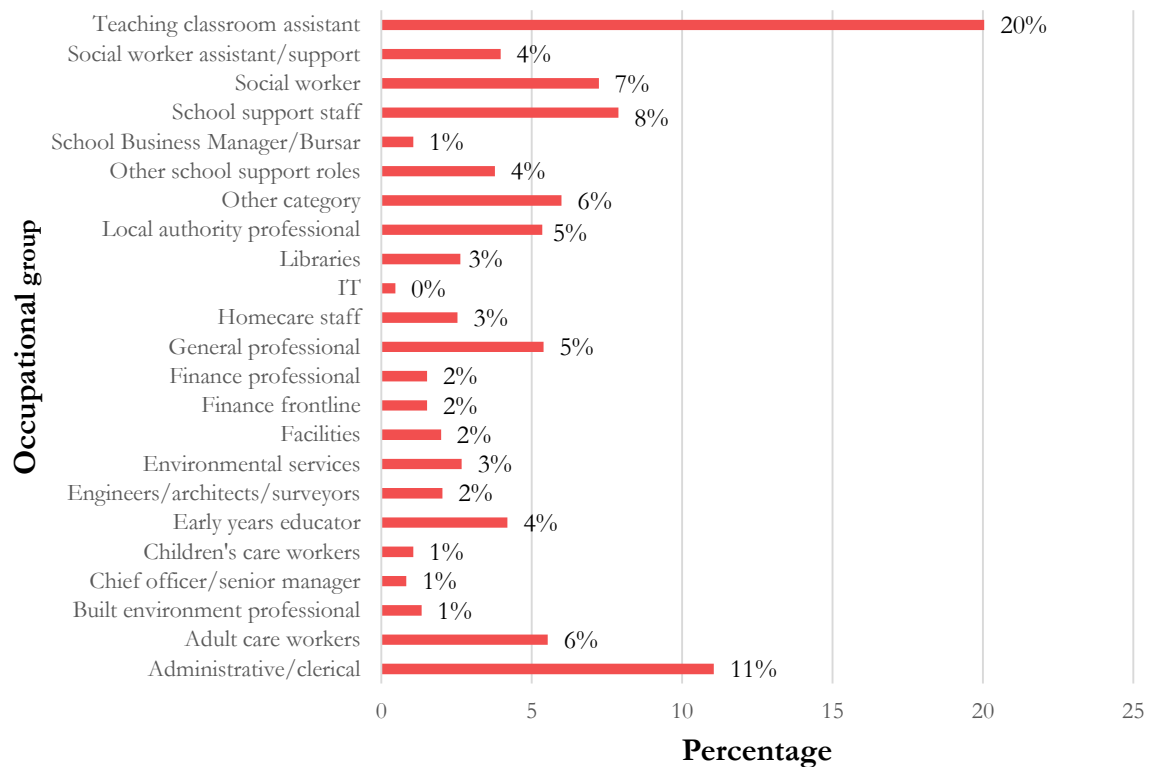
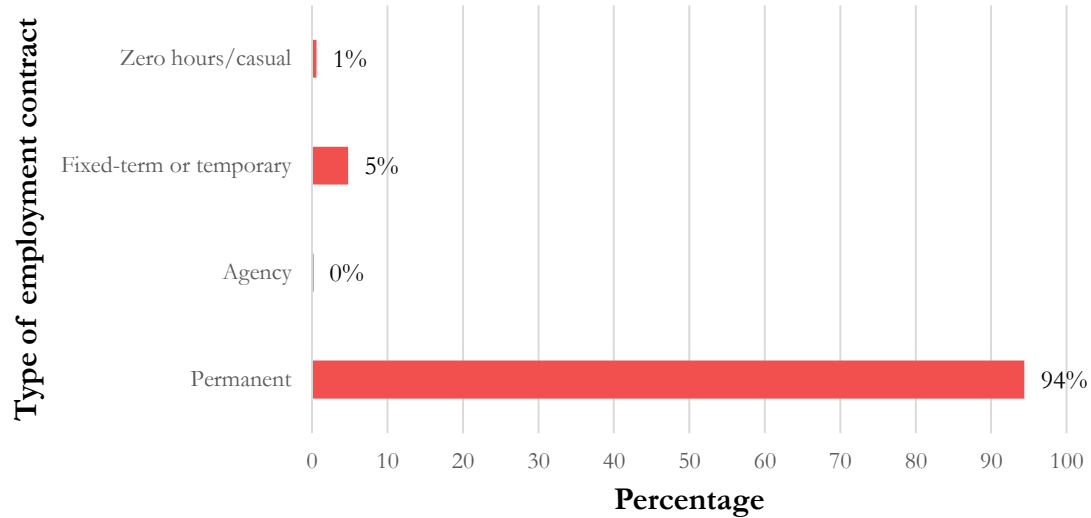


Chart 7: Profile of respondents by type of employment contract

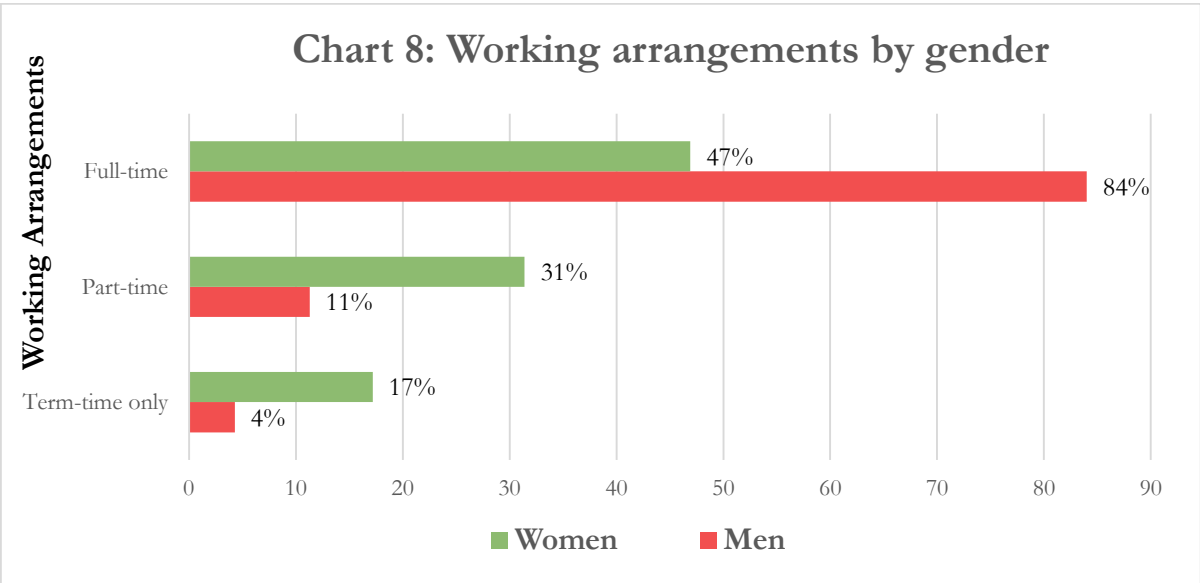


4. Working hours

Questions within the survey focused on various aspects of working hours and included issues such as working patterns, overtime, gross and net pay. With such a wide variety of occupations in local government it is understandable that responses are varied but a number of discernible patterns also emerge.

Working arrangements

The local government workforce is predominantly part-time, with some 61% of employees in this category. However, the responses to this survey came mostly from full-time employees, who make up 55% of respondents, while only 30% of respondents work part-time. The remaining 15% work term-time only, all of which are similar proportions to the 2008 survey. When the latest findings are examined by other factors such as gender and occupational group, however, there are some significant differences.



As chart 8 illustrates, there are significant differences by gender. Women are more likely to work part-time and during term-time only. Similarly, there are certain professions that are more likely to work particular patterns. For instance, over 85% of local authority professionals, environmental services staff and chief officers/senior managers work full-time while only a quarter of school

support staff and teaching assistants do. In contrast, around 45% of those working in facilities and libraries and school support staff work part-time. Meanwhile term-time working, not surprisingly, is dominated by those working in schools. Despite this, the survey also provides examples of term-time working elsewhere, such as in the fire and rescue services and OFSTED.

Types of contract and contracted hours

Respondents were asked about their contracts and 94% report being employed on permanent contracts. Of those not permanently employed, the majority (55%) are engaged on fixed-term or temporary contracts. When responses are analysed by some of the other variables, such as gender, occupational group and region, there are no significant differences.

However analysis by age shows that lower proportions of younger staff are employed on permanent contracts. Some 71% of those between 16 and 24 and 87% of 25 to 34 year olds are employed on permanent contracts, quite a bit lower than for the sample as a whole. Overall, the likelihood of working on a permanent contract seems to increase with age. The reverse is true for fixed-term and temporary contracts. For example, 29% of 16 to 25-year olds are employed on non-permanent contracts compared to just 3% of over 45-year olds.

The survey shows that 98% of staff work defined contracted hours with no discernible differences according to other factors such as age or gender. As a result, just 2% do not have set working hours, instead being employed using other arrangements such as zero hours contracts. These sorts of contracts have received a large amount of publicity in other areas of the economy but only around 1% of the whole sample report being employed in this way.

Multiple jobs

For many people, a key reason for engaging in non-traditional working patterns is to allow time for other activities. In some cases, however, it appears that this may be because they are unable to get work with longer hours or to make time for extra jobs, with a significant minority of staff reporting that they have more than one job. In fact, 8% provided details of the number of hours they work in a second job while just over 1% gave similar information regarding their third job.

These proportions are similar to the 2008 survey when the equivalent levels were 8% and 2% respectively.

Those occupations where individuals are most likely to have second or third jobs are those most likely to work part- or term-time only. These include school support staff, teaching assistants and those working in facilities. Women are also more likely than men to have more than one job but are also more likely to be employed part-time or in term-time only positions. This reflects the fact that women tend to have caring commitments outside of work and work patterns that allow them to meet these commitments.

Contracted hours

Survey respondents were asked the number of hours they are contracted to work each week as well as the number of hours they actually work. Responses illustrate that full-time staff, unsurprisingly, most commonly have a contracted week of between 35 and 37.5 hours. In contrast, the largest group of part-time staff report contracted hours of between 15 and 24.9 hours. In 2008, the most common contract period for part-time staff was under 20 hours. For term-time only staff, contracted hours are more variable, although the majority fell within the three bands within the 25 to 39.9 hours per week range (see chart 9).

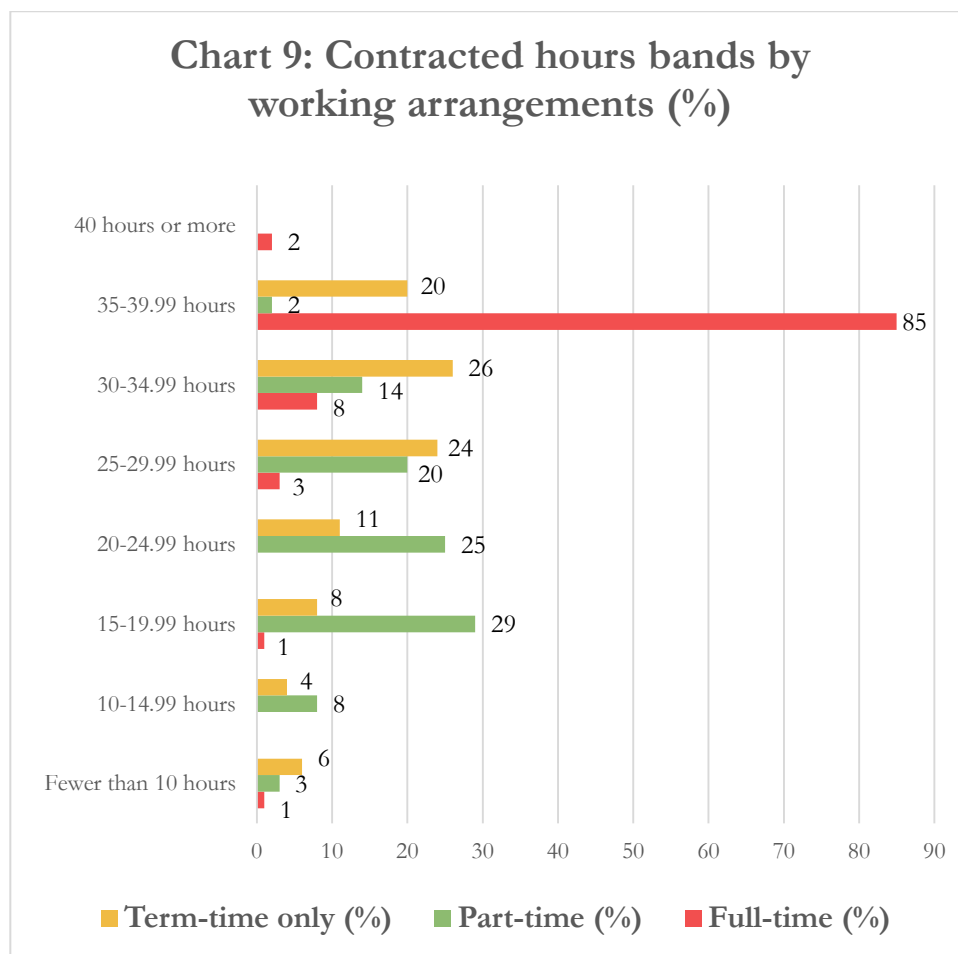
Actual versus contracted hours

Contracted hours of work and the actual time employees spend at work are not always the same, so we asked UNISON members what their contracted hours were, and also how much time they actually spend at work. When individual responses are analysed there are a significant number of staff working more than their contracted hours.

Just below 60% of the sample report working extra hours. Most commonly, staff work fewer than 10 additional hours while 6% work more than 10 hours extra per week. An additional analysis by working pattern also shows some other variations. Full-time staff work an extra 3.1 hours per week compared to 2 hours for part-timers and 2.8 hours for those working term-time only. At the median, the corresponding periods are 2 hours, 1 hour and 2 hours respectively.

Social workers are most likely to work extra hours. Nearly a fifth report working between 10 and 14.99 hours extra per week and just over 7% work 15 hours or more. By gender, ethnic group and age there are no significant differences. Meanwhile the South East and East Midlands stood out as the regions where extra hours are greater than elsewhere.

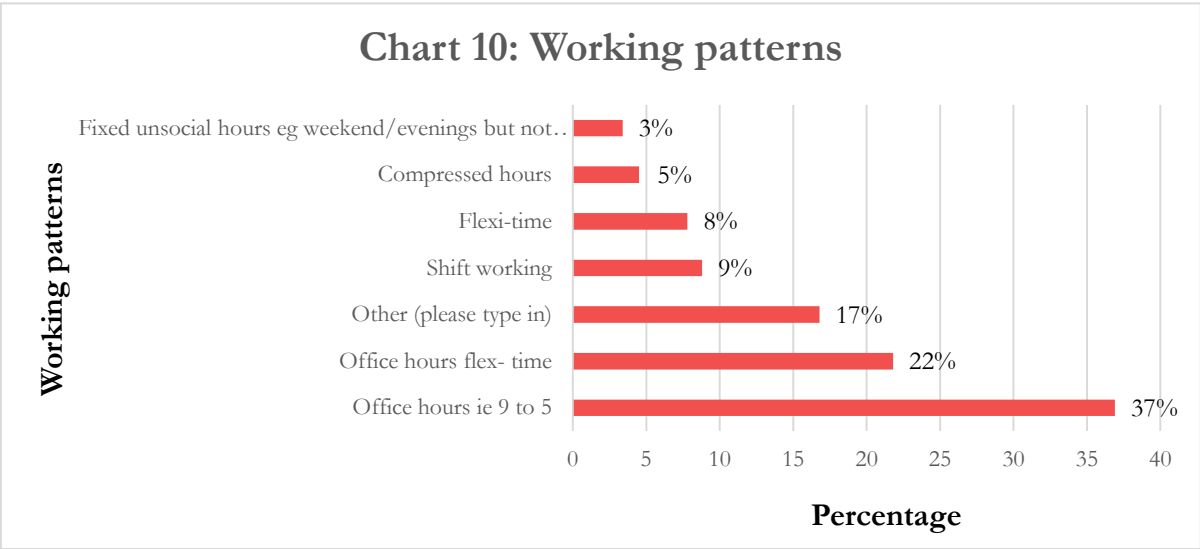
Despite many staff working more than their contracted hours, some 15% of respondents expressed a desire to work more hours. This may be connected to changes to the thresholds for working tax credits, with members on lower incomes looking to work extra hours to ensure they were eligible for the payments following these changes.



Working patterns

A significant proportion of respondents work ‘unsocial hours’, with just over a third (37%) of respondents working a standard ‘nine-to-five’ work pattern as shown in chart 10. Next most common are office hours flexi-time followed by ‘other’ working patterns. Where other working patterns were mentioned, most commonly respondents gave details of the specific start and end times they work.

The survey found differences between occupational areas in this respect, with those in libraries and environmental services most likely to work compressed hours and children and adult care workers and homecare staff most likely to work shifts. Similarly, engineers/architects/surveyors and local authority professionals are most likely to work flexi-time, while those in libraries and homecare staff are more likely than others to work fixed unsocial hours excluding shift work.



Paid overtime and time-off-in-lieu

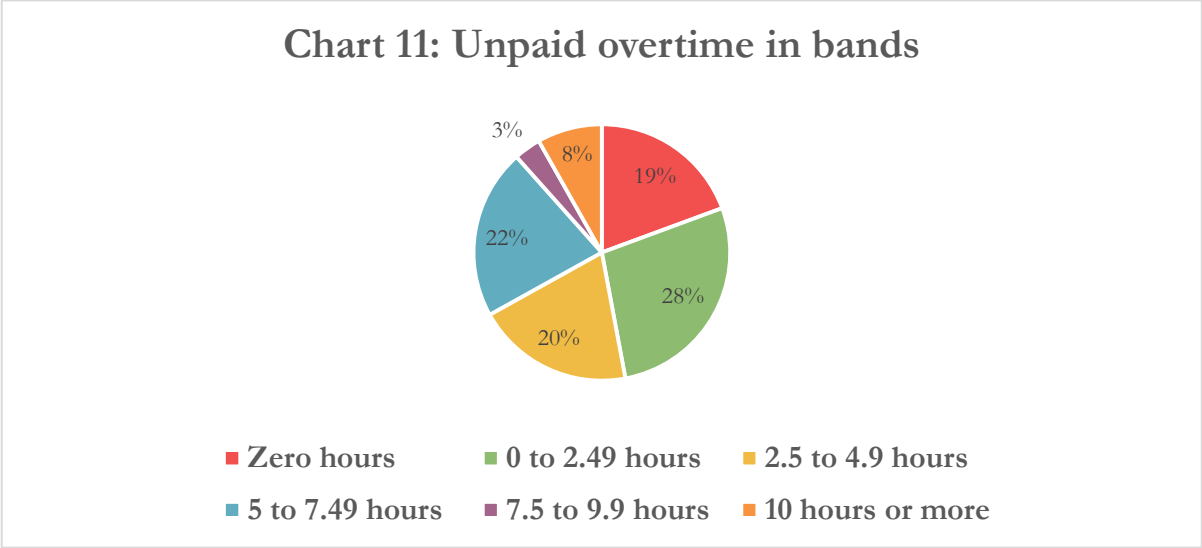
UNISON members in local government were asked whether they work any paid overtime hours and just under three-fifths said they do. Of these, around half work under five hours per week of overtime while at the other end of the spectrum around a fifth, or 11% of the whole sample, work 10 hours or more. Occupations that stood out as more likely to qualify for paid overtime are

homecare and facilities staff together with those undertaking adult care work although all these findings are based on quite small sample sizes.

Rather than paying for overtime, many employers prefer to offer time-off-in-lieu of pay (TOIL) with almost four-fifths of those responding to this question reporting this entitlement. Of those that receive it, just under 50% work between zero and 2.49 hours extra per week while the vast majority of the remainder receiving TOIL work between 2.5 and 7.5 hours extra per week. Among the occupations mentioning TOIL, social workers are the group most likely to be compensated in this way.

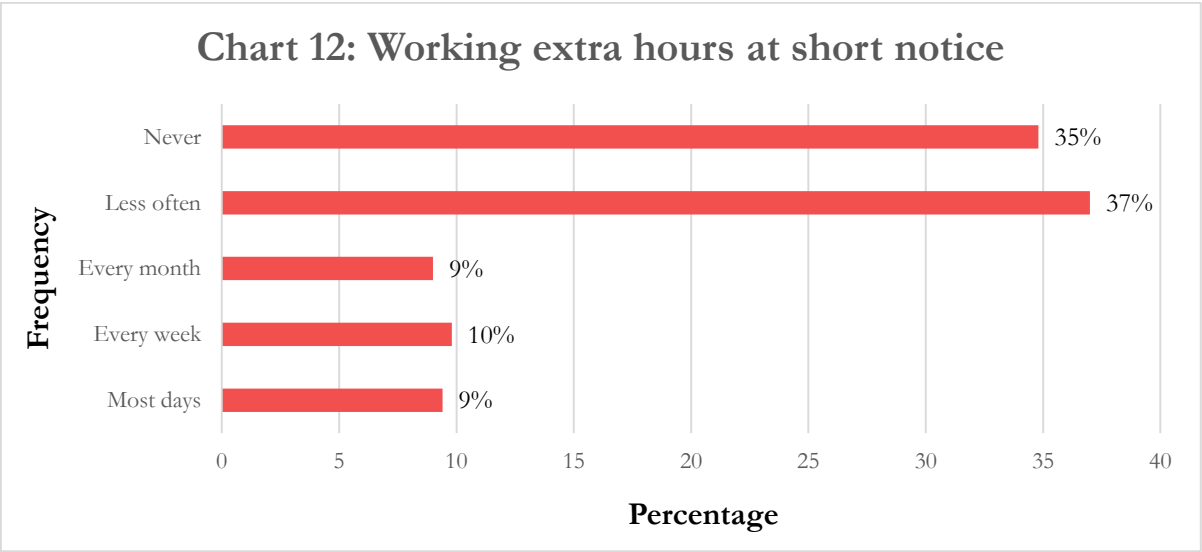
Unpaid work

While many members receive either paid overtime or time-off-in-lieu for any additional hours worked, the survey also shows that nearly a quarter (23%) of members work extra hours that are unrewarded or uncompensated every week. This compared to 31% in 2008. Of this group, the majority from the latest survey, nearly 50%, work up to five hours’ unpaid overtime a week although just over a fifth work between 5 and 7.49 hours unrewarded. Some 3% work between 7.5 and 9.9 hours and just below 10% work more than 10 unpaid hours per week. Most notable among the occupational groups working unpaid hours are social workers, social worker assistants/support and school business managers. In contrast, there are few differences when the data is analysed by gender, age or ethnic group.



Extra hours at short notice

Working extra hours without compensation is one source of staff concern while another is being asked to work extra hours at short notice, whether compensated or not. Chart 12 shows that two-thirds of staff work overtime at short notice to some extent or other, the same proportion as in 2008. Most of these respondents state that this occurs fairly infrequently, less than once a month. In contrast, equal proportions (around 10% in each case) report being asked to work extra hours at short notice every month, every week or most days.

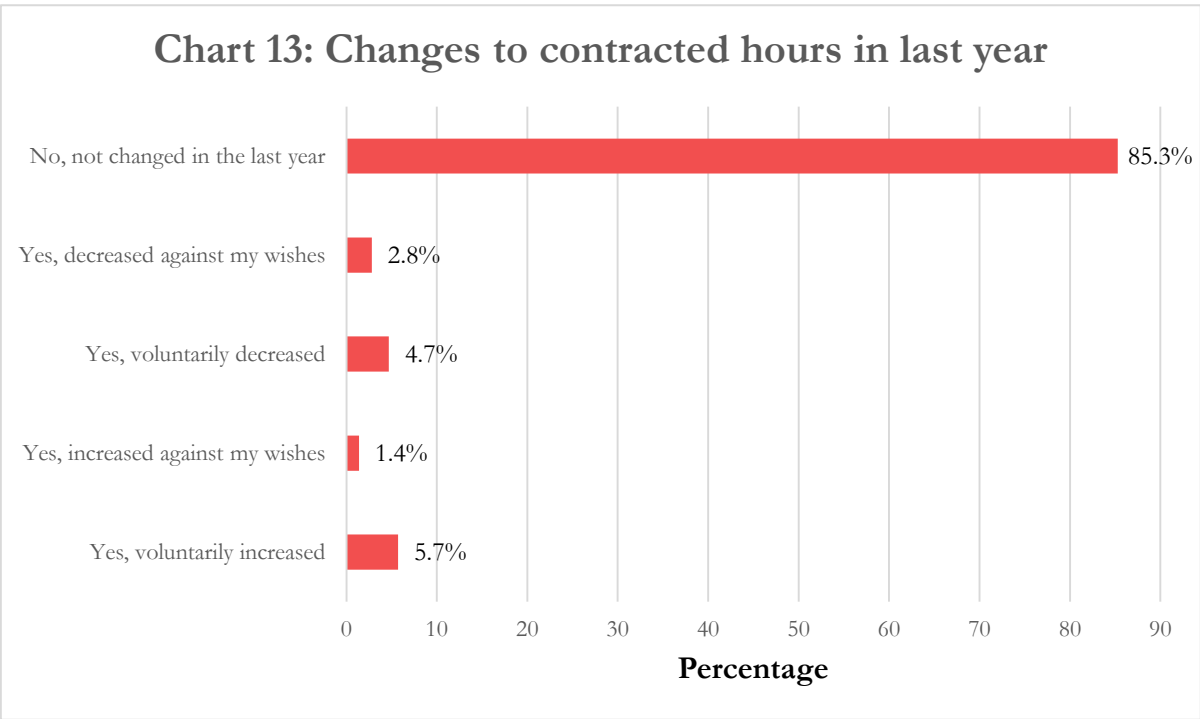


According to the survey, senior managers and social workers followed by homecare workers are the professions most likely to be called upon to work extra hours at short notice. The large majority of homecare workers are women, while 75% of our sample of social workers are women too.

Changes to contracted hours of work

Overall, 15% of respondents report changes in their contracted hours over the last year. This is the same proportion as in 2008. By occupational group, there were only small variations, and there are no significant differences across regions, age or ethnic groups. By gender, in contrast, the proportion of women that have undergone changes is slightly larger than for men. In most cases,

the changes were by mutual agreement, but in some instances hours were changed against individuals' wishes (see chart 13).



Furthermore, just over a quarter (26%) of those surveyed report that their pattern of work has changed in the last year which compared to just 15% in 2008. Of these, however, most (66%) report changes were made either as a result of their own suggestion or through agreement with their manager. In contrast, over a third of those who experienced changes said that their pattern of work had been changed against their wishes. Of the occupational groups examined, the most likely to experience changes against their wishes are homecare staff and adult care workers followed by early years educators and school support staff.

5. Pay levels

Pay has been a major issue for employees in local government since 1997 with a succession of low or no pay rises. As a result, the survey asked a number of questions to gauge both pay levels and overall attitudes to pay. First, survey respondents were asked about both their normal take-home and their gross pay. However gross pay is the most reliable measure of remuneration since it is not affected by tax, NI, pensions or other deductions that vary as a result of individual circumstances, and since it is more commonly used for comparisons the analysis focuses mainly on these figures. There are a few important caveats to mention prior to the discussion of the pay results, however, which largely relate to the way in which respondents from certain professions, most notably those in jobs employed on term-time contracts, have categorised themselves in their replies. Many of these issues did not arise to the same extent in the past because the number of staff on term-time contracts, in particular, has increased significantly since the previous survey.

Firstly, it appears that some respondents reported that they work full-time when in fact they are term-time, a confusion which probably arose because while staff on term-time contracts are only paid for the work they do during school terms, their pay is spread over the year perhaps leading them to consider that they work 'full-time'. As a result, some of the tables detailing pay levels of full-time staff may also include job roles that we might expect to be employed solely on term-time contracts.

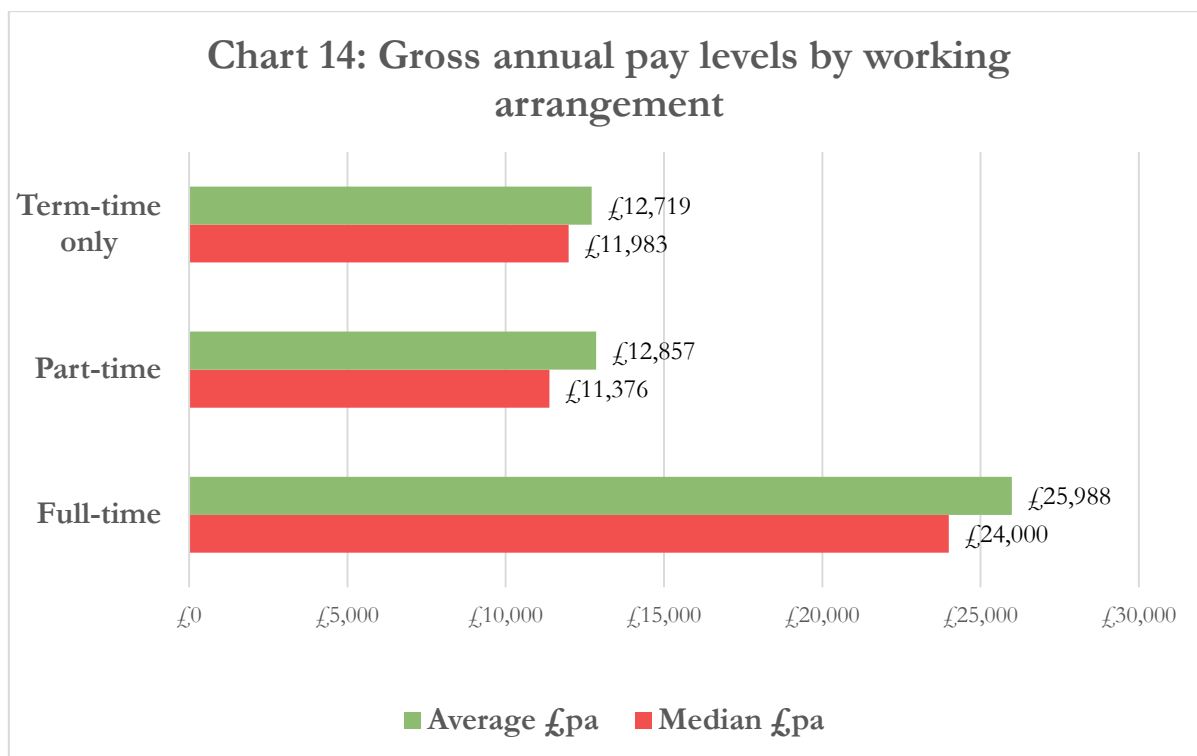
Another problem arose whereby staff reported relatively large pay levels that, based on knowledge of sector-wide pay scales, appeared to be monthly amounts but stated that they were paid these sums 'weekly'. This meant that when the amounts were annualised this inflated the aggregate figures. This resulted in the overstating of certain salary levels explaining why some of the average rates shown in the following tables may appear high. Also, it is evident from some of the high salary levels that have been recorded for occupations such as careworkers, environmental services and library services that respondents may have included additional premia payments such as allowances for unsocial hours payments, weekend working, and contractual overtime in their gross pay.

A final point worth noting is that within the categories, term- and part-time working, the number of hours worked by individuals may vary so that the pay levels presented can represent different numbers of hours worked. Different individuals' hours may vary from day-to-day or week-to-week and across the survey as a whole there is no set pattern of hours worked for term-time or part-time workers.

In all cases, though, we have presented the figures reported by those surveyed, regardless of whether the responses fitted with general perceptions of what pay levels should be based on available knowledge of actual pay scales. As a result, some of the figures reported in the following tables, while a true reflection of respondents' replies, may not be wholly indicative of actual earnings and should therefore be treated with caution when drawing any conclusions.

In some cases, for example in tables 1 and 2 below, information on the average number of hours worked for each of the professions is shown, illustrating that even for those categorising themselves as 'full-time', the number of hours worked can be quite variable.

Chart 14 provides details of the average and median gross pay levels for full-time, part- and term-time only staff. Taking the average figures first, it shows that gross pay for full-time staff is £25,988, gross pay for part-time staff is £12,857, and for those working term-time only is £12,719. The corresponding median figures are £24,000, £11,376 and £11,983 respectively. That the part-time figures are similar to those for term-time employees, when we might expect the part-time average to be higher, is due mainly to the fact that while term-time workers are mostly lower-paid school support staff, the part-time employees in the survey also include some relatively higher-paid members, such as engineers and social workers.



Further pay analysis

In order to produce a more consistent analysis, the in-depth breakdowns by other factors such as gender, occupational group and region are all based on full-time staff only.

Despite this, the analysis still suffers from limitations because the figures fail to take account of the variety of occupations. Full-time men and full-time women, for example, may be employed in very different occupations and the pay levels collected do not take into account other factors such as job tenure, position in salary range and actual job level. For this reason, the findings in the following section can only be used to provide a general impression of the whole picture and must be treated with caution when drawing wider conclusions.

Gender analysis

Differences in pay for men and women were again brought to the forefront recently when the Government announced that it would require companies with more than 250 staff to provide disclosure relating to their own gender pay differentials in the hope that this will help tackle the gender pay gap. An analysis of the survey's findings illustrates that, like the economy as a whole,

the gender pay gap continues to endure in local government. For example, the full-time gross median salary of men standing at £26,304 is 13% higher than the corresponding figure for women that stands at £23,268. Put in other terms, the full-time figure for women represents just 88.5% of the equivalent for men which is similar to the gender pay gap for the economy as a whole as measured by the UK Labour Force Survey (LFS). Here the latest equivalent proportion is 90.6%.

One of the main reasons for this gap is that across local government, the lowest-paid roles are completely dominated by women. Occupational segregation, whereby particular roles tend to be performed almost solely by women, is a key factor here.

Chart 15 provides a clearer representation of the situation for full-time local government workers and illustrates that men dominate the higher salary bands and women the lower ones. For example, over a fifth of men earn more than £36,000 a year compared to just 14% of women. At the other end of the spectrum, over a quarter of full-time women earn under £18,000 compared to around 16% of men.

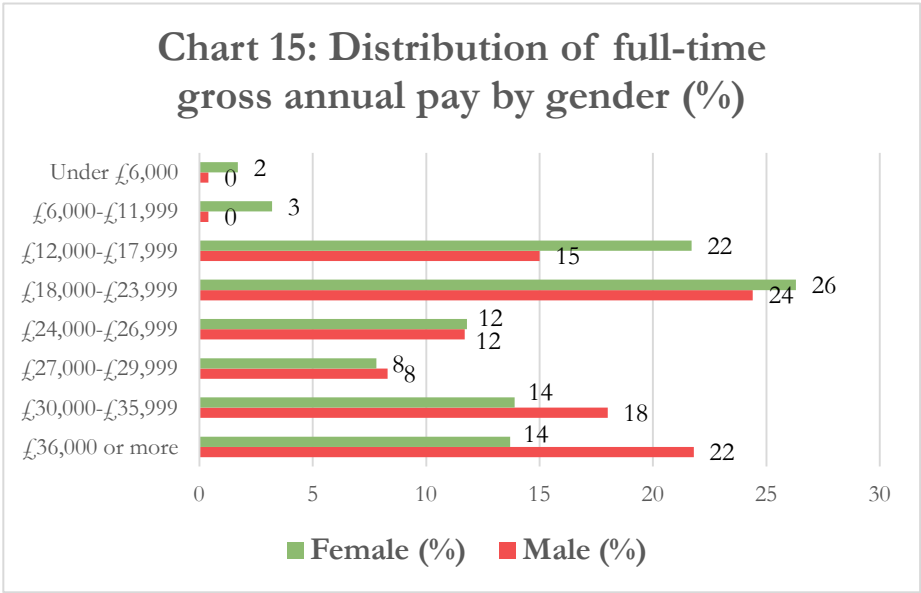
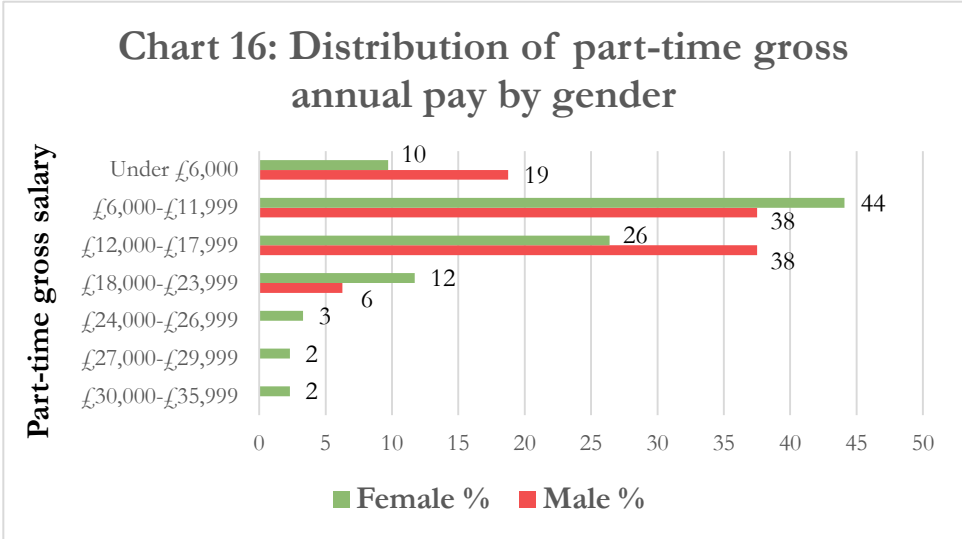


Chart 16 shows the equivalent pattern for part-time staff illustrating that the pattern is more complex. For example, the highest proportion of women are paid in the £6,000 to £11,999 band

while for men, the most common pay levels fall within two bands – £6,000 to £11,999 and £12,000 to £17,999. Also notable is the absence of part-time men earning higher pay levels although some caution should be taken in drawing conclusions from this data because the part-time figures for men are based on quite small sample sizes.



Occupational analysis

In order to analyse the gender pay gap further a selection of named occupational groups were chosen, representing relatively well-defined jobs to make comparisons meaningful. The results illustrate that the issue of gender differences in pay is more complex than the aggregate levels suggest. For example, while in some cases the gender pay gap for certain jobs is similar to the LFS findings, with men earning more than women, for some positions there is greater equality and for others the differentials are more substantial. As with other areas of the survey, the sample sizes for men responding to the survey in a number of the occupational categories is quite small which may distort results to some extent. For example, only 16% of social work assistants are men. Also, a by-product of combining certain roles into broader categories has meant that some of the categories encompass a range of seniority levels which could also have an impact on the results. For example, the large gender pay differential for the ‘libraries’ group is explained by the fact that 50% of men in the group were librarians compared to just 33% of women with the remainder working as much lower paid library assistants.

On top of these qualifications, because of the caveats mentioned earlier, some of the figures, while providing a true indication of respondents' replies, may not be wholly indicative of actual earnings and should therefore be treated with caution when drawing any conclusions.

Table 1: Gender pay differences for selected full-time roles with average contracted hours

Occupational group	Women			Men			Difference in gross pay
	No.	Average gross pay £pa	Average (contracted hours)	No.	Average gross pay £pa	Average (contracted hours)	
Chief officer/senior manager	7	50,588	36.7	6	51,271	37.1	1.4
Social worker	59	33,599	36.4	25	34,485	36.7	2.6
Local authority professional	37	31,634	36.6	35	33,621	36.4	6.3
Finance professional	10	26,953	36.9	8	36,131	36.6	34.1
General professional	51	28,774	36.0	18	29,607	36.9	2.9
Children's care workers	8	24,654	49.7	6	27,731	35.4	12.5
Social worker assistant/support	26	23,081	35.4	7	25,102	36.8	8.8
Other school support roles	10	20,757	32.7	11	21,924	36.5	5.6
Administrative/clerical	72	21,487	36.0	7	22,845	38.1	6.3
Adult care workers	21	19,370	35.3	12	23,366	33.3	20.6
Environmental services	3	15,333	37.2	22	20,572	37.1	34.2
Libraries	13	17,281	35.5	6	26,945	31.4	55.9
School support staff	8	16,974	28.3	19	20,043	35.6	18.1
Facilities	5	15,389	30.4	5	17,031	36.1	10.7
Teaching classroom assistant	56	15,400	31.0	4	18,570	34.7	20.6

Occupational pay

The survey specified over 60 occupations and those responding could also add their own positions, resulting in nearly 300 job titles. In order to be able to analyse the results, we grouped the roles together into the occupational areas shown in table 2. The basis for recoding these roles is explained in the appendix.

Again the amounts shown in table 2 reflect respondents' actual replies and may not align with those found on sector-wide pay scales. Despite this, not surprisingly, topping the pay league are chief officers/ senior managers. Full-time median gross annual pay for this group stood at £50,889. Following this, the other two professions with gross median pay in excess of £35,000 are built environment professionals and social workers.

In contrast, at the other end of the spectrum are teaching assistants and staff in facilities with full-time median annual pay of £15,534 and £15,689 respectively. In between these extremes, were eight broad occupational groups with median full-time pay of between £20,000 and £30,000 per year. These included occupations such as finance professionals, IT staff and children's care workers. Further, there are two groups with median salaries around £31,000 a year – local authority professionals and engineers/architects/surveyors.

The table also gives take-home pay levels which represent amounts received after all deductions for tax, national insurance, pension contributions and other deductions. In some cases, the figures for take-home pay may not appear to correspond exactly with those for gross pay but this is because they are based on different samples – more of those questioned provided information on their take-home pay than did so for gross pay.

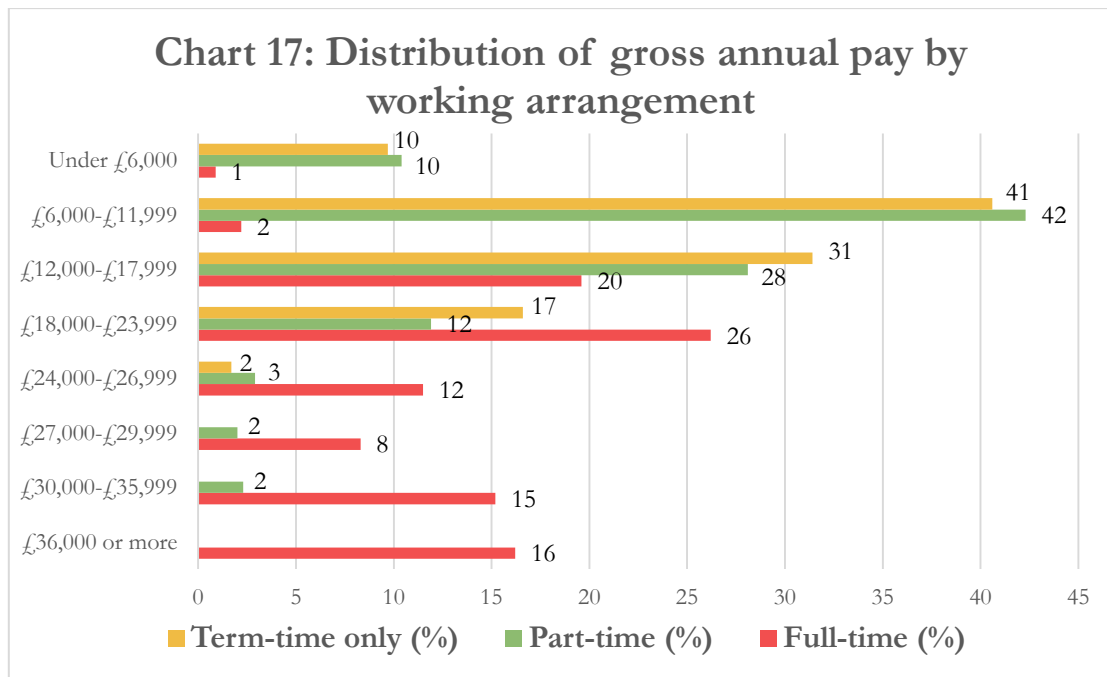
As with gross pay, chief officers/senior managers top the table for take-home pay with median pay of £32,588. Similarly, other relatively high levels are reported by social workers, engineers/architects/surveyors and built environment professionals. In contrast, at the foot of the table are teaching classroom assistants with median full-time take-home pay of £12,566. Similarly, school support staff, administrative and clerical staff, and library staff are also relatively low-paid with median pay below £16,000.

Table 2: Full-time take-home and gross pay rates for selected occupations

Occupational group	Take home	Gross pay			Working hours		
	pay						
	Average £pa	Median £pa	Average £pa	Median £pa	No	Average	Median
Administrative/clerical	16,610	15,642	22,101.0	19,870	83	36.5	37.0
Adult care workers	16,923	15,329	21,231.0	19,828	34	35.5	37.0
Built environment professional	23,124	23,046	33,854.0	35,515	9	36.9	37.0
Chief officer/senior manager	27,728	32,588	50,975.0	50,889	14	36.8	37.0
Children's care workers	19,587	18,040	24,309.0	25,067	14	43.6	37.0
Early years educator	16,695	15,642	20,255.0	19,357	19	34.7	35.0
Engineers/architects/surveyors	23,283	22,681	32,896.0	31,067	30	36.8	37.0
Environmental services	15,720	15,121	20,500.0	19,703	25	37.1	37.0
Facilities	13,628	13,609	16,059.0	15,689	12	33.3	37.0
Finance frontline	17,745	16,137	22,946.0	20,736	22	36.3	37.0
Finance professional	21,911	21,638	30,410.0	29,479	18	36.7	37.0
General professional	21,309	21,638	29,473.0	28,075	69	36.3	37.0
Homecare staff	16,113	15,407	22,809.0	19,603	14	36.8	37.0
IT	21,045	20,517	30,062.0	29,003	5	36.6	37.0
Libraries	17,055	15,590	20,249.0	18,770	19	34.2	37.0
Local authority professional	22,736	22,837	32,769.0	31,244	72	36.5	37.0
Other school support roles	16,538	16,528	22,206.0	21,864	21	35.1	37.0
School Business Manager/Bursar	20,892	19,839	27,750.0	28,075	8	33.1	37.0
School support staff	13,475	13,244	19,218.0	17,441	27	34.4	37.0
Social worker	23,960	24,089	34,069.0	35,074	85	38.0	36.5
Social worker assistant/support	17,078	18,040	27,257.0	23,646	34	36.4	37.0
Teaching classroom assistant	12,981	12,566	15,947.0	15,534	54	31.6	32.5

Annual gross pay by working pattern

In addition to the full-time rates, chart 17 provides details of the distribution of annual gross pay according to type of working pattern. It shows the most common pay band for full-timers is £18,000 to £23,999, although there are significant numbers with rates higher than this in various bands. In contrast, rates for staff that work term-time only and part-time are more concentrated at the lower end with over 50% of both part- and term-time only staff earning gross annual pay under £12,000.



Comparisons with 2008 results

Pay information was also collected in 2008 and the comparative results for full-time staff are given in chart 18. While the graph provides an interesting comparison, a number of caveats need to be borne in mind. Most crucially, the two samples are not matched so it is unclear to what extent those people surveyed in 2008 also responded in 2015. As a result, any findings need to be treated with caution and can, at best, only be considered as indicative of the way pay levels have moved over the period.

Despite these qualifications, the graph at least provides a snapshot of the two pictures in the respective years and the sample sizes in both years are quite substantial. For full-time staff, in both years the most common pay band lay between £12,000 and £17,999 and while this, and the overall pattern, does not look to have changed a great deal over the period, the graph does show one notable pattern. This is that the 2008 rates are more clustered in the lower pay rates while the 2015 ones dominate at the upper end. (Alongside this is the finding that the proportions earning below £24,000 are lower in 2015 than in 2008.) A notable shift appeared to occur with regard to those staff earning gross monthly pay of more than £36,000, for example. Nevertheless, this may be due to a greater proportion of senior staff responding to the most recent survey rather than a true reflection of salary rises. With the exception of this large shift, the overall distribution shown in the graph is replicated for part- and term-time only staff across the two years, albeit at lower pay levels, as shown in charts 19 and 20.

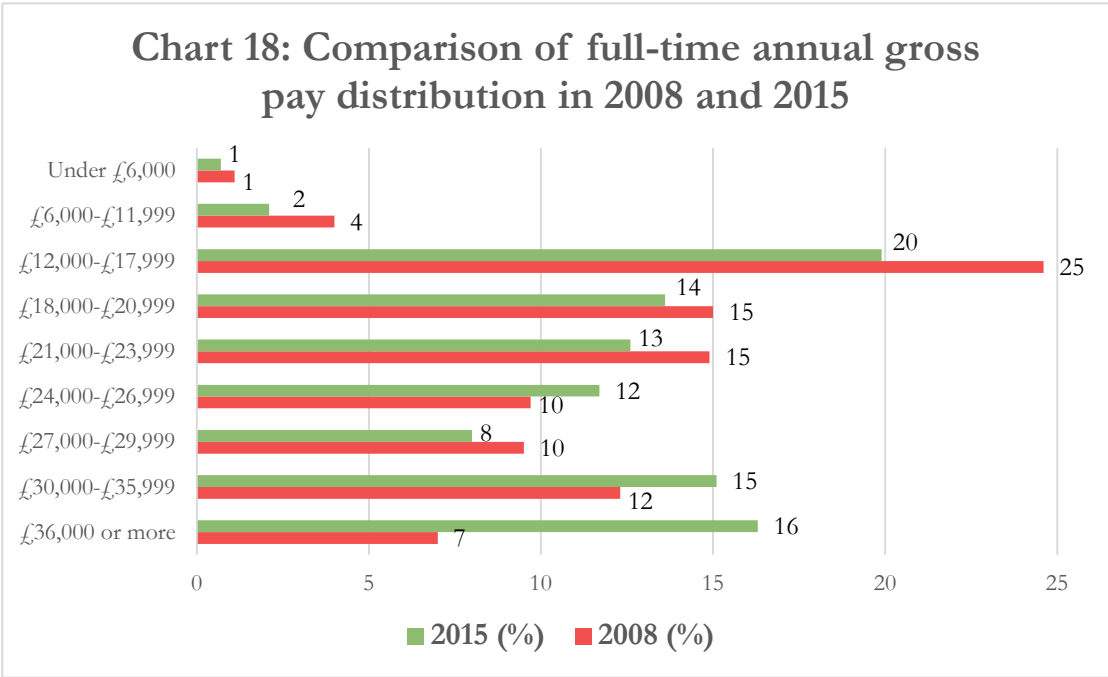


Chart 19: Comparison of part-time monthly gross pay distribution in 2008 and 2015 (%)

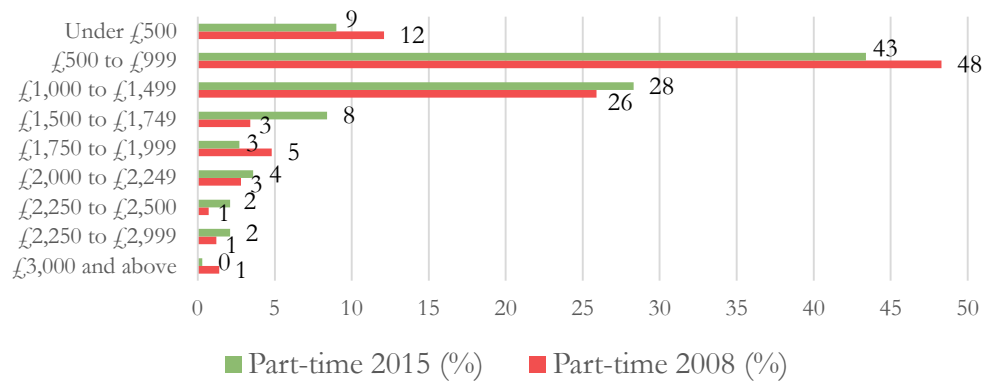
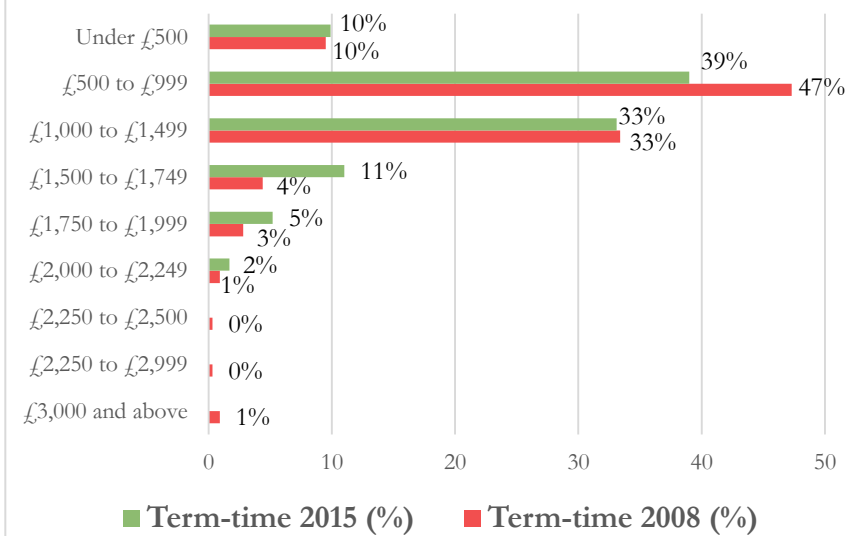


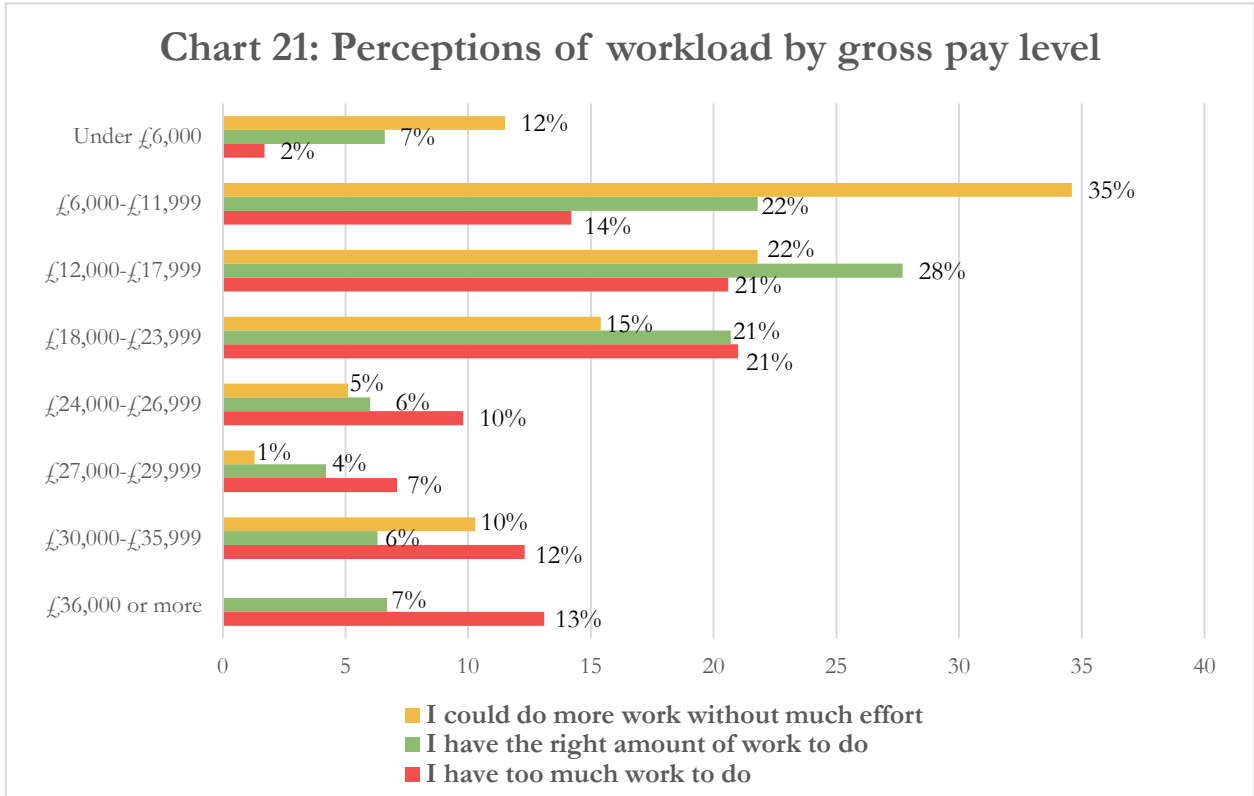
Chart 20: Comparison of term-time monthly gross pay in 2008 and 2015



Pay levels versus perceptions of workload

High pay is an aspiration for many but in a lot of cases there is a trade-off with work-life balance, the associated time available to spend with family and for leisure. For this reason, an analysis of pay levels against perceptions of workload was conducted and chart 21 gives the results for all respondents whether they work full-, part- or term-time only. It illustrates that those earning the

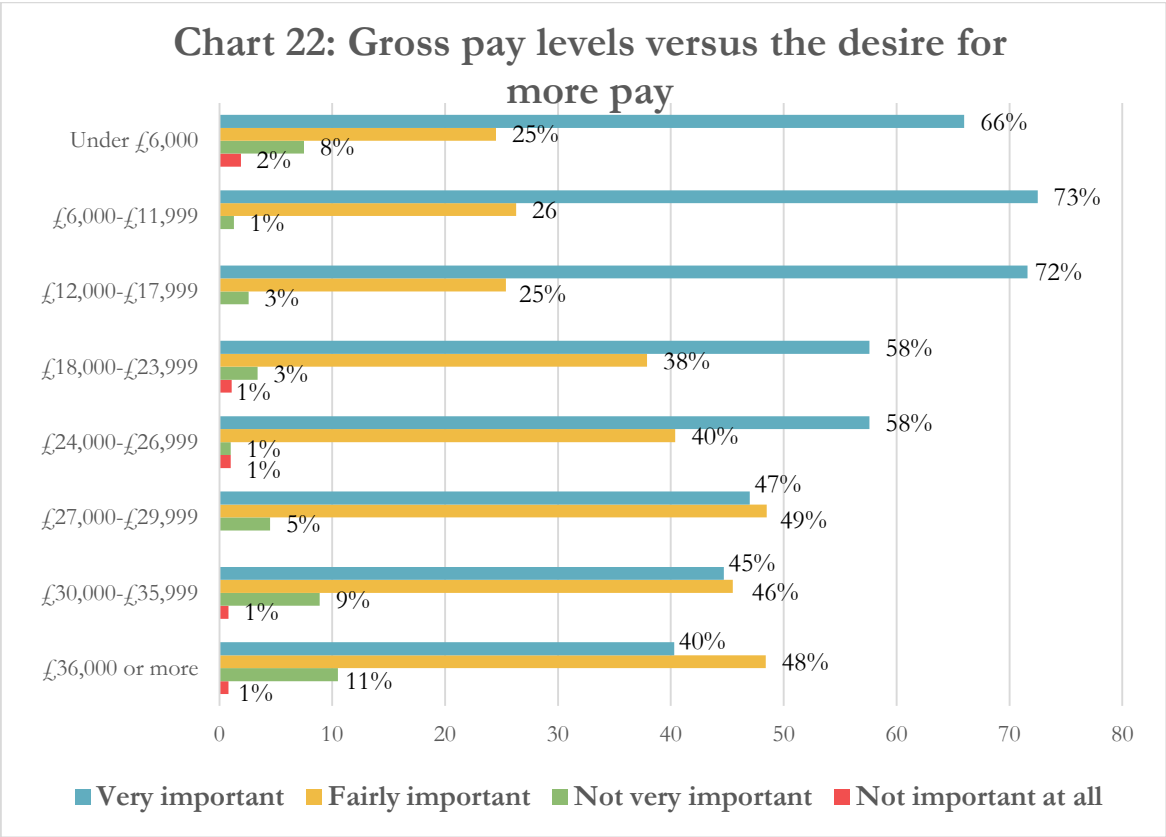
highest amounts do appear to feel under the greatest pressure. In fact, only one in ten of those earning over £30,000 believe that they could do more work without much effort. Many part-time workers also wish to work longer hours which may affect their perception of workload. Despite this, there are still significant proportions of those on most pay levels that felt that they have too much work to do.



The broader impact of pay

Pay obviously has an impact on a variety of issues and so was correlated with a number of other factors to examine whether any patterns emerged. Breaking down pay levels by whether those surveyed are finding it difficult to meet current living costs, for example, showed few differences with those on lower pay levels only finding it marginally more difficult than their higher-earning colleagues to meet household and other expenses.

In contrast, looking at pay levels and the replies to the questions concerning what members would like UNISON to do for them, there is a significant difference when it came to the desire for more pay. As chart 22 shows, between two-thirds and nearly three-quarters of those with pay below £18,000 think that the union achieving more pay is ‘very important’ compared to under half of those earning over £27,000. This is not to say that the aim of more pay is not important to the higher earners, just that the issue does not feature so highly for them as it does for their lower-paid colleagues. They are also more likely to be full-time and therefore less likely to face the pressure of working variable hours. Over 80% of staff at all levels of pay state achieving greater pay levels is an important aim to a varying degree.



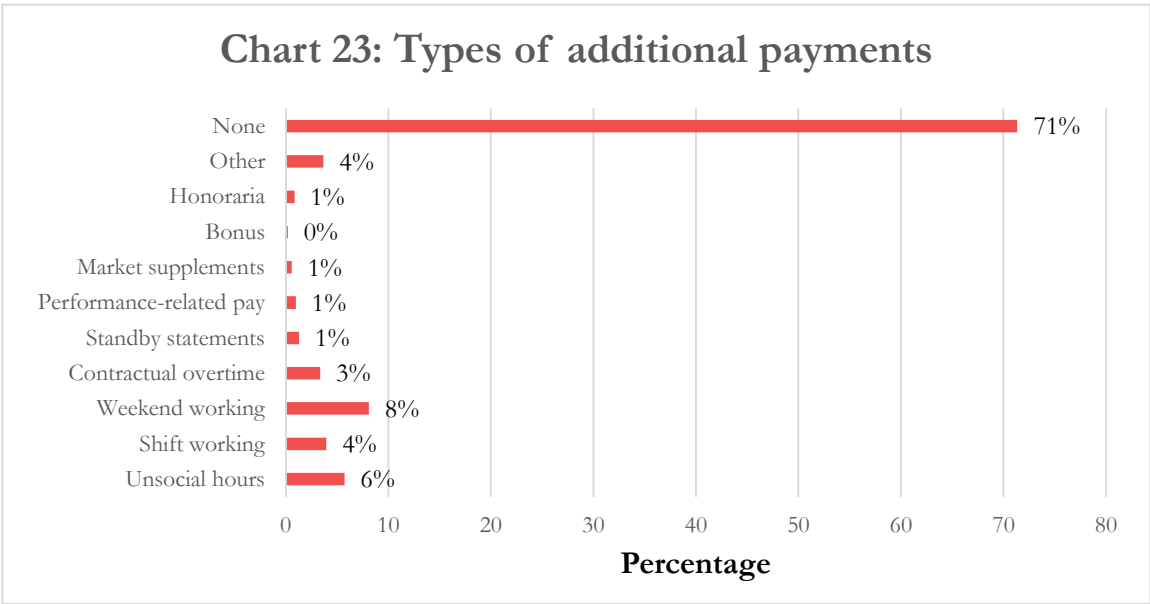
When pay levels are correlated against whether those surveyed believe they were paid fairly for the work they do the pattern is quite clear with those earning the highest levels more likely to express greater satisfaction. As pay levels became lower, for example, there is a greater proportion of respondents who do not believe they are paid fairly, with the exception of those earning under

£6,000 a year but this is probably because this group is part-time and amounts received may be considered a fair reflection of the hours worked.

Additions to pay

In addition to the pay sums that respondents disclose, they were asked whether pay includes any other additional amounts for unsocial or shift working, for example. Overall, 29% of those surveyed receive some kind of additional payment which is exactly the same as in the 2008 survey (see chart 23). A range of additional payments were mentioned but the most common is weekend working premiums mentioned by 8% of those that replied. Following this are unsocial hours and shift working payments mentioned by 6% and 4% respectively.

By occupational group, care staff stood out, with those working with children, adults and homecare staff particularly prevalent in receiving payments for unsocial hours, shifts and for weekend working. Over 50% of children’s care workers receive one or more of these types of payment while the figure is around a third for adult care staff. Also notable are homecare staff with 54% receiving pay for weekend working, 36% for unsocial hours and a quarter for shift working. Other occupations where fewer, but a significant minority, receive some type of additional payment include library staff, social worker assistant/support staff, facilities and environmental staff.



6. Changes to pay and conditions

A significant portion of respondents (46%) told us that their pay and conditions had changed since 2010. It also appears that in most cases the changes were imposed rather than agreed. Of the two-fifths of the total sample that answered the question on agreement/imposition, two-thirds reported that the changes were imposed.

The survey also gave respondents the chance to indicate the direction of change (deterioration or improvement) for a number of key terms and conditions. The level of response here was much lower than for the main question on whether pay and conditions had changed or not. Nevertheless we have summarised the results in table 3. It shows that unsocial hours payments were most likely to have been reduced, but that these were closely followed by bonuses/performance-related pay, car allowances and sick pay. All of these terms were reported as having been reduced in at least three-quarters of cases.

Table 3: Changes to pay and conditions since 2010

	Got worse %	Improved %	
Unsocial hours payments	85	15	
Weekend payments	84	16	
Bank holiday payments	83	17	
Evening/night payments	81	19	
Bonuses/performance-related pay	79	21	
Car allowances	78	22	
Paid overtime	77	23	
Sick pay	75	25	
Holidays unpaid	75	25	
Shift payments	74	26	
Paid holidays	65	35	
Pay progression	54	46	

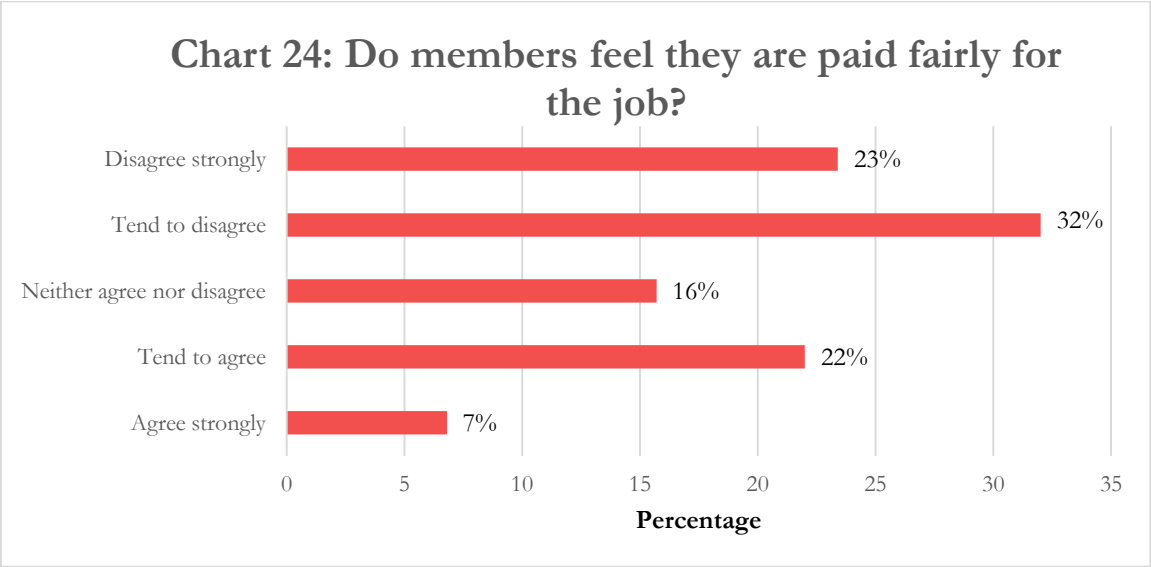
Note: these proportions are based on small sample sizes.

Other areas of change were paid holidays and pay progression. While these were not reduced in as many instances as the other terms, a significant amount of deterioration was nevertheless reported. In the case of paid holidays, 65% of respondents who reported a change said that terms in this area had worsened. In the case of progression, a significant amount of respondents (46% of those answering this question) reported an improvement. However the majority (54%) nevertheless reported that terms in this respect had deteriorated.

Over half of respondents in Greater London, the North East, Wales and the West Midlands reported changes in terms and conditions. By contrast, over three-fifths (63%) of respondents in the South West reported no change. The South East region appeared to be in-between in this respect, with just below three-fifths (58%) reporting no changes in pay and conditions since 2010.

Fair pay?

Those surveyed were also asked whether they believe that they are paid fairly for the work they do and, on the whole, the majority disagree as they did in 2008 (see chart 24). In fact, a third of those surveyed tend to disagree while 23% disagree strongly. This is slightly less negative than in 2008, however, when the same proportion tended to disagree and 28% disagreed strongly. Similarly, the latest survey shows 7% and 22% said they agree they are well paid – either strongly or less emphatically – compared to 4% and 20% in 2008.



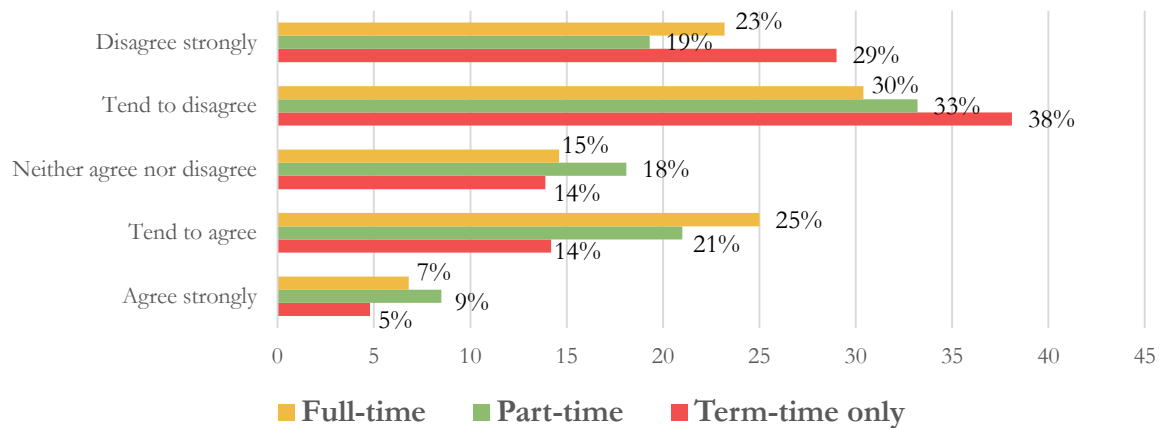
Pay satisfaction by gender, age and occupational group

A closer inspection of these findings by other factors sheds more light on the subject. In particular, differences according to gender and age are not significant but when looked at by occupational group, a few professions stood out as being more satisfied than others. For example, almost a third of those in facilities agree strongly that they are paid fairly while the equivalent figures for chief officers/senior managers and those in childcare are both around 18%. In contrast, over 30% of environment workers, other school support staff and teaching classroom assistants disagree strongly with the statement. In 2008 the position was slightly different, with care and environment workers, maintenance staff, engineers/architects/surveyors and social workers alongside teaching classroom assistants the professions most dissatisfied with pay, though more of these types of staff responded to the last survey.

Term-time staff least satisfied with pay

As in the 2008 survey, term-time-only staff are least satisfied with their pay levels, which is perhaps not surprising as this group includes teaching assistants and school support staff as mentioned previously. In fact, 67% of term-time only staff do not think they are paid fairly for the work they do, compared to 50% of full-timers and 53% of part-timers. In contrast, just 19% of term-time only staff believe they are paid fairly in comparison with 32% of full-timers and just under this proportion of part-timers.

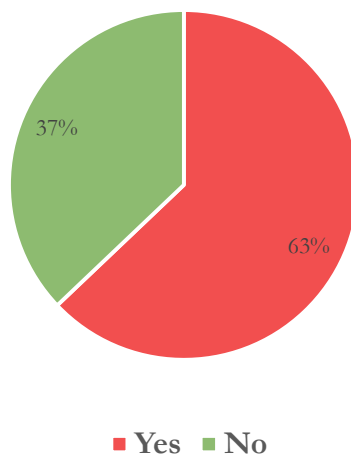
Chart 25: Do members feel they are paid fairly for their work?



Reviews and reorganisations

The incidence of reviews and reorganisations of work appears to have increased since the last survey in 2008. Then, half of respondents reported these as having taken place, while over a third did not. This time, the proportion of respondents reporting reviews/reorganisations has increased, with almost two-thirds reporting their occurrence as shown in chart 26.

Chart 26: Members experiencing a review or reorganisation since 2010



When asked about the reasons for reviews/reorganisations, by far the largest proportion of respondents (73%) chose 'cost-cutting exercises or funding reductions'. The next most popular reason was as a result of redundancies (30%), and after this, 'moves to shared services' (19%).

The survey also examined the outcomes of reviews and reorganisations (see table 4). Most resulted in negative outcomes, with 'reduced staffing levels' the most common outcome, reported by 46% of respondents. 'Fewer resources' was next, followed by 'worse ways of working' and a 'worsened service to the public'.

However in a small number of cases the outcomes were positive, with 13% of respondents reporting 'better ways of working', and 8% reporting an 'improved service'. Some of these outcomes may have been associated with the small proportion of reviews/reorganisations (6%) that resulted in services returning in-house, though more work is needed here to establish such a link.

Table 4: Outcomes of reviews/reorganisations

	Number	% of responses	% of cases
Reduced staffing levels	586	24	46
Fewer resources	410	17	32
Worse ways of working	366	15	29
Worsened service to the public	338	14	26
No change	190	8	15
Better ways of working	170	7	13
Improved staffing levels	98	4	8
Improved service to the public	97	4	8
Services returned in-house	77	3	6
Privatisation	59	2	5
More resources/better equipment	48	2	4
<i>Total</i>	2,439	100	190

Note: members could indicate more than one outcome, as indicated by the % of cases column, which shows what % of cases mentioned each category. These sum to more than 100 because many members chose more than one outcome.

Privatisation

In a small number of cases (5%), reviews/reorganisations resulted in privatisation. The survey asked respondents what happened to pay and conditions following the privatisations. While pay was reported as having remained the same in 71% of cases, it was reported as having deteriorated in a quarter of cases, and a very small proportion of respondents indicated their pay had improved. A question on conditions of employment produced similar results, if marginally better from the employees' point of view. Just below a fifth of respondents (19%) who answered this question reported that conditions had deteriorated since privatisation, while more than a quarter (76%) indicated that they had remained the same. Greater London showed the greatest number of responses on privatisation, with the North East second.

Job security

When asked how secure they felt in their job, compared to last year, just below half (49%) reported that they felt the same level of security. However, a large minority, 43%, said they felt less secure.

Looking to the future, we then asked members how worried they felt about job security in the short term, i.e. over the next 12 months. A total of 38% reported feeling either very worried (13%) or fairly worried (25%). In other words, the majority of staff were either not very worried (41%) or not worried at all (21%) about job security in the short term.

However the proportions changed when we asked members about job security over the longer term, one to five years from now. Together, some 62% reported feeling either very worried (28%) or fairly worried (34%) about job security over the longer term. The proportions in the remaining categories were 23% (not very worried) and 15% (not worried at all).

Intentions to leave

The next set of questions examined members' intentions to leave or remain in their current job. Over a quarter of respondents (27%) had seriously considered leaving their current role over the past 12 months. A further 32% indicated that they had considered leaving, though not seriously, leaving a large minority of 42% who said they had not considered leaving their current job.

A large minority (38%) reported actively looking for another role. Most of these said they would prefer a role in their current area of work, but a significant minority were either unsure (10%) or were looking at other areas of work (34%).

Reasons for considering leaving are shown in table 5. The top three reasons for doing so were: feeling undervalued in my job (51%); pay too low (45%); and lack of promotion prospects (41%). These three factors may be closely linked, though the first, 'feeling undervalued' is not necessarily connected to pay or promotion prospects.

Other influential factors were, in order of frequency, with the highest-rated first, as follows: having to compromise on standards; over-worked; staff shortages; lack of resources to do my job; managers' treatment of staff; and job too stressful.

Improving services

Asked to choose three from a list of measures that would most help staff provide a better service, the greatest proportion (56%) chose 'protecting pay and conditions'. This was significantly greater than the next most popular option, job security guarantees, chosen in 44% of cases (see chart 27).

This represents a change on the last survey, when 'greater recognition of staff input' was the most frequently mentioned measure that could help staff provide a better service. The change may indicate that members view pay and conditions as a crucial underpinning to service provision in a period when there have been adverse changes to employment terms at many local authorities.

Other commonly chosen options, in order of frequency, were as follows: better funding for local government (29%); better management (29%); greater recognition of staff input (27%); and more staff (25%). It may be worth noting that better funding for local government also comes ahead of greater recognition for staff. This indicates members' views of the implications for services resulting from the funding reductions that have taken place since the last survey in 2008.

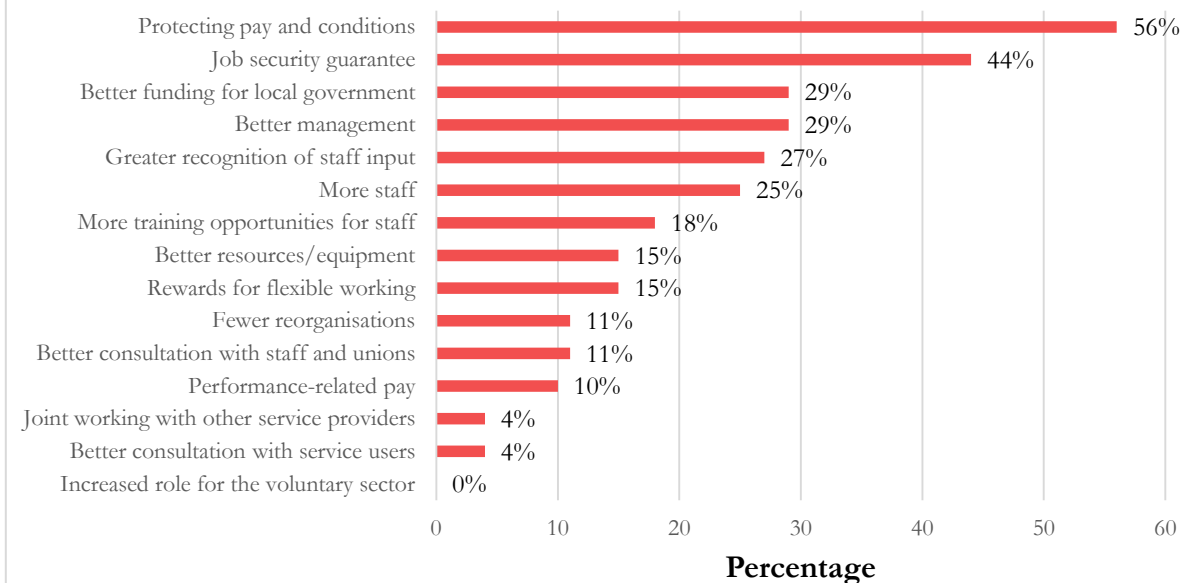
Table 5: Reasons for considering leaving current job

	Number	% of responses	% of cases
Feeling undervalued in my job	618	9	51
Pay too low	548	8	45
Lack of promotion prospects	497	7	41
Having to compromise on standards	474	7	39
Over-worked	461	7	38
Staff shortages	428	6	35
Lack of resources to do my job	415	6	34
Managers' treatment of staff	409	6	34
Job too stressful	408	6	34
Unfair grading	362	5	30
Want to do something else	332	5	27
Want to find a better job	316	5	26
Fear of redundancy	311	5	26
Cuts to my conditions of service	228	3	19
Too much responsibility in current post	216	3	18
Living costs too high e.g. bills, fuel	177	3	15
Too many temporary/agency staff	136	2	11
Problems with pattern of working hours	117	2	10
Housing costs	102	2	8
Travel costs too high	87	1	7
Other travel-related reasons	50	1	4
Childcare costs/responsibilities	42	1	4
Other carer costs/responsibilities	39	1	3
<i>Total</i>	6,773	100	560

Note: members could indicate more than one reason, as indicated by the % of cases column.

Remaining options, such as joint working with other service providers, figures less prominently on members' preferred lists of measures that would help them provide a better service. Only one respondent regarded an increased role for the voluntary sector as helping provide a better service.

Chart 27: Measures believed by members to help provide better services



Members appear to be supportive of changes aimed at improving services. We asked respondents to what extent they would agree or disagree with the following statement: ‘In general employees in my workplace support change which would improve services’. The great majority, some 78%, either tended to agree (52%) or agreed strongly (26%), though it might be worth noting the slightly tentative flavour to the responses here, with more in the ‘tend to agree’ than the ‘strongly agree’ category.

Interestingly, when it came to changes to the way individual members carry out their work, this tentativeness was reduced. The statement here was: ‘I am generally supportive of changes to the way I do my job, when they are intended to improve services’. The proportion in the ‘strongly agree’ category increased to 34% for this question, and the proportion that tended to agree rose too, to 55%, leaving an even smaller proportion of respondents who either tended to disagree or disagreed strongly. This is broadly in line with the findings of the 2008 survey, though the proportion in the ‘strongly agree’ category was greater in 2008.

Perhaps the change here is linked to some members' experiences of changes that are ostensibly aimed at improving services, among other objectives, but have not always resulted in service improvement. Or perhaps other effects of these changes have negatively outweighed the impact on services.

7. Pressures, stress and morale

Given the changes that have taken place in local government since the last membership opinion survey was conducted in 2008, it is perhaps not surprising to find that the latest survey presents a deteriorating picture in respect of work pressures, stress and morale. Exactly three-quarters of respondents reported that workload and pressure had increased compared to the same time last year. This is up from the 2008 proportion of just over two-thirds of respondents. Similarly, almost three-quarters of respondents reported rising stress levels, also up from two-thirds in 2008. The backdrop of reduced funding, and councils' reactions to this in the form of cost savings, reductions in posts and reorganisation of services, are likely to be the main contributory factor to the differences between the two surveys.

Most occupational groups registered fairly high proportions of members reporting an increase in workload and pressure (see table 6). The highest proportions reporting increased workload and pressure – over 80% in each case – were among chief officers and senior managers, frontline finance staff, social workers, adult care workers, children's care workers and local authority professionals. Lower proportions were found among school support staff, environmental services and facilities staff, though over 60% of each of these groups still reported increased workload and pressure.

There was little difference between men and women respondents on this topic. Similarly, regional variations were small, with no region recording a response rate of less than 70% in respect of increased workload and pressure. Greater London did stand out, however, with 83% of respondents here reporting an increase in workload and pressure. This was the only region to pass the 80% mark in this response category.

Analysing the findings according to whether staff were full-time or part-time shows that full-time staff were more likely than their part-time colleagues to feel that workload and pressure had increased, with 79% in the former response category versus 70% in the latter. However, among part-time staff, women were more likely to report a rise in workload/pressure than men, by a ratio of 71% to 62%.

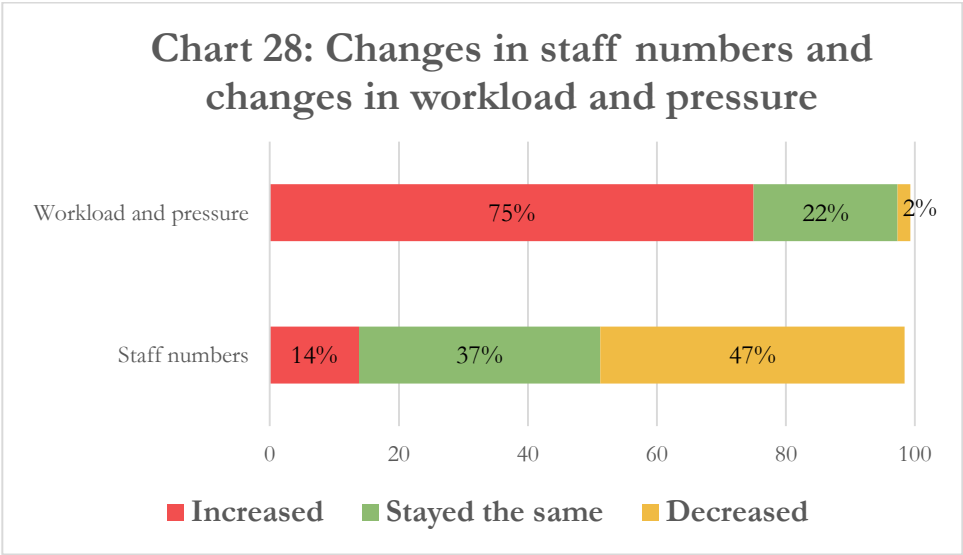
Table 6. Changes in workload and pressure by occupation

Occupations	Increased %	Stayed the same %	Decreased %	Don't know %
Administrative/clerical	73.2	23.7	2.6	0.4
Adult care workers	82.0	14.4	3.6	0.0
Built environment professional	79.3	20.7	0.0	0.0
Chief officer/senior manager	88.2	11.8	0.0	0.0
Children's care workers	80.0	20.0	0.0	0.0
Early years educator	77.9	18.6	2.3	1.2
Engineers/architects/surveyors	76.7	23.3	0.0	0.0
Environmental services	62.7	33.3	3.9	0.0
Facilities	63.6	24.2	6.1	6.1
Finance frontline	87.5	12.5	0.0	0.0
Finance professional	75.0	21.4	3.6	0.0
General professional	79.6	17.7	2.7	0.0
Homecare staff	67.3	26.9	3.8	1.9
IT	70.0	30.0	0.0	0.0
Libraries	77.8	20.4	0.0	1.9
Local authority professional	82.6	14.8	2.6	0.0
Other school support roles	76.2	20.0	3.8	0.0
School business manager/Bursar	77.3	22.7	0.0	0.0
School support staff	62.2	35.8	0.7	1.4
Social worker	86.8	10.5	1.3	1.3
Social worker assistant/support	74.7	24.1	0.0	1.2
Teaching classroom assistant	71.5	25.8	1.9	0.7
Other	72.0	25.4	1.7	0.8
<i>Average*</i>	74.9	22.3	2.0	0.7
<i>*The average shown is for all responses, and NOT simply an average of the figures in the table.</i>				

Changes in staff numbers

There is likely to be a relationship between reduced staff numbers and increased workload and pressure. While for workload and pressure, the greatest proportion of respondents reported an

increase, for staffing the proportions are inverted, with the greatest proportion reporting decreased staff numbers. Just below half of respondents told us that staff numbers had fallen on the previous year, with just over a third reporting they had remained the same. Only 14% of respondents said that staff numbers had increased. This is a clear change from the previous survey, in 2008, when the proportions reporting that staff numbers had stayed the same (43%) were greater than those reporting a reduction (39%). We have set out the responses for staffing numbers and workload and pressure in chart 28, illustrating the inverse relationship between the two.



When we analyse the responses for changes in staff numbers by occupation, we can see that a reduction in staffing is the greatest response category across most occupational groups (see table 7). The greatest proportions reporting fewer staff occur among built environment professionals, engineers, architects and surveyors, and frontline finance staff, library staff, local authority professional staff and social workers. Over 60% of these groups of staff reported decreasing staff numbers compared with the previous year. Groups in which 50% or more of respondents reported falling staff numbers included administrative and clerical staff, children’s care workers, environmental services, finance professionals and home care staff.

However, in a small number of occupational areas, more respondents reported that staff numbers had remained the same than had decreased. Most of these were school staff, but facilities and IT also featured here. In fact, IT staff reported that staff numbers remained the same in 40% of cases, and incidences of increase were equal to incidences of decrease at 30% each.

Table 7: Changes in staff numbers by occupation

Occupations	Increased %	Stayed the same %	Decreased %	Don't know %
Administrative/clerical	13.2	34.6	51.3	0.9
Adult care workers	8.3	41.7	49.1	0.9
Built environment professional	3.6	17.9	78.6	0.0
Chief officer/senior manager	12.5	43.8	43.8	0.0
Children's care workers	5.3	42.1	52.6	0.0
Early years educator	21.	40.2	36.8	1.1
Engineers/architects/surveyors	4.7	23.3	72.1	0.0
Environmental services	12.8	34.0	51.1	2.1
Facilities	12.1	45.5	30.3	12.1
Finance frontline	12.9	19.0	67.1	0.0
Finance professional	7.4	33.3	59.3	0.0
General professional	13.8	35.8	49.5	0.9
Homecare staff	3.9	33.3	58.8	3.9
IT	30.0	40.0	30.0	0.0
Libraries	7.4	29.6	61.1	1.9
Local authority professional	12.5	23.2	63.4	0.9
Other	8.6	37.9	52.6	0.9
Other school support roles	12.5	47.5	40.0	0.0
School business manager/Bursar	27.3	59.1	13.6	0.0
School support staff	18.4	46.3	33.1	2.2
Social worker	10.7	23.5	63.1	2.7
Social worker assistant/support	18.5	30.9	49.4	1.2
Teaching classroom assistant	19.5	47.2	31.1	2.2
Average*	14.0	37.5	46.9	1.6
<i>*The average shown is for all responses, and NOT simply the average of the figures in each column.</i>				

Analysing the responses on staff numbers by region, most regions showed that a decrease in staff numbers was the most common pattern. And a correlation between the data on staff numbers and that on workload and pressure emerges too. Just as Greater London was the region showing the greatest increase in workload and pressure, it was also the region showing the greatest incidence of decrease in staff numbers, with 58% of respondents indicating a fall in staffing since last year. The only other region to pass the 50% threshold in this category was the West Midlands, with 54% of respondents in this region reporting falling staff numbers.

There were just two regions in which the proportion of respondents indicating that staff numbers had remained the same was greater than the proportion indicating a decrease. These were the South East and Northern Ireland. In the case of the South East, some 45% of respondents reported that the number of jobs had remained the same, marginally more than the proportion reporting a fall in the number of jobs (44%).

Expectations of service users and employers

The expectations of both service users and employers can add to increased pressure on staff. In respect of service users' expectations, the responses show a similar pattern to the previous survey. In both 2008 and in the latest survey, just over half of respondents said that service users' expectations had increased. A smaller proportion felt these had remained steady, and just a tiny fraction believed that expectations had diminished.

Analysing the results by occupation, perceptions of an increase in service users' expectations were strongest among frontline finance staff, professional staff and engineers, architects and surveyors. By region, London, the South East and Scotland registered the greatest perceived increases in service users' expectations.

The latest findings on perceptions of employers' expectations show that members believe these are even greater than at the time of the last survey. In 2008, some 69% of respondents believed their employers' expectations had increased. This time, the proportion regarding their employers' expectations of them having increased was even higher, at just below 76% of respondents.

Virtually all of the remaining respondents believed their employers' expectations had at least remained the same as previously.

Looking at the results by occupation, the perception that employers' expectations had increased was particularly marked among social workers and professional staff, though virtually all groups recorded large majorities in this response category. Regional analysis indicates that the largest proportions of members who felt that their employers' expectations had increased were in the South East (82%), the North West, London (both 79%), the South West (77%) and Scotland (76%). However, no regions registered proportions of less than 73% in this category.

Linked to both employers' and service users' expectations is members' perception of the amount of work they have to perform. The survey asked respondents how they felt about the amount of work they carried out in a normal week. While the greatest proportion (49%) chose the option, 'I have the right amount of work to do', almost as great a proportion (46%) responded 'I have too much work to do'. Only 5% felt they could do more work without much effort.

Temporary and agency staff

The use of temporary and agency staff can sometimes be linked more broadly to issues around workload and morale, for instance as temporary and agency staff are used to deal with staffing shortages caused by absenteeism, or recruitment and retention difficulties. In the latest survey, just below a third of respondents felt that the use of agency and temporary staff had increased in the last year, slightly above the proportion that felt their use had remained the same. Only 13% of respondents felt that the use of these staff had decreased. However almost a quarter of those who answered this question felt they didn't know whether the trend was up, down or level.

In certain occupations however, the use of agency and temporary staff appears to be on the rise. This is mainly the case in social work and social care, with the largest proportions of adult care staff, children's care staff, social workers and social work assistants all reporting that the use of agency/temporary staff had increased in the past year, and the smallest proportions indicating a decrease. The proportions of 'don't knows' were much smaller in these areas too, indicating more familiarity with trends in the use of agency/temporary staff.

Outside of social care and social work, two-thirds of built environment professionals felt that the use of agency and temporary staff had increased. And a third of teaching assistants felt the same, with a further quarter of these staff reporting that the use of agency/temporary workers had remained the same as previously. Built environment professionals seemed fairly certain of the trend, with only a tiny fraction of respondents in the 'don't know' category, but over a quarter of teaching assistants also placed themselves in the 'don't know' category.

Regional analysis indicates that London was where the greatest proportion of respondents (40%) felt that the use of temporary/agency staff had increased, followed closely by the South East (39%). The East of England region and the East Midlands also registered a relatively high proportion in this category, at 35% each.

Frozen posts and redundancies

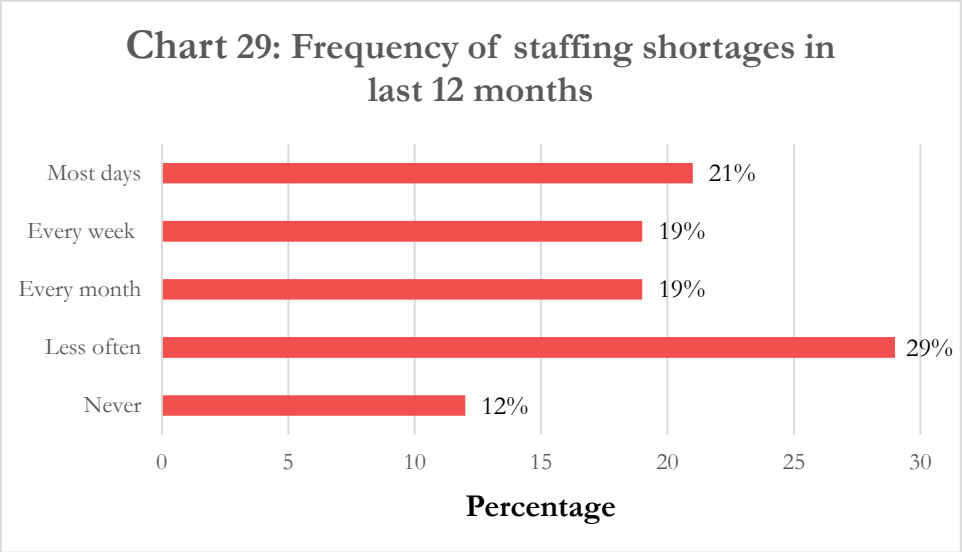
In response to budget reductions and restrictions, many local authorities have frozen vacant positions, or made redundancies. Again, however, many staff do not know whether these approaches have burgeoned or declined over the past year. Where staff were able to respond, just over a fifth reported that the number of frozen posts had increased, while just below a third reported that levels of frozen posts had remained the same in the past year. Some 45%, however, placed themselves in the 'don't know' category for this question.

There were fewer 'don't knows' when it came to redundancies, though this still showed a significant number of 'don't knows' at 37%. Of those that felt they could say whether the trend was up, down or level, just below a quarter said the number of redundancies was up on last year, while just over a third reported that the number of redundancies was the same. Meanwhile only a small fraction of respondents (3%) felt that the number of redundancies had declined over the year.

Staffing shortages

As a likely result of falling staff numbers in many areas, staffing shortages appear to be a major issue for many of our respondents. Just below two-fifths of respondents in total reported that staffing shortages occur either most days or every week. A further 19% reported that they

occurred every month, taking the total reporting frequent staff shortages to just below three-fifths of respondents. Some comfort may be gleaned from the fact that slightly below a third said they occurred less often than this, however only 12% said staffing shortages never occurred (see chart 29).



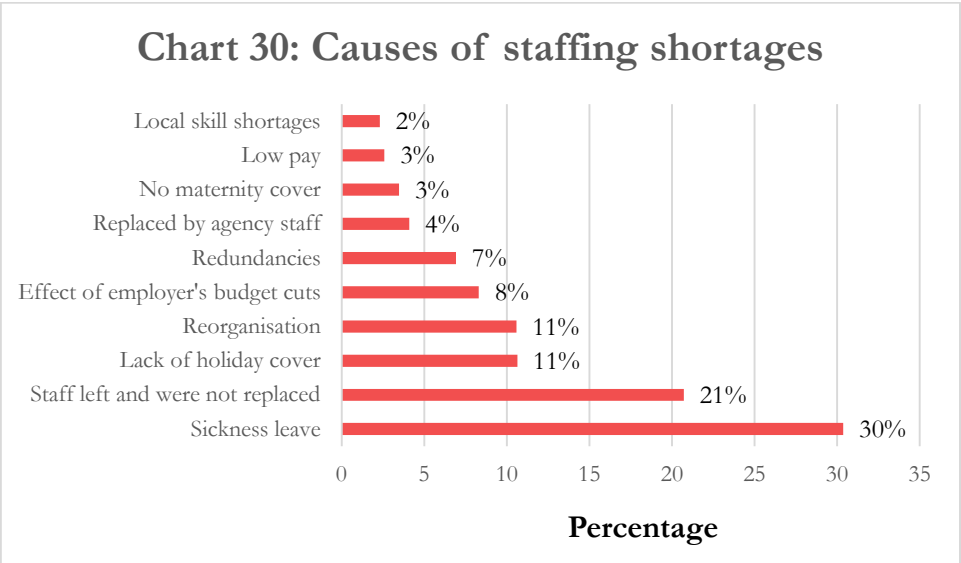
Looking at the responses by occupation, there were a number of instances where relatively large proportions of staff (between a quarter and a third) reported staff shortages occurring on most days. These included homecare staff, where 28% of staff reported staffing shortages occurring at this rate, though a greater proportion (32%) reported them on a weekly basis. Other occupations indicating high proportions of almost daily staffing shortages included social workers, IT staff, general professionals and frontline finance staff.

Greater London once again stands out as the region where the greatest proportion of staff reported staffing shortages as an almost daily occurrence. Just below a third of respondents here were in this category, with a further 18% reporting weekly staffing shortages.

Reasons for staffing shortages

The pre-eminent reason for staffing shortages, according to the survey respondents, is sick leave. Just over 30% of respondents cited this as a factor (see chart 30). A recent local government

workforce survey by the LGA highlighted the link between stress and sick leave, with many instances of staff taking sickness absence because of increased stress at work.¹ While our survey did not examine the reasons for sick leave, it could be that increased stress is adding to this problem and helping create staff shortages.



The second most popular explanation for staff shortages was a failure to replace leavers, with just above a fifth of respondents choosing this as a factor. Lower proportions of respondents – around a tenth in each case - cited lack of holiday cover or reorganisations as a cause of staff shortages.

Were there any regional differences in the factors respondents regarded as underlying staff shortages? We didn't find any major differences, with all regions showing that sick leave was the pre-eminent factor. However there were some differences in respect of the importance afforded to not replacing leavers, with this factor more common in some regions – notably the Midlands, both East and West, and the North West – than others.

¹ According to the LGA survey, the biggest cause of sickness in 2013/14 was *stress, depression, anxiety, mental health and fatigue*, followed by *other musculo-skeletal problems* and *infections*.

In respect of re-organisations, a greater proportion of respondents in the West Midlands (nearly 31%) cited this as a cause of staffing shortages than in other regions. The West Midlands also featured alongside the North West and Wales as regions where a greater prominence was given to employers' budget cuts as a factor behind staffing shortages, with over 23% of respondents citing this as an influence.

Stress levels

One of the potential consequences of many of the issues highlighted above – increased workload, falling staff numbers, staff shortages – may be an increase in the stress experienced by local authority employees. While it is not possible to establish a direct causal link, it is certainly the case that the survey found evidence for a significant increase in stress levels. When asked what has happened to stress levels, compared to the same time last year, almost three-quarters of respondents (73%) reported that they had increased. Over a fifth (22%) indicated they had remained the same, and there were more 'don't knows' (3%) than those who thought stress levels had declined (1%).

Comparing the latest results with those of the previous survey, the latest survey indicates that a greater proportion of staff feel that stress levels have increased. In 2008, two-thirds of respondents felt that stress levels had increased and a third felt they had remained the same over the previous 12 months. (We also asked respondents about the extent to which stress was affecting their performance at work and their personal lives. In each case, over half of respondents either agreed strongly or tended to agree that this was the case. Only a minority disagreed that this was the case).

When we analyse responses on stress levels by occupation, there were a number of occupations where over three-quarters of respondents felt that stress levels had increased since last year. These included social workers (90%) and social work assistants, adult care workers, early years educators/nursery nurses and general professional staff.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, most respondents believe morale in their area or department has worsened over the past year. When we put this question to participants, nearly two-thirds

answered that morale had worsened, and just below a third felt it had remained the same. Only around one-in-twenty respondents thought morale had improved.

Work intensity

The latest survey also asked UNISON members their views on the amount of work they do in a normal week as well as whether work-related stress is affecting their personal lives and job performance. Overall, just under a half of survey respondents said that they have the right amount of work while 6% believe they could do more without much effort. In contrast, a significant minority, 46% of members, said they have too much work to do.

Examined by occupational group, the professions that appear to be under the most pressure in terms of workload are senior managers, social workers, finance frontline workers and built environment professionals. In all cases, around 70% or more of respondents said they have too much work to do. In contrast, only around 30% of those working in libraries, school support staff and homecare staff share the same sentiments. When looked at by gender and region, there are no marked differences while those in the lowest age range, 16 to 25 year olds, are less likely to report feeling excessive workloads than their older colleagues.

Stress at work

When asked to give an opinion on whether or not stress at work is affecting job performance a total of 54% of respondents said they either strongly agree or tend to agree that it does. (Over a third, 36%, tended to agree while just below a fifth, some 18%, strongly agreed.) Meanwhile 20% of respondents disagreed to some extent.

When examined according to occupational group, four occupations stand out as being particularly impacted by work-related stress. These are social work, chief officers/senior managers and school business managers/bursars and, to a slightly lesser extent, residential children's care workers. In each case, around 65% or more of staff from these groups agree to some extent that stress is affecting their work performance. By age, the youngest and oldest staff are least affected by stress in this way while when analysed by region and ethnic group, differences are not that great.

On the question of whether stress at work affected personal lives, just over a half either agree strongly or tend to agree that it does. In contrast, just over a fifth disagree with the statement. By occupational group, the same four professions stood out. In contrast, age does not make a great deal of difference to respondents' replies and again, there are no significant differences according to gender, ethnic group or region.

8. Living costs and debts

In the wake of the longest recession in living memory, and central government cuts to local government budgets, the cost of living and indebtedness have become more pressing issues since the last survey was conducted. While personal incomes have remained the same in most cases, personal expenditure has increased in a greater proportion of cases. Looking at change in personal incomes over the past 12 months, 59% of respondents told us their income had remained the same. And while 26% said it had increased, 15% indicated that their income had fallen in the past year.

Expenditure, however, was reported as having increased in 70% of cases. Most of the remainder (26%) said that it was the same as previously, and only 4% of respondents reported a decline in expenditure and outgoings.

We asked respondents how difficult they found it to meet a range of living costs, as follows:

- Housing costs, e.g. rent, mortgage, council tax;
- Energy and utility bills, e.g. gas, electricity, water, telephone;
- Food shopping;
- Healthcare costs, e.g. prescriptions, opticians, dental costs;
- Childcare costs and/or school expenses;
- Travel costs, e.g. fares, fuel, repairs/maintenance;
- General living costs, e.g. clothes, footwear, entertainment, sports;
- Credit cards, loans or other borrowing.

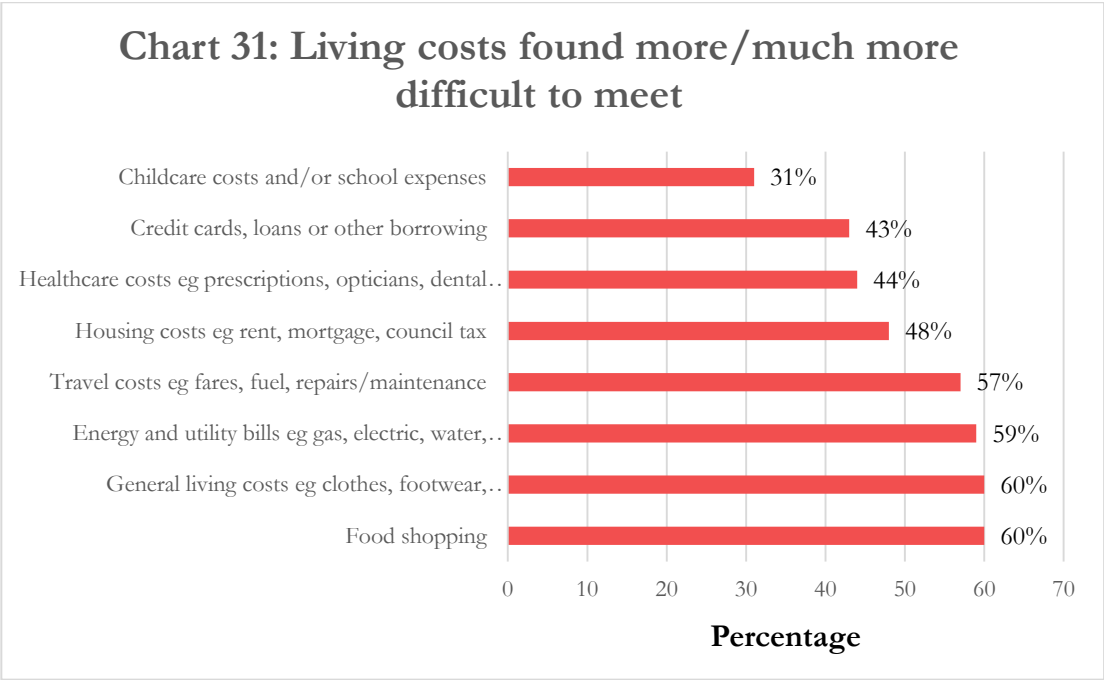
Respondents were given a range of choices, from 'much easier', and 'easier', through 'neither difficult nor easy', to 'more difficult' or 'much more difficult'. Chart 31 shows results for those living costs that respondents found either 'more difficult' or 'much more difficult' to meet (as compared with 'neither difficult nor easy', 'easier' or 'much easier').

It indicates that for four of the categories – food, general living costs, utility bills and travel costs – many essential items, a majority of respondents found these 'more difficult' or 'much more

difficult’ to cover. Looking at the remainder, between two-fifths and half of respondents found costs relating to housing, healthcare and credit cards or loans hard to pay.

A lower proportion, just below a third, found, childcare costs and/or school expenses difficult to meet. This probably reflects the age profile of respondents, with many members’ children grown up.

In all cases, the bulk of the rest of the responses were in the ‘neither difficult nor easy’ category, with only very small proportions indicating that costs were easier to meet.



Regional housing costs

In none of the regions did fewer than 40% of members responding find housing costs more or much more difficult to meet. And in some areas, over half the respondents were in this category. These were: London (55%), the South East (51%), Scotland (51%) and Wales (52%). Responses approached these levels in the South West (48%), North West (48%) and the North East (49%).

Indebtedness

The proportions of members reporting indebtedness are broadly similar to the levels in the last survey, but still worryingly high. Just below 42% of respondents said they had personal debts, excluding mortgage repayments. This is just slightly above the 41% recorded in the previous members' survey. Of these, a large proportion of just below a quarter reported debts totalling £10,000 or more, a rise of just over 1% on the figure recorded in the previous survey.

The occupations with the greatest frequency of reported debt were children's care staff and assistant social workers (above 63% in each case). Other occupations reporting relatively high frequencies of indebtedness were adult care workers, with 48% reporting indebtedness.

Some 60 adult care workers responded to the question on levels of debt. Of those responding, 31% owed between £2,000 and £9,999, and 27% said they owed more than £10,000. Some 53 social work assistants responded here and over half (56%) owed between £2,000 and £9,999.

In response to the question on personal debts, all of the regions produced response rates of at least 35%, but those coming in above the average were Wales (49%), the East Midlands, the North West (both 46%), London and Scotland (both 43%).

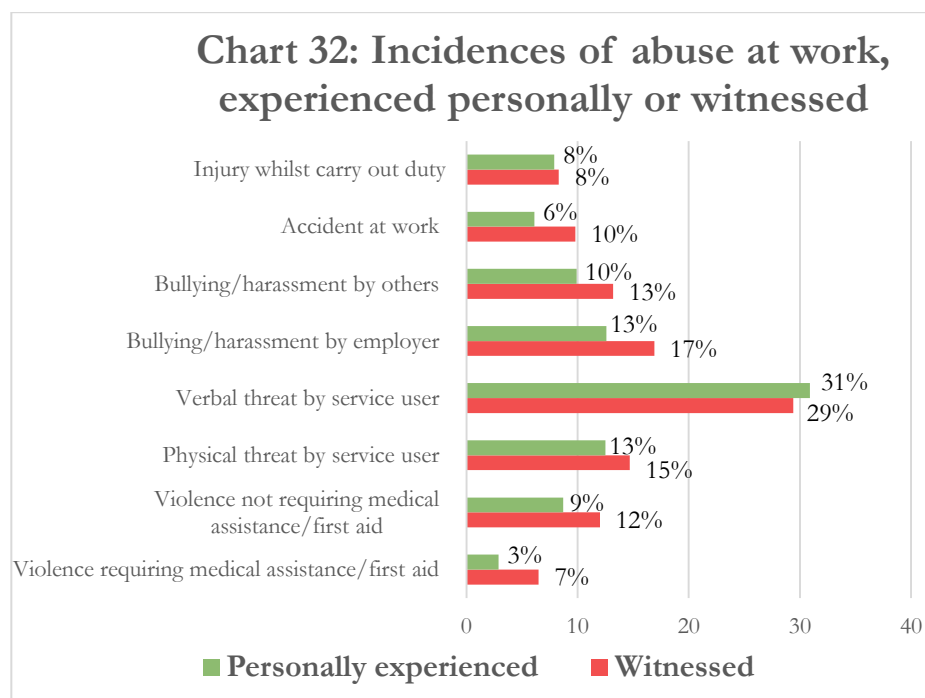
Benefits and entitlements

Some 19% of members told us they are in receipt of child benefit, while 7% receive working tax credits, and 8% receive child tax credits. Looking at working tax credits by occupation, those groups with the largest proportions of respondents receiving this entitlement were facilities staff (17%), school support staff (11%), social work assistants, finance professionals and children's care workers (all 10%).

Analysis by region showed that the regions with most members in receipt of working tax credits were the West Midlands (11%) and Wales (10%). The West Midlands was also the region with the most members reporting receipt of child tax credits, with 13% of respondents in this category. The North West (12%) and Wales (11%) also figured here.

9. Bullying and harassment

Compared to the previous survey, it appears that incidences of abuse at work have increased. Some three-fifths of respondents (60%) have themselves been subjected to at least one form of abuse, whether that be bullying/harassment, or verbal or physical threats, as well as actual violence. An even higher proportion (69%) reported witnessing a colleague subjected to the same types of behaviour. In the previous survey, when we put a similar list to members, 44% said they had personally experienced some form of abuse and 48% had witnessed colleagues being subjected to abuse.



The most commonly experienced form of abuse is verbal threats by service users, with similar proportions of respondents experiencing this directly (31%) or witnessing a colleague being subjected to them (29%). This was the only form of abuse where incidences of personal experience were reported with a greater frequency than witnessed occurrences. In the case of all the other forms of abuse listed, respondents were more likely to have witnessed the occurrence than to have experienced it themselves. This is an indication that verbal threats from service users, while only experienced by a minority of respondents, are nevertheless a relatively common occurrence.

Other forms of abuse were experienced or witnessed with much less frequency. However, actual violence was witnessed by a total of 19%, and experienced directly by some 12% of respondents. A breakdown by severity of physical violence shows that 3% required medical assistance or first aid afterwards and 6.5% witnessed a colleague needing medical assistance after the incident. Some 15% of respondents witnessed a colleague being physically threatened by a service user, while 13% reported that they have personally experienced this in their work.

Bullying or harassment of a colleague by an employer was reported by 17% of respondents, while 13% reported personal experience of bullying/harassment of this sort. (Bullying or harassment by others was witnessed by 13% of respondents and experienced by 10% of respondents).

Occupational analysis

The occupations that emerged from the survey as most at risk from violence or threats were pre-eminently children's care workers, and to a slightly lesser extent, adult care workers. Some caution is required here because children's care workers were only a small proportion of the sample. Nevertheless, almost three-fifths of children's care workers reported witnessing violence that didn't require first aid or medical treatment and just over two-fifths of the same group reported witnessing more serious violence. The proportions here rose to around three-quarters in respect of threats.

Table 8: Occupations most at-risk of threatening behaviour

Occupation
Children's care workers
Adult care workers
Library staff
Professional staff
School support staff

Adult care workers were a much greater proportion of the sample, and therefore we can be more confident about drawing inferences from their responses. There were fewer reports of actual

violence from this group. However when it came to threats, both verbal and physical, the proportion of reported incidences increased markedly. Half of respondents in this group reported receiving verbal threats from service users.

Other occupations at risk of threatening behaviour included library staff, local authority professionals and school support staff, with relatively large proportions of these groups personally experiencing verbal threats from service users. Library staff reported the largest number of incidences in this category. Homecare staff also reported a relatively large proportion of incidences of verbal abuse, however reports of other forms of abuse were generally much lower for this group.

When we asked members how effective they felt their employer was when it came to making adjustments to prevent stress, over half of adult care workers, children's care workers and library staff answered that their employer was either 'not very effective' or 'not at all effective'.

Pretexts for harassment

Bullies often use employees' characteristics (some of which are protected) as a pretext to harass. From a range of characteristics, three stood out as the most common bases for ill-treatment: age, disability and race.

Age was the pretext for reports of harassment by line managers, whether experienced or witnessed, in 25% of cases; by another staff member in 12% of cases; and by a member of the public in 13% of cases.

Disability was reported as the pretext for harassment by line managers in 16% of cases; by another staff member in 12% of cases; and by a member of the public in 8% of cases.

Instances of race providing a pretext for harassment by line managers were relatively low at 3% of responses. However the proportions rose when it came to harassment by other staff members (8%) and members of the public, where it rose to 14% of instances.

Other characteristics, such as gender or sexual orientation, were less commonly reported as pretexts for harassment. However, gender appeared in relation to harassment by other staff in 6% of cases and members of the public in 7% of cases. Sexual orientation was much less common a basis for harassment by other staff (3%) but the figure rose to 7% in relation to harassment by members of the public.

Employer effectiveness

The survey asked respondents how effective their employing authorities were in respect of a number of issues as follows:

- Ensuring general health and safety
- Preventing violence at work
- Supporting victims of violence
- Preventing racial harassment
- Adjusting for disabilities
- Preventing stress
- Preventing muscle and joint pain
- Helping staff back to work after sickness.

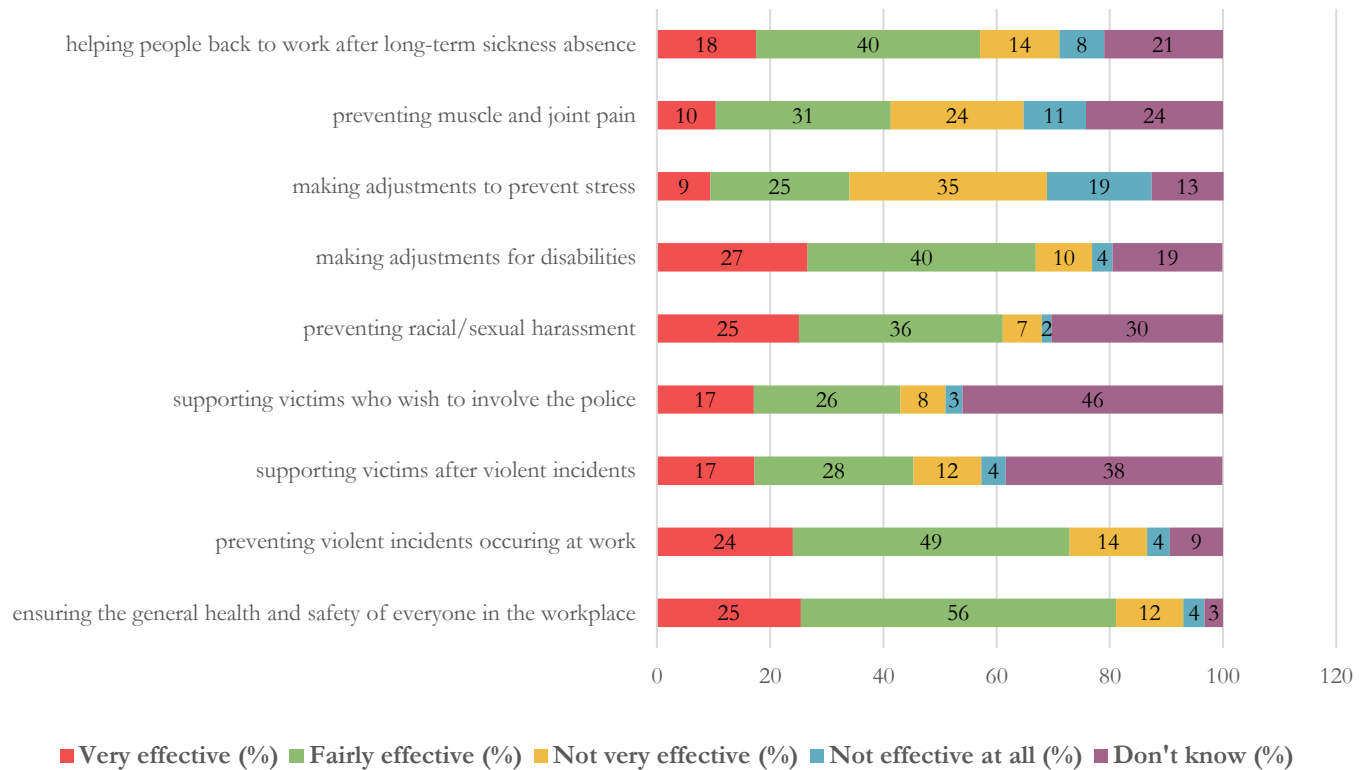
The findings show that employers were considered generally effective in ensuring general health and safety, preventing violence at work, making adjustments for disabilities, preventing racial harassment, and helping staff return to work after long periods of sickness absence.

Where employers were less effective was in preventing stress, with a majority of respondents reporting that their employers were not very effective or not effective at all in this respect. To a lesser extent, this was also the case in respect of employers' effectiveness in preventing violent incidents at work and supporting victims of violence.

There were also relatively large proportions of 'don't knows' in response to some of the questions, for example when it came to supporting victims of violence, and preventing racial harassment. This is somewhat concerning. There may be a potential link to awareness of employers' policies on

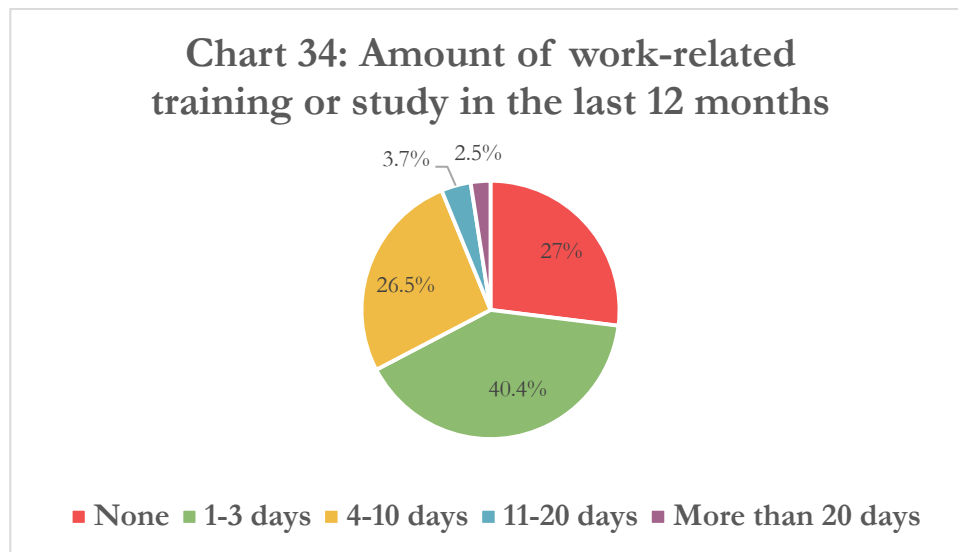
preventing violence at work. When we asked members if their employer had such a policy, while the majority (65%) responded 'yes', the great bulk of the remainder (34%) placed themselves in the 'don't know' category. This may indicate that councils need to do more to make staff aware of their policies and highlight the sorts of support systems that are in place in the event of violent incidents.

Chart 33: Members' views on employer effectiveness (%)



10. Training and development

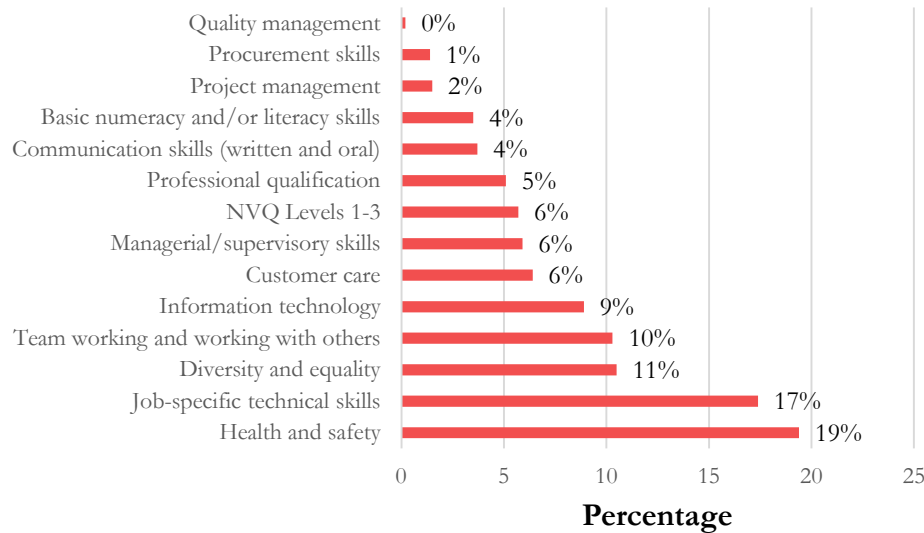
The key finding here was that over a quarter of respondents said they had not received any work-related study or training in the past 12 months (see chart 34). Of those that had received training, the largest proportion, just over 40%, had undertaken between 1 and 3 days' study/training, with over a quarter undertaking between 4 and 10 days' training.



Most of this training was in health and safety (19% of respondents) and so likely to be mandatory, but the second most frequently chosen category was job-specific technical skills, with 17% of respondents reporting undertaking this. Broadly similar proportions were recorded for diversity and equality (11%) and team working (10%), with IT training a little lower at 9%.

Most training was carried out in the employer's time (70%), though a significant proportion of members (25%) reported that the time spent covered both the employer's time and their own time. This represents an increase on the previous survey when 74% reported that most training was conducted in the employer's time and 21% covered both the employer's and the employee's time. In most cases, (74%), the fee was paid by the employer, and in most other instances respondents reported the training as having no cost.

Chart 35: Areas of work-related study or training undertaken by members



Usefulness of training

When we asked members about how useful the training they had undertaken was for their current role, the large majority – some 89%, responded that it was either fairly or very useful, with slightly more respondents regarding it as ‘fairly’ than ‘very’ useful.

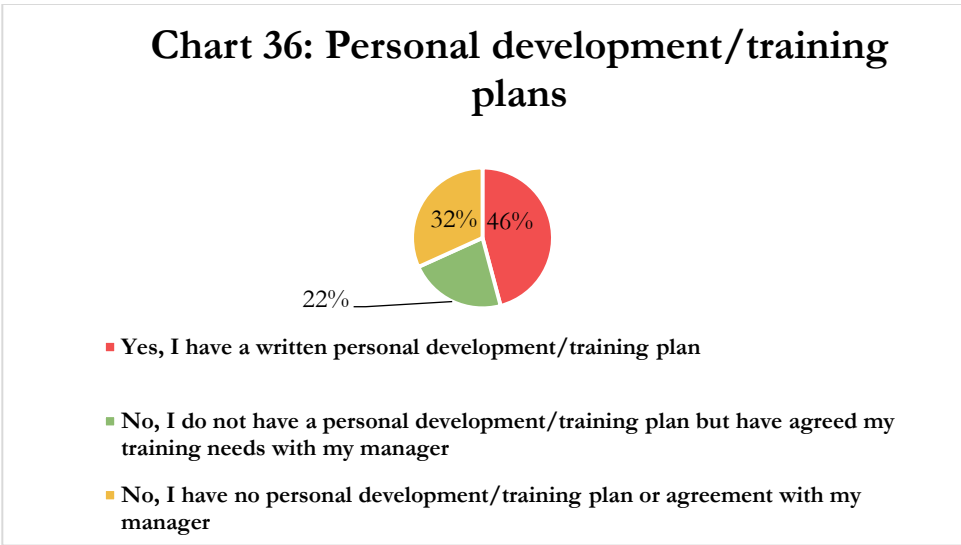
In respect of the training’s usefulness for future career development, a smaller proportion, 72%, reported that it was fairly/very useful, with those regarding it as ‘fairly useful’ a larger proportion (42%) than those regarding it as ‘very useful’ (30%). However a relatively high proportion of around a fifth of respondents (20%) replied that the training was not very useful and a further 8% reported that it was ‘not at all useful’ in respect of future development.

Training and development plans

The survey asked respondents about personal development/training plans. It found that while 46% reported having a plan in this regard, a relatively large proportion of respondents, almost a third (32%) said that they did not have a personal training/development plan. A further 22% reported

that while they did not have a personal development/training plan, they nevertheless had agreed their training needs with their managers.

When we asked respondents about whether they had undertaken any training identified in their plan, almost two-thirds (63%) reported that yes, they had. Over a third (37%) reported that they had not undertaken any training identified in their plan.



Occupational variations

While most staff had undertaken some form of work-related training or study in the past 12 months, there were variations for particular occupations. In fact a majority of respondents from three occupational groups – facilities, IT and school support staff – reported having undertaken no such training in the past 12 months. It is worth noting that these are the same occupations who had not undertaken training in the previous survey in 2008. And groups with relatively large proportions of members also reporting having undertaken no training included administrative and clerical staff, finance frontline staff and environmental services.

Occupational variations are also seen in respect of personal development/training plans. The same groups with a majority reporting no training in the past year were also those with a majority reporting not having personal development plans – again, facilities, IT and school support staff,

and also environmental services. Occupations with relatively large proportions of staff (between 30% and 49%) reporting having no personal development plans included homecare staff, professional staff and administrative and clerical staff.

Variations by pay and work pattern

Generally-speaking, lower-paid employees were least likely to have received training in the past 12 months, while higher-paid staff are most likely to have received more days' training than their lower-paid colleagues. Some 34% of those earning between £100 and £199 a week reported receiving no training, while this figure falls to 20% for those earning between £400 and £499 a week.

Looking at work pattern, it seems that full-time staff are most likely to have received no training, with 51% of full-time staff in this category, compared to 31% of part-time staff and just 14% of term-time only employees. Many part-time staff and term-time staff will require mandatory training to carry out their roles.

11. Priorities for action

As a result of the funding squeeze on local government, members had many concerns. Job security is still the most important priority for members. The survey asked members what they would most like Unison to achieve for them, and supplied a list of potential priorities and requested that members rate these in order of importance. When it came to job security, a total of 98% of respondents replied that they regarded this as either 'fairly important' or 'very important', with most (76%) regarding it as 'very important'.

While this area also came top of members' lists of priorities in 2008, the proportion favouring it then was slightly lower at 97%. The most likely explanation for the rise is the backdrop of funding reductions, with a consequent impact on employment, that have taken place since the last survey. The top five priorities emerging from the survey are: job security; equal pay for work of equal value; more pay; a decent pension; and more job-related training. All of these issues were felt to be important by over 90% of members surveyed.

Other important areas, mentioned by over 80% of respondents, were: safer workplaces; bereavement leave; better career opportunities; improved grading; and a better deal for part-time workers. Many of these latter areas are not necessarily subjects for formal negotiations at National Joint Council or Scottish Joint Council level, but perhaps they might begin to feature.

Table 9: Top five priorities for Unison members in 2015

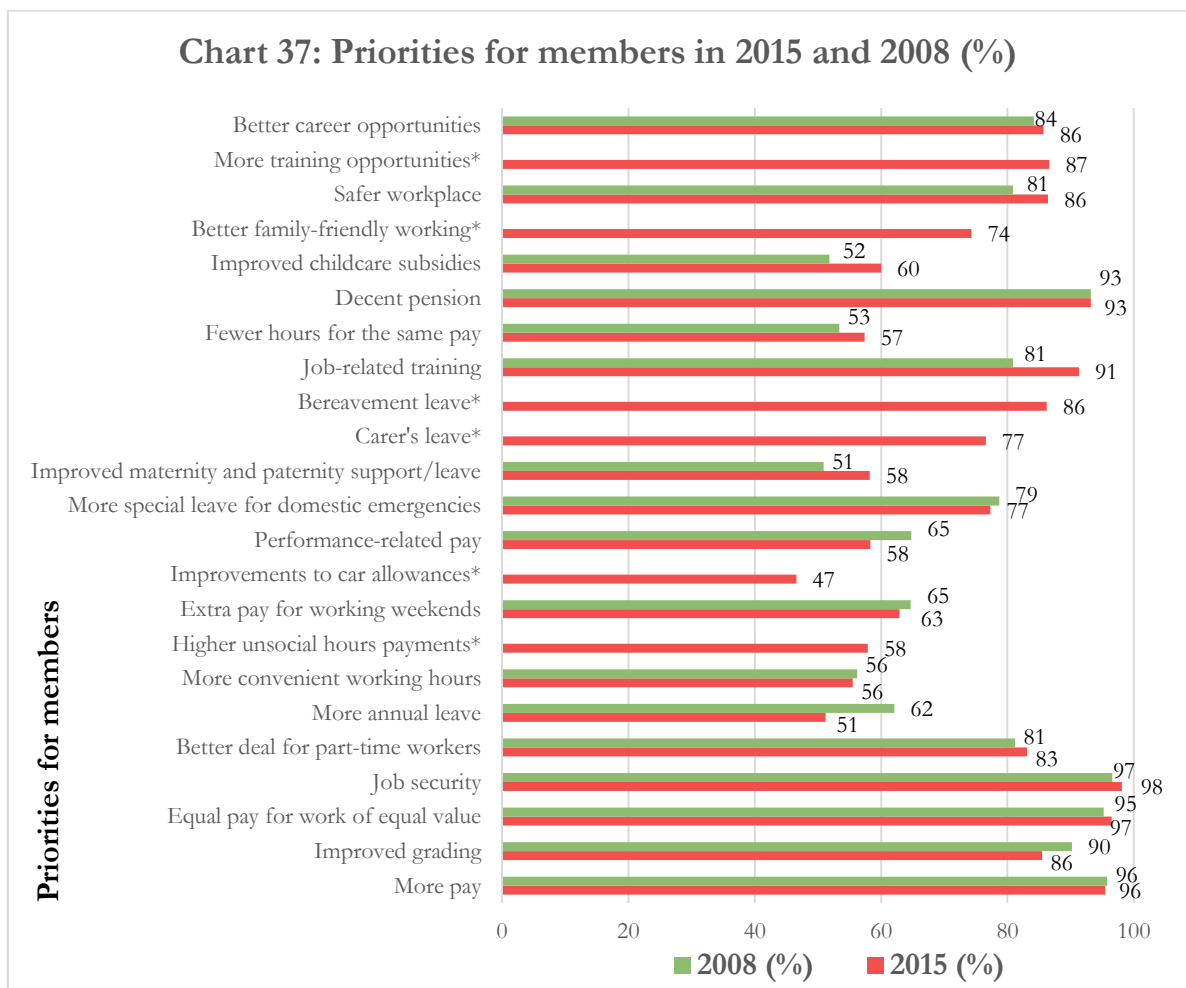
Top five priorities for Unison members in 2015	
1.	Job security
2.	Equal pay for work of equal value
3.	More pay
4.	A decent pension
5.	Job-related training

The second-most important priority was equal pay for work of equal value, with 97% of respondents rating this as important, up from 95% in 2008. This may reflect the gender make-up of

the survey, with women constituting 79% of respondents (for more on which, see below). The gender pay gap in local government has increased recently, and this may also be a factor here.

More pay came third, at 96% of respondents. This is likely to reflect the absence of any real-terms pay growth in local government since the policy of austerity began to be implemented. The linked issue of pensions came fourth, with the same proportion of respondents as the previous survey regarding this as important (93%).

Finally, training has increased in importance for members, according to the latest survey. Last time, some 81% of respondents regarded more job-related training as an important priority. In the latest survey this area rose to fifth place, with 91% of members rating it as fairly or very important.



**Some areas were not included in the 2008 survey.*

Age and gender profiles shape responses

Most respondents are aged 45 or over, with a total of 74% in this age bracket. And the bulk of respondents are women (79%), to a large extent reflecting the relatively high proportions of women who work in local government and are active in the union.

These factors are likely to have influenced the responses when it comes to priorities for campaigning and negotiations. As mentioned already, equal pay for work of equal value is an extremely high priority for women members who made up the majority of those that responded to the survey.

Women's role as primary carers is further reflected in the priority ascribed to such areas as: special leave for domestic emergencies, cited by 77% as important; carer's leave, rated as important by 76.6% of respondents, and better family-friendly working, with 74% regarding this as an important priority for the union.

But age appears to be a factor as well, with bereavement leave – a question that was not included in the 2008 survey – regarded as an important priority by some 86% of members (with 50% regarding it as 'very important'). This is likely to reflect the age profile of the respondents, with many reaching that time of life when parents and relatives die.

Interestingly, a better deal for part-time workers figures highly in the priorities rated as important by members. And while the proportion citing this as important was high in the last survey, at 81%, it has increased in the latest survey to 83%. This is despite the fact that the proportion of part-time workers responding to the survey is low in comparison to their prevalence across the local government workforce as a whole, where they are a majority. The likely explanation is that the full-time employees who make up the bulk of survey respondents work with many part-time staff and recognise the pressures on them to complete their work in a smaller number of hours each week. In addition, most part-time staff are women, as is borne out by the survey – some 92% of respondents who reported working part-time are women. Many of these staff have caring responsibilities outside of work, as do many full-time workers, and this is likely to have produced the high frequency of responses here.

Shifting priorities?

Just over half the items we also put to members in the 2008 survey registered an increase in the importance placed on them in the latest survey. These were as follows: job security; equal pay for work of equal value; more job-related training; safer workplaces; better career opportunities; a better deal for part-time workers; improved childcare subsidies; improved maternity and paternity support/leave; fewer hours for the same pay. A decent pension registered the same level of importance as in 2008.

However some items registered a slight fall in the importance placed on them between the previous survey and this one. These included: grading; special leave; pay for weekend working; performance-related pay; and more convenient working hours.

Some of the differences, and they are mostly small, are likely to be down to sampling variations. But the changes could also be due to changes in members' priorities in a more austere environment. So, instead of focusing on grading, or performance pay, members would prefer to receive more training, or see a better deal for part-time workers.

12.Occupational analysis

This chapter provides an in-depth study of the individual occupations with the largest number of responses (80 or more). Because of their relatively high response rate, we can present some interesting and significant findings for employees working in these professions.

Administrative/clerical staff

- **240** administrative/clerical workers were surveyed
- **Working pattern:** 58% are full-time, 30% part-time and 9% work term-time only
- **More than one job:** 6% have two jobs
- **Type of contract:** 97% have permanent contracts
- **Gender:** the majority, 92%, are women
- **Age:** administrative/clerical staff are mainly mature workers with 71% between the ages of 45 and 64
- **Disability:** 9% are disabled
- **Other forms of payment:** Very few earn additions to basic pay with less than 11% of staff reporting any of the types mentioned
- **Fair pay:** 35% 'tend to disagree' that they are fairly-paid, with a further 16% strongly disagreeing with the statement, a total of 50%
- **Changes to pay and conditions:** some 42% reported that changes had been made to their pay and conditions; however only a small proportion of respondents indicated which terms had changed
- **Reviews and reorganisations:** 77% reported these taking place, mainly as a result of funding reductions, and some 56% reported that they resulted in reduced staffing levels
- **Working hours:** some 38% of administrative/clerical staff work office hours flex-time and 42% work office hours (11% report working flexi-time)
- **Hours:** some 59% report their contracted hours as between 35 and 39.99 hours a week; however this falls to 39% for actual hours, indicating many work additional hours (paid or unpaid)
- **Overtime:** administrative and clerical staff work 1.6 hours of overtime a week on average, 2.5 hours of TOIL and 2.5 hours' unpaid overtime

- **Work extra hours at short notice:** 80% reported either they never did or if they did, it occurred less than monthly; 7% reported doing so 'most days', 8% weekly and 6% monthly
- **Workload:** 44% of administrative/clerical staff believe they have too much work to do, and less than half (47%) reported they had the right amount of work to do
- **Experience:** Administrative/clerical staff are very experienced with 77% employed in local government for ten years or more
- **Training:** some 41% reported having had no training in the past 12 months; of those that had, most (46%) had between 1 and 3 days, mostly in IT, health and safety or job-specific technical skills
- **Staff shortages:** 36% reported staff shortages most days or every week while just 14% said they never experienced shortages
- **Changes in working area in last 12 months:** notably, 73% of administrative/clerical staff reported their workload had increased and 73% said stress levels were up while 73% said employers' expectations were up
- **Morale:** 72% said morale was worse compared to a year ago while only 3% reported an improvement
- **Stress:** more administrative/clerical staff tended to agree or agreed strongly (37%) that stress was affecting their work, than those who tended to disagree/disagreed strongly (20%) ; a similar pattern was seen for the effect of stress on personal life (37% and 20% respectively)
- **Job changes:** 40% reported that they are actively looking for a job with just over half of these saying that they are looking in their current area of work
- **Improvements to the service:** administrative/clerical staff believed protecting pay and conditions (69%), better management (42%) and job security guarantees (40%) were the three most important measures that would help staff improve the service to the public
- **Abuse in the workplace:** administrative/clerical staff did not encounter a great deal of violence but 29% experienced verbal abuse from service users and 23% were subject to bullying
- **Harassment:** few staff encountered incidences of harassment, but some respondents reported harassment by managers or other staff on grounds of age

- **UNISON priorities:** these were not significantly different from the overall sample with job security (77%), a decent pension (69%), equal pay for work of equal value (67%), and more pay (59%) all prominent
- **Debt:** 36% reported indebtedness with just below half owing between £2,000 and £9,999.

Teaching/classroom assistants

- **435** teaching/classroom assistants were surveyed, the largest single group covered
- **Working pattern:** 25% are full-time, 28% part-time and the largest proportion, 39%, work term-time only
- **More than one job:** just 13% have two jobs, so for over 80% of classroom assistants it is their main job
- **Type of contract:** 87% have permanent contracts, with 12% reporting they are temporary
- **Gender:** the majority, 96%, are women
- **Age:** the largest age cohort is the 45-54 bracket, with 40% here; however, some 20% are aged 25-34 while 28% are older, aged between 55 and 64
- **Disability:** 4% of teaching/classroom assistants are disabled
- **Other payments:** most teaching/classroom assistants received no other payments
- **Fair pay:** there appears to be significant dissatisfaction with pay - 40% 'tend to disagree' that they are fairly-paid, with a further 31% strongly disagreeing with the statement
- **Changes to pay and conditions:** some 42% reported that changes had been made to their pay and conditions; however only a small proportion of respondents indicated which terms had changed (by far the largest response was in relation to progression, with over 70% of those responding indicating that it had improved)
- **Reviews and reorganisations:** just below half (48%) said that there had been a review of reorganisation of their work area since 2010
- **Working hours:** while most (59%) reported working 'office hours', or 9 to 5, some 36% classified their working pattern as 'other'
- **Hours:** some 53% report their contracted hours as between 25 and 34.99 hours a week; however this falls to 43% for actual hours, indicating many work additional hours (paid or unpaid)

- **Overtime:** teaching assistants work 2 hours' overtime a week on average, take 0.8 hours as TOIL, and work 3.7 hours of unpaid overtime
- **Work extra hours at short notice:** it is rare for teaching assistants to be asked to work extra hours at short notice, with 77% reporting either that they never did or if they did, it occurred less than monthly; 9% reported doing so 'most days', 6% weekly and 8% monthly
- **Workload:** 34% of teaching assistants believe they have too much work to do, but three-fifths (60%) reported they had the right amount of work to do
- **Experience:** teaching assistants in the survey tend to be very experienced with over three-fifths (61%) employed in local government for ten years or more
- **Training:** 19% reported having had no training in the past 12 months; most (46%) had between 1 and 3 days, mostly in IT, health and safety or job-specific technical skills
- **Shortages in the last 12 months:** a third of teaching assistants (33%) reported staff shortages most days or every week while just 13% said they never experienced shortages
- **Changes in working area in last 12 months:** some 72% of teaching assistants reported their workload had increased and the same proportion said stress levels were up, while 78% said their employers' expectations had increased
- **Morale:** 55% said morale was worse compared to a year ago while only 9% reported an improvement
- **Stress:** more teaching assistants tended to agree or agreed strongly (46% in total) that stress was affecting their work, than those who tended to disagree/disagreed strongly (24%); the same pattern was seen for the effect of stress on personal life, though the margin was narrower
- **Job changes:** exactly three-fifths of teaching assistants said they had considered leaving their employer over the past year, and a third reported that they are actively looking for a job (61% of whom would like a role in the same area)
- **Improvements to the service:** teaching assistants believed protecting pay and conditions (56%), job security guarantees (44%) and better management (36%) were the three most important measures that would help staff improve the service to the public
- **Safety at work:** almost a quarter (24%) of teaching assistants reported receiving verbal threats from service users, and a greater proportion (30%) said they witnessed a colleague

experiencing this sort of abuse; 15% personally experienced violence that luckily did not require medical assistance, with 22% witnessing this occurring to a colleague

- **UNISON priorities:** these were not significantly different from the overall sample with more pay and job security (both 73%), equal pay for work of equal value and a decent pension (both 71%) all prominent; other key priorities included more job-related training (62%)
- **Debt:** 36% reported indebtedness with 45% owing between £2,000 and £9,999; a fifth of the 159 respondents said they owed £10,000 or more

School support staff

- **171** school support staff were surveyed
- **Working pattern:** most school support staff work part-time (45%) or term-time only (27%); just 24% of school support staff work full-time
- **More than one job:** over a quarter, 28%, have two jobs, while most of the remainder (71%) have one
- **Type of contract:** 96% of school support staff have permanent contracts
- **Gender:** just below a quarter of school support staff (23%) are men, and the large majority (77%) are women
- **Age:** most staff in this occupational area are older, with 34% aged between 45 and 54 and 39% aged between 55 and 64; unusually, a further 10% are 65 or over
- **Disability:** 6% of school support staff are disabled
- **Other payments:** some 11% of school support staff report receiving additional payments for contractual overtime; however most reported receiving no other forms of payment
- **Fair pay:** there is a certain amount of dissatisfaction with pay – while 32% tend to agree or agree strongly that they are fairly-paid, 52% in total tend to disagree or strongly disagree with this statement
- **Changes to pay and conditions:** 45% reported that changes had been made to their pay and conditions; but like other groups only a small proportion of respondents indicated which terms had changed

- **Reviews and reorganisations:** some 35% of school support staff reported reviews or reorganisations over the past 12 months, with most of these as a result of funding reductions; the most common outcome was reduced staffing (reported in 40% of cases)
- **Working hours:** 30% reported working 'office hours', or 9 to 5, while 36% classified their working pattern as 'other'
- **Hours:** contracted hours for school support staff vary widely, as do actual hours
- **Overtime:** school support staff work 3.4 hours' overtime a week on average, 2.5 hours' unpaid overtime, and take 0.9 hours as TOIL on average
- **Work extra hours at short notice:** it is rare for school support staff to be asked to work extra hours at short notice, with 75% reporting either that this never happened or if it did, it occurred less than monthly
- **Workload:** 28% of school support staff believe they have too much work to do, but three-fifths (61%) reported they had the right amount of work to do
- **Experience:** school support staff tend to be very experienced with over two-thirds (69%) employed in local government for ten years or more
- **Training:** a large proportion of school support staff (56%) reported having had no training in the past 12 months; 35% received between 1 and 3 days' training
- **Staff shortages:** a quarter of school support staff (25%) reported staff shortages most days or every week while 25% said they never experienced shortages
- **Changes in working area in last 12 months:** some 62% of school support staff reported their workload had increased; 52% said stress levels were up, while 53% said their employers' expectations had increased
- **Morale:** 43% said morale was worse compared to a year ago while only 10% reported an improvement
- **Stress:** more school support staff tended to agree or agreed strongly (40% in total) that stress was affecting their work, than those who tended to disagree/disagreed strongly (31%); the same pattern was seen for the effect of stress on personal life, though the margin was narrower (39% and 32% respectively)
- **Job changes:** some 42% of school support staff said they had considered leaving their employer over the past year, and the same proportion reported that they are actively looking for a job (52% of whom would like a role in the same area)

- **Improvements to the service:** school support staff believed protecting pay and conditions (64%), job security guarantees (51%) and better funding for local government (25%) were the three most important measures that would help staff improve the service to the public
- **Safety at work:** while 70% of school support staff reported no abuse, harassment or violent incidents at work, just below one-in-ten reported being bullied or harassed by their employer, and the same proportion said they had been injured while carrying out their duties
- **UNISON priorities:** job security (86%) and more pay (83%) were the most prominent, followed by equal pay for work of equal value and a decent pension (79% and 76% respectively) all prominent; other key priorities included a better deal for part-time workers (66%), bereavement leave (65%) and safer workplaces (63%)
- **Debt:** 34% reported indebtedness with 55% owing between £2,000 and £9,999; just below a quarter (23%) of the 61 respondents said they owed £10,000 or more

Social workers

- **157** social workers were surveyed
- **Working pattern:** most social workers work full-time (80%); 20% work part-time
- **More than one job:** the large majority (96%) have one job; 4% have two jobs
- **Type of contract:** 96% of social workers are on permanent contracts; 4% are casual/temporary
- **Gender:** three-quarters (75%) of social workers are women
- **Age:** just over a quarter (26%) of social workers are below 45, but most are older
- **Disability:** 8% of social workers are disabled
- **Other forms of payment:** 82% reported receiving no other additional payments; however, 9% reported receiving unsocial hours payments
- **Fair pay:** there is significant dissatisfaction with pay – 65% in total tend to disagree or strongly disagree that they are fairly-paid
- **Changes to pay and conditions:** 50% reported that changes had been made to their pay and conditions; car allowances have been reduced in many cases
- **Reviews and reorganisations:** some 83% of social workers reported reviews or reorganisations over the past 12 months, with most of these as a result of funding reductions;

the most common outcomes were a worse service to the public and fewer resources, though many respondents also mentioned reduced staffing

- **Working hours:** 43% reported working office hours, or 9 to 5, while 37% reported working office flex-time
- **Hours:** over three-quarters (76%) social workers are contracted to work between 35 and 39.9 hours each week; however this falls to 58% when it comes to actual hours, indicating that many work additional hours, paid or unpaid
- **Overtime:** social workers work 2 hours' paid overtime a week on average, and 6.2 hours' unpaid overtime; they take 5 hours as TOIL on average
- **Work extra hours at short notice:** it is rare for social workers to be asked to work extra hours at short notice, with 75% reporting either that this never happened or if it did, it occurred less than monthly
- **Workload:** 77% of social workers report they have too much work to do
- **Experience:** social workers tend to be very experienced with almost three-quarters (74%) employed in local government for ten years or more
- **Training:** most social workers (57%) reported having received between 4 and 10 days' training in the past 12 months;
- **Staff shortages:** over half of social workers responding (56%) reported staff shortages most days or every week; only 3% said they never experienced staff shortages
- **Changes in working area in last 12 months:** some 87% of social workers reported their workload had increased; and equal proportions (90% each) said both stress levels and employers' expectations had increased
- **Morale:** 82% said morale was worse compared to a year ago
- **Stress:** many more social workers tended to agree or agreed strongly (75% in total) that stress was affecting their work, than those who tended to disagree/disagreed strongly; a similar pattern was seen for the effect of stress on personal life, with 72% in the categories indicating agreement with the statement
- **Job changes:** some 67% of social workers said they had considered leaving their employer over the past year, but 70% said they are not actively looking for a job

- **Improvements to the service:** social workers believed protecting pay and conditions (55%), more staff (42%) and better funding for local government (36%) were the three most important measures that would help staff improve the service to the public
- **Safety at work:** some 60% of social workers reported receiving verbal threats from service users, and 47% witnessed this occurring to a colleague; just over a fifth were in receipt of physical threats from service users, while this rose to a quarter in the case of those witnessing this happening to colleagues; 27% reported seeing a colleague bullied or harassed by their employer, while 15% experienced this directly themselves
- **UNISON priorities:** a decent pension, job security and equal pay for work of equal value were the most prominent, followed by job-related training; other key priorities included more pay, better career opportunities and safer workplaces
- **Debt:** 52% reported indebtedness, with 48% owing between £2,000 and £9,999; just over a third (34%) of the 80 respondents said they owed £10,000 or more

Adult care workers

- **120** adult care workers were surveyed
- **Working pattern:** most adult care workers work full-time (62%); 35% work part-time
- **More than one job:** the large majority (93%) have one job
- **Type of contract:** 97% of adult care workers are on permanent contracts; of the rest, a very small number (2) reported being on zero hours contracts
- **Gender:** over four-fifths (81%) of adult care workers are women
- **Age:** some 85% of adult care workers are aged 45 or older
- **Disability:** 6% of adult care workers are disabled
- **Other payments:** relatively large proportions of care workers reported receiving extra payments for either weekend working (35%), unsocial hours (29%) or shifts (25%)
- **Fair pay:** there is significant dissatisfaction with pay – 59% in total tend to disagree or strongly disagree that they are fairly-paid
- **Changes to pay and conditions:** 45% reported that changes had been made to their pay and conditions; unsocial hours payments have been reduced in many cases

- **Reviews and reorganisations:** some 58% of adult care workers reported reviews or reorganisations, with most of these as a result of funding reductions; the most common outcomes were reduced staffing and fewer resources
- **Working hours:** 42% of adult care workers work shifts; 31% work office hours, 9 to 5
- **Hours:** just over half (53%) of adult care workers are contracted to work between 35 and 39.9 hours each week; however this falls to 29% when it comes to actual hours, indicating that many work additional hours, paid or unpaid
- **Overtime:** adult care workers work 5 hours' paid overtime and 2.7 hours' unpaid overtime a week on average; they take 1.8 hours as TOIL on average
- **Work extra hours at short notice:** it is rare for adult care workers to be asked to work extra hours at short notice, with 75% reporting either that this never happened or if it did, it occurred less than monthly
- **Workload:** 42% of adult care workers report they have too much work to do; 52% report they have the right amount of work
- **Experience:** adult care workers tend to be very experienced with over four-fifths (83%) employed in local government for ten years or more
- **Training:** 43% of adult care workers reported having received between 1 and 3 days' training in the past 12 months; 36% said they received between 4 and 10 days' training
- **Staff shortages:** nearly three-fifths of adult care workers responding (58%) reported staff shortages most days or every week; only 7% said they never experienced staff shortages
- **Changes in working area in last 12 months:** some 82% of adult care workers reported their workload had increased; 77% said stress levels and 82% said employers' expectations had increased
- **Morale:** 65% said morale was worse compared to a year ago; 33% said it was the same, and only 2% felt it had improved
- **Stress:** more adult care workers tended to agree or agreed strongly (58% in total) that stress was affecting their work, than those who tended to disagree/disagreed strongly; much the same pattern was seen for the effect of stress on personal life
- **Job changes:** some 54% of adult care workers said they had considered leaving their employer over the past year, with 41% actively looking for a job

- **Improvements to the service:** adult care workers believed protecting pay and conditions (66%), job security guarantees (52%) and more staff (31%) were the three most important measures that would help staff improve the service to the public
- **Safety at work:** some 51% reported receiving verbal threats from service users, and 32% received physical threats; 26% said they were victims of violence not requiring first aid, and 13% reported being bullied or harassed by their employer
- **UNISON priorities:** job security, equal pay for work of equal value and a decent pension were the most prominent, followed by more pay; other key priorities included extra pay for working weekends, job-related training and safer workplaces
- **Debt:** 48% reported indebtedness, with 42% owing between £2,000 and £9,999; just over a quarter (27%) of the 60 respondents said they owed £10,000 or more

Professional staff

- **116** local authority professionals were surveyed; these include building officers, environmental health officers, housing officers and trading standards officers
- **Working pattern:** 86% work full-time; 14% work part-time
- **More than one job:** the large majority (93%) have one job
- **Type of contract:** almost all (99%) are on permanent contracts
- **Gender:** 60% of professional staff are women and 40% are men
- **Age:** almost four-fifths (79%) are aged 45 or older
- **Disability:** 14% of professional staff are disabled, a higher proportion than other groups
- **Fair pay:** professional staff are dissatisfied with pay – 51% in total tend to disagree or strongly disagree that they are fairly-paid, compared to 36% who tend to agree or strongly agree
- **Changes to pay and conditions:** 60% reported that changes had been made to their pay and conditions; car allowances, overtime and unsocial hours payments have been reduced in many cases; pay progression also figured and while a third saw it improve, two-thirds said it deteriorated; in most cases the changes were imposed
- **Reviews and reorganisations:** some 84% reported reviews or reorganisations; the most common outcomes were reduced staffing, fewer resources and worse ways of working, and staff also mentioned a worse service to the public

- **Working hours:** most professional staff (56%) work office hours flex-time, and 20% work flexi-time
- **Hours:** 63% of professional staff are contracted to work between 35 and 39.9 hours each week; however this falls to 37% when it comes to actual hours, indicating that many work additional hours, paid or unpaid
- **Overtime:** professional staff work 1.9 hours of overtime a week on average, and 4.7 hours' unpaid overtime; they take 3.5 hours as TOIL on average
- **Work extra hours at short notice:** it is comparatively rare for professional staff to be asked to work extra hours at short notice, with 75% reporting either that this never happened or if it did, it occurred less than monthly
- **Workload:** 58% of professional staff report they have too much work to do; 38% report they have the right amount of work
- **Experience:** professional staff tend to be very experienced with over four-fifths (82%) employed in local government for ten years or more
- **Training:** 45% of professional staff reported having received between 1 and 3 days' training in the past 12 months; 23% said they received between 4 and 10 days' training, and 28% said they received no training
- **Staff shortages:** some 45% of professional staff reported staff shortages most days or every week; 17% said these were monthly, and 33% less often; only 5% said they never experienced staff shortages
- **Changes in working area in last 12 months:** some 83% of professional staff reported their workload had increased; 73% said stress levels and 80% said employers' expectations had increased
- **Morale:** 66% said morale was worse compared to a year ago; 28% said it was the same, and only 7% felt it had improved
- **Stress:** many more professional staff tended to agree or agreed strongly (60% in total) that stress was affecting their work, than those who tended to disagree/disagreed strongly; much the same pattern was seen for the effect of stress on personal life (also 60% in the 'tend to agree' or 'agree strongly' categories)
- **Job changes:** 60% of professional staff said they had considered leaving their employer over the past year, with 37% actively looking for a job, mostly in the same area

- **Improvements to the service:** professional staff believed better funding for local government (46%), protecting pay and conditions (45%), and job security guarantees (41%) were the three most important measures that would help staff improve the service
- **Safety at work:** some 38% of professional staff reported receiving verbal threats from service users; and 20% said they had been bullied or harassed by their employer
- **UNISON priorities:** a decent pension, job security, equal pay for work of equal value were the most prominent, followed by more pay; other key priorities included job-related training, better career opportunities and safer workplaces
- **Debt:** 36% reported indebtedness, with 28% of these owing between £2,000 and £9,999; 43% said they owed £10,000 or more

Early years educators

- **91** early years educators were surveyed
- **Working pattern:** 45% work full-time; 29% work part-time and 18% are term-time only
- **More than one job:** 88% have one job and 10% have two jobs
- **Type of contract:** most (96%) are on permanent contracts; 4% are temporary
- **Gender:** 99% of early years educators are women
- **Age:** 38% are aged below 45 and the remainder, 62%, are aged 45 or older
- **Disability:** 6% of early years educators are disabled
- **Fair pay:** early years educators are dissatisfied with their pay – 49% in total tend to disagree or strongly disagree that they are fairly-paid, versus 27% who tend to agree or strongly agree
- **Changes to pay and conditions:** 39% reported that changes had been made to their pay and conditions; pay progression was mentioned most, with roughly equal proportions reporting improvement or deterioration
- **Reviews and reorganisations:** 59% reported reviews or reorganisations; while half were connected to funding reductions, 20% were linked to changes in the law; the most common outcomes were reduced staffing and worse ways of working, and staff also mentioned fewer resources (20%) and 'no change' (20%)
- **Working hours:** 46% of early years educators work office hours (9 to 5); 34% work an 'other' pattern and 11% work shifts

- **Hours:** 60% of early years educators are contracted to work between 30 and 39.9 hours each week; there was little overall change when it came to actual hours, though the distribution changed slightly, with fewer in the 30 to 34.99 hours band and more in the 35 to 39.99 band
- **Overtime:** early years educators work 0.6 hours' paid overtime a week on average, and 3.6 hours of unpaid overtime; average TOIL is 1.8 hours for this group
- **Work extra hours at short notice:** it is rare for early years educators to be asked to work extra hours at short notice, with 81% reporting either that this never happened or if it did, it occurred less than monthly
- **Workload:** 57% of early years educators report they have too much work to do; 32% report they have the right amount of work
- **Experience:** early years educators tend to be very experienced with nearly three-quarters (72%) employed in local government for ten years or more
- **Training:** 41% of early years educators reported having received between 1 and 3 days' training in the past 12 months; 31% said they received between 4 and 10 days' training, and 20% said they received no training
- **Staff shortages:** some 38% of early years educators reported staff shortages most days or every week; 20% said these were monthly, and 29% less often; 14% said they never experienced staff shortages
- **Changes in working area in last 12 months:** some 78% of early years educators reported their workload had increased; 79% said stress levels and 76% said employers' expectations had increased
- **Morale:** 56% said morale was worse compared to a year ago; 40% said it was the same, and only 4% felt it had improved
- **Stress:** many more early years educators tended to agree or agreed strongly (57% in total) that stress was affecting their work, than those who tended to disagree/disagreed strongly; a slightly more pronounced pattern was seen for the effect of stress on personal life, with 60% in the categories indicating agreement
- **Job changes:** 55% said they had considered leaving their employer over the past year, with 44% actively looking for a job, mostly in the same area

- **Improvements to the service:** early years educators believed protecting pay and conditions (64%), job security guarantees (44%) and better funding for local government (27%) were the three most important measures that would help staff improve the service
- **Safety at work:** some 17% reported receiving verbal threats from service users, and this rose to 26% in the case of those witnessing such threats being made to colleagues
- **UNISON priorities:** job security, a decent pension, and equal pay for work of equal value were the most prominent, followed by more pay; other key priorities included bereavement leave, better career opportunities and job-related training
- **Debt:** 40% reported indebtedness, with 29% of these owing between £1 and £1,999, 34% owing between £2,000 and £9,999; 13% said they owed £10,000 or more

Social work assistants

- **86** social work assistants were surveyed
- **Working pattern:** 63% work full-time; 30% work part-time
- **More than one job:** 94% have one job and 6% have two jobs
- **Type of contract:** most (93%) are on permanent contracts; 5% are temporary and 2% recorded themselves as casual/on zero hours contracts
- **Gender:** 84% of social work assistants are women
- **Age:** 27% are aged below 45 and the remainder, 73%, are aged 45 or older
- **Disability:** 12% of social work assistants are disabled, a higher proportion than most other groups
- **Other payments:** some 16% of social work assistants are in receipt of payments for working weekends, and 12% reported receiving pay for unsocial hours
- **Fair pay:** social work assistants are dissatisfied with their pay – 56% in total tend to disagree or strongly disagree that they are fairly-paid, versus 32% who tend to agree or strongly agree
- **Changes to pay and conditions:** 51% reported that changes had been made to their pay and conditions; pay progression was mentioned, with 61% of respondents reporting deterioration; car allowances was another key area, with deterioration in 82% of cases; most of the changes (73% of respondents) were imposed

- **Reviews and reorganisations:** 83% reported reviews or reorganisations, with 81% connected to funding reductions; the most common outcomes were fewer resources, a worse service to the public and worse ways of working
- **Working hours:** most social work assistants (64%) work office hours; 10% work flexi-time and 9% work shifts
- **Hours:** 57% of social work assistants are contracted to work between 35 and 39.9 hours each week; this fell to 33% when it came to actual hours
- **Overtime:** social work assistants work 4 hours' paid overtime a week on average, and 4.3 hours of unpaid overtime; they take 3.2 hours' TOIL a week on average
- **Work extra hours at short notice:** just over a fifth (21%) of social work assistants are asked to work extra hours at short notice most days or every week; 12% reported it occurring every month; and 44% reported that it occurred less than monthly
- **Workload:** 41% of social work assistants report they have too much work to do; 54% report they have the right amount of work
- **Experience:** social work assistants tend to be very experienced with three-quarters (75%) employed in local government for ten years or more
- **Training:** 30% of social work assistants reported having received between 1 and 3 days' training in the past 12 months; 36% said they received between 4 and 10 days' training, and 17% said they received no training
- **Staff shortages:** some 43% of social work assistants reported staff shortages most days or every week; 22% said these were monthly, and 24% less often; 11% said they never experienced staff shortages
- **Changes in working area in last 12 months:** some 75% of social work assistants reported their workload had increased; 75% also said stress levels had increased and 82% said employers' expectations had increased
- **Morale:** 69% said morale was worse compared to a year ago; 24% said it was the same, and only 7% felt it had improved
- **Stress:** more social work assistants tended to agree or agreed strongly (55% in total) that stress was affecting their work, than those who tended to disagree/disagreed strongly; a more pronounced pattern was seen for the effect of stress on personal life, with a total of 63% in the agree or agree strongly categories

- **Job changes:** 62% said they had considered leaving their employer over the past year, with 55% actively looking for a job, though only 41% are looking in the same area
- **Improvements to the service:** social work assistants believed protecting pay and conditions (57%), job security guarantees (55%) and better funding for local government (36%) were the three most important measures that would help staff improve the service
- **Safety at work:** over half (52%) reported receiving verbal threats from service users, and over a fifth (21%) reported receiving physical threats
- **UNISON priorities:** job security, a decent pension, and more pay were the most prominent, followed by equal pay for work of equal value; other key priorities included job-related training, better career opportunities and improved car allowances
- **Debt:** 64% reported indebtedness, with 57% of these owing between £2,000 and £9,999; 15% said they owed £10,000 or more.

Appendix: Recoding of occupational groups

The survey specified over 60 occupations and those responding could also add their own positions, resulting in nearly 300 job titles. In order to be able to analyse the results, we grouped the roles together into the occupational areas shown in the table below.

Occupational category	Job titles
Administrative/clerical	Administrative Assistant Administrative Officer Call Centre Worker Customer Services Director's Personal Assistant (PA) Secretary (not school) Typist/Clerk
Adult care workers	Day-care Worker Residential Adults Care Worker
Built environment professional	Inspector Planning Officer Registration Officer
Chief officer/senior manager	Chief officer/senior manager
Children's care workers	Residential Children's Care Worker
Early year's educator	Early Years Educator/Nursery Nurse Early Years Professional/Teacher
Engineers/architects/surveyors	Architect Building Control Officer Engineer Surveyor
Environmental services	Caretaker (housing) Construction Worker Grounds Maintenance Worker Refuse Collector Road Worker

Occupational category	Job titles
Facilities	Catering worker (not school) Domestic/cleaner (not school) Warden
Finance frontline	Housing Benefits Officer Revenues Collection Worker
Finance professional	Accountant Auditor Finance Officer
Environmental services	Caretaker (housing) Construction Worker Grounds Maintenance Worker Refuse Collector Road Worker
Facilities	Catering worker (not school) Domestic/cleaner (not school) Warden
Finance frontline	Housing Benefits Officer Revenues Collection Worker
Finance professional	Accountant Auditor Finance Officer
General professional	Careers Adviser Human Resources Assistant Human Resources Officer Occupational Therapist Office Manager Training Officer Youth and Community Worker
Homecare staff	Homecare Services Organiser Homecare Worker
IT	IT Data Entry Officer
Libraries	Librarian Library Assistant

Occupational category	Job titles
Local authority professional	Building Officer Economic Development Officer Environmental Health Officer Housing Officer Policy Officer Trading Standards Officer
Other school support roles	Education Welfare Officer School Secretary/Administrator School Technician Welfare Assistant
School Business Manager/Bursar	School Business Manager/Bursar
School support staff	Caretaker (school) School Cleaner School Cook/Supervisor School Crossing Officer School Meals Worker
Social worker	Social worker
Social worker assistant/support	Social worker assistant/support
Teaching classroom assistant	Teaching classroom assistant

