

UNISON – 25 years in local services and schools

UNISON Local Government
Service Group Executive
Annual Report

2017/18

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1. Introduction

Three events during the last year highlighted the devastation wreaked upon local government and the other public services within the Local Government Service Group by Conservative governments since 2010.

The financial collapse of Northamptonshire County Council in February was generated by a combination of Westminster's attacks on local government finance and the Tory council's own misguided attempts to fragment and outsource most of its services, keep council tax low and borrow expensively in private markets. Northamptonshire became the first council in twenty years to be subject to a Section 114 notice and external report from a government appointed inspector, though there are strong rumours that further Tory county councils could also face financial meltdown. With councils facing the loss of 70% of their budgets by 2020, it seems inevitable that this will happen.

Cuts have continued to have a major impact on councils, schools, further education and other parts of the Service Group. Youth services, Sure Start, community resources and most local services – from street lighting to highways maintenance, nurseries to parks. We have worked closely with the Shadow Communities and Local Government and Housing teams over the last year to highlight the impact of the cuts.

The unheralded demise of Carillion in January demonstrated just how right UNISON has been to oppose privatisation as a poor use of public money since Compulsory Competitive Tendering was introduced by Thatcher in 1981. The lack of scrutiny of the tendering and outsourcing process was brought to the fore once more as one of the largest private sector 'providers' showed just how vulnerable our members and our public services can be in private hands.

The good news is that increasing recognition of the limitations of privatisation has initiated a steady and growing trickle of in-sourcing, evidenced by ongoing research by APSE – the Association for Public Service Excellence. Councils and other employers are realising that there is little scope for change within contracts and service delivery is not always of the required standard. The Service Group is continuing to produce guidance and advice for branches on the dangers of privatisation and creation of arms length bodies and on good procurement practice.

The Grenfell disaster preceded our 2017 conference by a few days, but has inevitably dominated the news on housing throughout the year, along with the growing housing and homelessness crisis. Outsourcing of key safeguarding functions within housing, weak scrutiny of building materials and design – along with failure to listen to tenants – have been highlighted as critical factors in the Grenfell tragedy and issues which are of vital importance to all tenants across the UK. The Local Government Service Group is stepping up our work on housing. We held a seminar with the Community Service Group and our Policy team in May at which John Healey MP, Shadow Housing Minister, spoke and will participate in regular meetings of a housing interest group initiated by the seminar.

Social care remains high on the Local Government Service Group and public agenda, with lack of funding and pressures on poorly treated care workers the critical issues in what is an increasingly challenging environment. The Service Group has continued to put pressure on local authorities as the commissioners of the majority of care services and highlight the damage caused by the almost-wholesale outsourcing of social care. Our campaign to make the Government issue regulations on payslips to ensure that care workers are able to monitor whether they are being paid the National Living Wage met with some success this year.

41 councils across the UK have now signed up to our Ethical Care Charter – up from twenty five last year – along with seven independent providers. It continues to be quoted and held up as a standard for home care. The Service Group's Residential Care Charter has now been launched, aiming to achieve better care through better treatment of staff, like the Ethical Care Charter in homecare. So far only Southampton council has agreed to sign up to it and we will be looking at ways to generate more interest over the coming year. The pressure generated by the funding shortfall and the questionable business models of some care providers is creating further uncertainty in the whole social care 'market'. We have worked with the Centre for Health and Public Interest over the year to look at the impact of privatisation on care and will continue to argue for the best use of public money in this vital service.

Social work continues to be a target for the Westminster government, which is hell-bent on reforming it without proper funding. The Service

Group is working closely with the branches in councils identified as pilots for the National Assessment and Accreditation System (NAAS) and continues to oppose it as an unnecessary burden on social workers. We are also actively involved in Social Work England, the new Regulator for England. In Scotland, the Social Work Issues Group (SWIG) has carried out important work on the response of social workers to the needs of refugees and migrants and continues to be an important focus for our social work members in Scotland. We are actively resisting moves to privatise social work into trusts wherever they occur.

As more and more councils face the shut-down of non-statutory services in order to fund social care and other statutory provision, they are forced to draw on reserves to stay afloat and look at means of income generation. Across the UK our Regions and branches are putting up a great fight against austerity. They have continued to lobby councillors, MPs and Ministers for adequate funding for local services, amplified by our Save Our Local Services (SOS) and Public Works campaigns in the UK and Scotland. We have developed an ambitious programme of further campaigning for this year, taking the fight against austerity to politicians across the UK in a co-ordinated programme of local lobbying. Our SOS day this year focussed on libraries – with great local support – and we are following this up with work on the use of volunteers to replace library staff and a joint union demonstration later in the year.

The Government's 1% pay cap has formally been lifted, although the lack of additional funding for improved pay offers makes the move somewhat hollow. Pay offers for sectors within the Local Government Service Group have varied significantly, with NJC workers in councils, schools and academies being offered a two-year deal for 2018-2020, which includes a 15.65% increase on the bottom rate and a 2% increase for the higher paid in each year. The bottom rate will now be £9 an hour from 1 April 2019. For the first time in some time, this means the NJC bottom rate will be higher than in several other sectors – and well ahead of the National Living Wage. This offer was accepted by members. CQC and FSA members fared less well, with offers hardly exceeding the 1% 'envelope'. There will be a concerted push within our sectors for much higher offers next year – and increased funding to pay for them!

Education services across the UK have continued to feel the chill wind of austerity. Ministers have heralded increased funding, whilst ignoring soaring pupil numbers and increased additional costs that have bitten into budgets. UNISON joined with sister unions and parent groups to campaign for increased funding, which was estimated to have made around three

quarters of a million voters change their votes in the summer general election.

Governments continue to meddle with structures, with Scotland the latest to suggest governance changes that would weaken the role of local authorities in overseeing schools. Academy conversions began to slow down and UNISON managed to fight off a number of potentially destructive restructurings in Multi Academy Trusts. Workload, pupil health needs and the role of support staff working with pupils with additional and special needs were high on issues raised by members. UNISON also launched a recruitment campaign called 'join the experts' which highlighted our role as the leading support staff union.

The SGE has continued to maintain a clear focus on the issues of real concern to members – especially fighting privatisation and outsourcing of all kinds, campaigning for decent pay deals, making the case for fair and decent funding for councils and schools and ensuring an equality and UK perspective in everything we do. We have tried to work as closely as possible with lay and paid officials in other Service Groups, the Membership Participation Unit and in the Regions to ensure that what we do hits the spot and reflects the diversity of the workforce and the changing public service landscape. Although recruitment has risen, attacks on jobs continue to result in a net loss of membership, but we are holding our own. Massive thanks goes to each and every one of you for keeping the union strong and ready to fight for members in these, the toughest of times. Hopefully, local government will have more Labour councils by the time Conference comes around and we will have taken some real strides towards a new government in Westminster – for the many, not the few!

We will continue to support your campaigns and listen to your views and those of service users. The survival of our communities, our public services and our union is under threat, but together we can ensure that UNISON remains a well organised, dynamic union, which reflects the needs of its majority – women – alongside those of its minorities too. The Local Government SGE will ensure that the views and ideas of members in all of our sectors are fed into the 25th anniversary review and that our structures and resources continue to reflect our policies, the needs of our members and a union fit for whatever the future holds.

Glen Williams
Heather Wakefield
Jon Richards

2. Local Government Service Group Executive

2.1 Local Government Finance

UNISON has continued to provide branches with information and analysis of the latest developments in local government finance across the UK.

The Local Government Finance Settlements for England, Wales and Scotland were published at the start of 2018, bringing more bad news for local councils. Despite lobbying efforts, including from a number of Conservative MPs, which led to an extra £166m being added to the final Local Government Finance Settlement in England, the failure to address the damage caused by years of austerity means that councils in England will face an overall funding gap of more than £5bn by 2020. Central government funding to councils in England has fallen back almost 50% over the last eight years.

Councils have been given the 'freedom' to raise council tax by an extra 1% without triggering a local referendum on the issue. However, this move would only raise up to £540m in 2019/20 if all councils take this step in both 2018/19 and 2019/20. Councils with lower council tax bases, often those areas with higher levels of need for council services, are naturally disadvantaged by this policy.

Many local authorities in England are having to rely on using their reserves to fund local services and are overspending on services, which is not financially sustainable. A report published in 2018 by the National Audit Office revealed that if local authorities with social care responsibilities keep using their reserves at current rates, one in ten could have exhausted them within three years.

There is a similar picture in Scotland. The draft financial settlement was improved by the injection of an additional £170m, but councils across Scotland were left needing an extra £375m just to stand still in 2018/19. Councils in Wales also face a shortfall in funding for the next two years. Core funding for local government has reduced by nearly £800m, or 20%, since 2011-12.

The consequences of the cuts are now more visible than ever before. Early 2018 saw the first council in England in almost twenty years file a section 114 notice, as Northamptonshire Council announced that it was unable to balance its budget. Subsequently it had to pass a budget in which over £40m of cuts were made to vital public services. A graphic

illustration of the consequences of the dire financial situation in the area was the admission by the director of adult social care at the council that the department was on the "edge of being unsafe", with 2,000 vulnerable adults in the county still waiting to be assigned a social worker.

UNISON has emphasised that whilst central government cuts have certainly contributed to the problem, the council's reckless policy of seeking to outsource all its services greatly exacerbated the financial challenges they are facing. The branch has been provided with support from both the region and the Service Group.

The grim financial outlook for councils across the UK has highlighted the importance of putting more pressure upon governments to invest significantly more money into local councils. UNISON issued a report in advance of the budget in November 2017 calling for the billions of pounds that the Westminster Government has centrally retained from business rates to be reinvested into local government services. UNISON will continue to make this call throughout 2018 in advance of the next budget.

The Service Group is planning on providing training across every region on local government finance issues in order to help equip branches and regions with the ability to better understand the subject area, to analyse and challenge any proposed cuts to budgets, and help find alternatives.

2.2 Campaigning Against the Cuts

In summer 2017 the SGE agreed a new project to steer its work campaigning against the Government's continuing massive cuts in local authority funding. Through this project, we have produced guidance on cuts and income generation; written to all council chief executives to highlight alternative approaches they might take; sent briefings to all councillors on the local government finance settlement and our views on it; developed work with outside bodies like APSE; and produced tailored campaign and lobbying materials aimed at specific groups of 'target Tory' and 'target Labour' MPs. We have also worked closely with Labour, and have been a major influence on what is now clear Labour Party policy to end the local government cuts and, crucially, to develop a new and sustainable future funding system for local authorities.

In spring 2018, we launched a major programme of lobbying of politicians on local government cuts. The aim is to encourage UNISON members across the UK to lobby their local MPs in their local areas (for example at their surgeries) on the state of local government – the lack of funding, and the crisis this is causing for working people and service users. At the time of writing, materials were being prepared to support members to do this, and a survey was being prepared to pick up more detailed evidence on the impact of cuts on our members.

SOS campaign

The Save Our Local Services (SOS) Campaign focused on libraries this year, highlighting the massive cuts to library services across the UK, the widespread use of volunteers, loss of expert and qualified staff and the worrying expansion of unstaffed libraries. Social media campaigning kicked off in March and the campaign was formally launched at Local Government Conference. Positive stories, case studies and quotes were collected and a video was created to show the importance and value of libraries and library workers for publicity use.

The campaign was heavily promoted on social media during the Conference which had a significant impact on the SOS campaign’s social media presence, particularly on Twitter. Over the two days of Conference, Twitter users saw SOS tweets over 14,000 times, almost triple the normal reach in one month.

UNISON built on the SOS campaign’s online presence contributing to SOS blogs on library cuts and encouraging members to tell us their own library stories with articles promoting the campaign featured across UNISON’s activist and membership media.

A briefing and range of materials were produced to support branches to make the most of the campaign.

In the run up to SOS Libraries Day, UNISON wrote to MPs calling for:

- The Government to review how it allocates funding to ensure that properly resourced library services can be delivered
- The Government to enforce the requirement in law for local authorities to provide a “comprehensive and efficient” library service
- A real living wage and equal pay for all local government workers, with proper training and development opportunities
- Councils to ring-fence funding for library services in the long-term and to stop outsourcing the management of libraries to volunteer groups or

private companies

- Councils to maintain an adequate level of resources and paid library professionals instead of relying on volunteers to run library services.

SOS Libraries Day was held on 19 October and saw branches across the UK organising events, celebrating libraries, setting up stalls and encouraging members of the public to join their library. Activities included branches encouraging the public, UNISON members and councillors to sign and promote petitions, paying for advertisements in the local press to encourage the public to engage in library consultations, and using the day to register formal objections to library consultations with council leaders. Branches also held ‘librarithons’, taking the opportunity to visit all the libraries in their regions on the day or across several days, even when this involved covering large geographical rural areas. Branches also used the opportunity to recruit new members.

Events took place across Eastern, East Midlands, Northern, South East, South West, Scotland, Cymru/ Wales, West Midlands and Yorkshire and Humberside.

The campaign’s profile on social media was significantly increased through heavy promotion on Facebook and Twitter, with support from UNISON health branches, women’s groups, the public, library campaigners, local politicians and bookshops evident.

In 2018, the SOS campaign will have a cross-service focus, primarily highlighting and campaigning against the cuts to local government funding and the need for central Government to significantly increase the money available to local councils.

2.3 Anti-Privatisation and Service Delivery

Privatisation and outsourcing are increasingly discredited. The collapse of Carillion has further enhanced the view that privatising public services not only undermines workers’ pay, terms and conditions, but also represents the massive waste of public resources. The failure of so many private contracts, in conjunction with a politically driven austerity agenda, has broken the neo-liberal consensus of “private good, public bad”.

Up and down the country, councils are bringing services back in-house, from whatever political persuasion, to save money and to end the in-built inflexibility of private contracts, where the slightest change involves extra cost. An example of this inflexibility is the waste disposal contract in the London Borough of Redbridge, where the current Amey contract is to be brought back in-house because it does not allow for food waste.

In Blackpool, the waste contract with Onyx will be brought back in-house when it runs out in 2019 because there is no flexibility to collect Christmas trees or cardboard. The council says the contract costs them £3.8m and they can deliver it better for £3.5m and pay staff the real Living Wage, with all the money staying in the community. At West Sussex County Council, some back-office functions are being brought back in-house from Capita, including supervised contact administration, recruitment and HR management – small, but welcome, especially in the multi-agency safeguarding hub that deals with children and young people.

The Smith Institute launched a new report in January this year, ‘Out of contract: Time to move on from the “love-in” with outsourcing and PFI’. The report calls for an immediate “pause” in contracting out across the public sector, as well as a new public regulator to oversee an audit of existing contracts to be named the “Domesday Book”. The report also highlights that services to the value of £100bn are contracted out, but no one checks the success, failure or indeed performance of these contracts. The report states “we...have a yawning information deficit on how outsourcing and PFI impacts on employees and wider society.”

The National Audit Office has also published a report that assesses the costs of the impact of the Private Finance Initiative (PFI) named, “PFI and PF2”. The key findings state:

- There are currently over 700 existing PFI and PF2 projects, worth £60bn with little evidence indicating any financial benefit to the public
- If new PFI deals cease to be signed, the current and future deals will continue for a minimum of 25 years at a cost of £199bn to the Government, i.e. our money
- The cost of privately financing public projects can be 40% higher than using government money
- PFIs are a dereliction of public value for money.

The collapse of Carillion has been major news. Carillion went into compulsory liquidation with debts of £900m and has some outsourced local government contracts. Local authorities are now placed in a very difficult position against a severe crisis in local government funding, created by the Government in the form of austerity. Some local authority contracts such as school catering, library management and general cleaning services with Carillion have been brought back in-house.

Then there is Northamptonshire County Council. A Conservative-run authority which has been the first council to fail. Three years ago, UNISON warned the

council that its attempts to privatise every service to four companies, including to a social enterprise and a mutual would result in a financial crisis. The chief executive refused to listen. However, he received a £95,000 pay-off but our members will see their pay frozen and the council will have a £21.1m gap in income to expenditure for this year alone.

Northamptonshire has also been issued with a section 114 notice under the Local Government Finance Act 1988. No other local authority has been issued with such a notice for 20 years.

We continue to fight against any attempt to spin-out local authority services to public sector mutuals including co-operatives. We are also involved in the Community Wealth Building Unit, organised by Jeremy Corbyn’s office which is looking at how wealth can be retained in local communities.

2.4 Recruitment and Organisation

There were around 587 thousand members in the Local Government Service Group across the UK in January 2018.

UNISON recruited 63,859 new members in the Local Government Service Group in 2017 – a 3% increase on the previous year. This means that 11% of our members had been recruited in the last year.

As in recent years, we lost more members than we gained, with 83,254 members leaving the service group in 2017. But the number of leavers fell by 7% compared to 2016, and as the Government’s massive cuts in local authority funding continue to bite, this is a major achievement by our branches and regions, and a direct result of their work recruiting, organising, training, representing and negotiating.

Of the Local Government members who joined in 2017, 35% are schools members, and 23% work in the private sector. Of the members who left the union in 2016, 36% were from schools and 14% were private sector members.

At the time of writing, UNISON had around 8,500 stewards in the Local Government Service Group. This represents a 6% drop compared to 12 months earlier, following a 7% drop this time last year. Similarly, there are 2,093 health and safety reps and 4,346 workplace contacts in the Service Group – less than a year earlier. It is clear that there is an urgent need to arrest the decline in membership participation. The service group knows that branches are increasingly struggling to organise and represent members, as facility time is tightened and members are more and more wary of getting involved.

43% of our health and safety reps, 54% of stewards, and 78% of workplace contacts are women. The role

of the workplace contact is clearly crucial as a first step in trade union activism for women members, and it is vital that we encourage more workplace contacts to become accredited stewards, if our activist base is to be representative of our predominantly female membership.

The SGE's Recruitment and Organising Working Group has met regularly over the last year. It received discussions on presentations on activist training and development, the North West region's social care organising project, and organising Black workers in fragmented workforces. The group also conducted a survey of branches, regions and Self-Organised Groups, on the support offered by the service group for recruitment and organising. The consensus was that the volume of materials, the mix of hard copy and electronic materials, and the mix of materials for different audiences were all about right, but that more occupation-specific materials would be welcomed. Following discussion at the SGE, the group agreed to produce new materials focusing on youth work, admin workers and social care.

Facility time continues to be a major concern for local government branches, as local authorities cut the time allowed and place more restrictions on how it can be used. Stewards are finding it increasingly difficult to use facility time in privatised and outsourced areas.

In 2017, the Government published the Trade Union (Facility Time Publication Requirements) Regulations, aimed at implementing the restrictions contained in the Trade Union Act 2016. The regulations set out the requirements for employers to publish annually the amount of facility time used by local trade unions. At the time of writing, the Government was consulting on draft guidance on the regulations, and UNISON has responded via the TUC. Meanwhile, in January 2018 UNISON published substantially revised guidance on facility time, including detailed advice on how to deal with the regulations. In particular, the guide makes clear what does not need to be reported, and what to do if employers seek to collect too much detail. The guide also contains a model facility time agreement.

The SGE also worked with the Labour Group of the Local Government Association to promote facility time – they worked with us to write and put out a clear message of support for facility time on its circular to all Labour Councillors.

The SGE has continued to monitor and raise the issue of the resources available to branches whose facility time has been cut, making clear the scale of the problem for many local government branches.

Also as a result of the Trade Union Act, UNISON has had to make arrangements with all public sector employers to pay a 'reasonable fee' to continue DOCAS arrangements. This work has been ongoing for some time. The Local Government SGE has discussed various issues around the sign-up process and received reports on progress.

2.5 Equalities

The Local Government Service Group continue to work with the Self Organised Groups and National Young Members Forum to gather information on the impact and extent of cuts to jobs, pay and conditions in local government in order to publicise and monitor the impact cuts are having on protected groups.

As part of this work, the Service Group has continued to assist branches in using equality legislation and principles to challenge cuts to jobs, pay, terms and conditions, and proposals to change how services are delivered. We continue to advise branches that employers should carry out Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) to demonstrate that they have shown "due regard" under the General Equality Duty and to assist them in doing so.

We also advise branches that NJC guidance advises authorities to have regard to equality standards and use the Equality Framework for Local Government (England) and the Equality Improvement Framework (Wales), both of which promote EIAs. It is the experience of the Service Group that most authorities are conducting EIAs on changes to terms and conditions of employment, thanks to the efforts of the Local Government team, branches and Regions.

In September 2017 we published a new guide to using the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) to fight local government cuts. This guide aims to help UNISON activists and organisers to campaign more effectively against cuts, attacks on pay and conditions and discrimination by councils and other public service employers, by using the PSED. It can be ordered from stockorders@unison.co.uk, stock number 3814.

The guide can also be read online at <https://www.unison.org.uk/content/uploads/2017/09/24577.pdf>.

The Service Group Executive has worked with the National Black Members' Committee on the issue of bullying and harassment of Black workers and the challenges posed for organising Black workers in fragmented workforces, and at the time of writing a survey and subsequent follow-up work were planned.

The Local Government Service Group has worked closely with the other Service Groups over the last year on the issue of mental health. We helped

produce comprehensive UNISON guidance on mental health, and also an information sheet containing sources of further, more specialist support. These publications have been widely publicised among branches and regions.

The Local Government and Self Organised Groups Liaison group continues to meet twice a year, so that the Service Group Executive and Self-Organised Groups can discuss developments relating to equalities in local government, and practical measures to improve the way we represent, organise and campaign on equality issues.

3. Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS)

The last year saw additional pressures on local government pensions as employers looked to reduce costs and get out of their obligations. Nonetheless UNISON made some significant progress in key policy areas.

UNISON carbon disinvestment campaign

UNISON launched a campaign to encourage local government pension funds to divest from carbon based industries (they invested around £16 billion in 2017) which have been linked to climate change. A joint report with ShareAction should help LGPS members to push funds to go carbon-free. The campaign highlights reasons why continued investment in carbon threatens the value of pension funds. For example, new government regulations for fossil fuels have raised the costs of high-polluting industries and reduced their investment appeal. Equally, emerging clean and green technology has created new and lucrative business opportunities for funds. The campaign has been widely reported and resonated with a wide audience and began influencing the agenda.

Investment and governance

UNISON demands for transparency of costs for members' pension schemes have led to the introduction of codes of transparency for the LGPS schemes in England/Wales and Scotland, and for improvements for members in defined contribution (DC) pension schemes. Currently the lack of cost transparency allows fund managers to conceal some charges, which add additional costs to employers and members and mean pension funds have trouble measuring their investment performance. New codes will provide transparent data for all LGPS pension funds to allow them to judge value for money. In defined contribution schemes, new legislation from April 2018 has given unions the right to obtain hidden cost data which will allow us to bargain for improvements.

The Scottish Local Government Pension Scheme will start its valuation a year after the England and Wales scheme. The S13 dry run and Audit Scotland overview showed that the scheme is in good health. The Scheme Advisory Board has prepared an options paper for a review of the structure of funds in Scotland and this will be followed by a formal consultation this spring. The options range from

greater collaboration between the eleven funds, to a full merger. An external governance review leaves the current structure of pension boards in place with trade union representatives occupying all the member places. It also recommended strengthening communication and training. Pension campaigns include work on fossil fuel divestment and cost transparency.

In England/Wales the eight investment pools began operation during Spring 2018. Increased pressure from UNISON saw increasing numbers of pools accepting the need to have member representatives on governing structures.

LGPS cost pressures

Analysis and consequential action following the 2016 triennial evaluation results continue. A notable cost pressures was the lower than expected take up of the 50:50 option. There have been concerns that only 5% of the membership take up this offer, when the original cost model aimed for 10%. However it seems that most taking it up are higher paid and so the overall saving may be nearer to the target. Nonetheless a joint awareness campaign was launched to make sure members know of the option. At the time of writing there was little pressure to change member contributions

Ill health retirement

UNISON continued to push for the harmonisation of the England and Wales scheme with the Scotland and Northern Ireland schemes and move to two tiers/ levels of ill health retirement rather than three. If agreed the legislative log jam caused by Brexit could delay potential regulations and so changes to statutory guidance would be looked at.

Employer opt outs and Fair Deal

An increasing number of employers tried to sidestep their LGPS obligations. Some employers (notably universities, colleges) who are required to offer the LGPS because they are 'scheduled bodies' in the regulations sought to set up arms length companies and offer new employees inferior DC arrangements. We are getting far more cases including from post 92 universities, colleges and academies. UNISON is confronting actuarial companies actively assisting employers leave the LGPS.

UNISON also challenging employers ignoring previously issued government directions for employers taking over contracts to provide a comparable scheme to the LGPS (or continued membership of the LGPS) and considering whether members can take cases to the Pensions Ombudsman for compensation. New updated Fair Deal Regulations continue to be subject to legislative delay.

4. Education and Children's Services

The UK education sector had another year of budget cuts, restructuring and outsourcing as austerity continued to bite. Despite higher recruitment than in many previous years, increased job losses across the sector led to a small overall fall in UNISON's education membership.

The National Education Union

Several months of discussions produced a TUC agreement to restrict recruitment of school support staff by the new teaching union the NEU. Based on the 2003 TUC agreement with the ATL the new version was strengthened to cover academies and guarantees that the NEU will not produce recruitment materials targeting school support staff in publicly funded schools. The NEU was asked to make staff and reps were clear about the agreement. A few early breaches of the agreement were dealt with satisfactorily, with a couple taking longer to investigate.

Minded that the launch of the NEU and their predatory introductory membership offer might still persuade support staff to join them, UNISON produced a series of materials and guidance from the start of the Autumn term. The materials were based on the theme 'join the experts', which stressed UNISON's history, knowledge and expertise in representing support staff.

Education funding

Concerted campaigning by unions, parents and communities forced UK governments to find ways to maintain or increase school budgets and some early years funding, but FE, and adult learning continued to suffer.

Funding in Cymru/Wales was estimated at £843 per pupil per year worse than England in 2017. The Wales government committed to narrowing this gap by increasing funding for schools by 1% above the council block grant, but cuts to the grant meant slower progress than aimed for.

The joint union/parents school funding cuts coalition in England was estimated to have persuaded around 750,000 to change their vote in the election. As a result the government transferred £1.3 billion into school funding; some to top up the new National Funding Formula (NFF) so that no school would face cuts as a result of the changes. Nonetheless, other

additional costs will mean the vast majority of schools will suffer real terms funding shortages. The joint union school cuts campaign, held a successful rally/lobby on the 24th November and got considerable media coverage with new data on job losses in early 2018.

UNISON worked with the Northern Ireland Committee of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions on a campaign to secure additional resources, achieve better pay and defend education workers against austerity. Post election the expected £105 million cut to education was offset by money secured under the deal to shore up the Tory government; so schools budgets will be maintained in cash terms. UNISON pressed for greater transparency in the NI Education Funding Formula.

UNISON Scotland continued to campaign for the Scottish government to improve funding of local authorities to increase funding for schools following our research that showed that 20% of school support staff posts had gone since 2010.

Advice on the potential for industrial action in schools relating to funding was discussed at the NJC and schools committee. It was noted that any industrial action would have to satisfy the conditions to meet a legal trade dispute and would need to be based on pay and conditions issues legislation. This advice related to England and Wales, due to specific legislation. The NJC and Schools committees agreed to keep open the possibilities for action.

Despite the government making noises about the need to improve technical and professional skills there were no significant improvements in funding for the FE sector in the Autumn budget. A few small pockets of funding were found: £20 million money for T-level preparation; Unionlearn funding was secured and £30 million set aside for a new scheme on digital skills.

Education policy and governance

A new apprenticeship levy for large employers was introduced across the UK. In England additional major changes to apprenticeships saw numbers decline due to employer confusion. UNISON carried out a survey of apprenticeships across public services looking at rates of pay, contractual arrangements, impact on other jobs and job substitution. UNISON also launched an Apprenticeships Charter in June 2017, which was taken up by a number of employers.

A post election government re-shuffle saw most of

the education ministerial team in England changed. The new Secretary of State Damian Hinds took a low profile. Early speeches suggested an interest in character education, technology, skills, and grammar and faith schools.

The government established fifteen routes for apprenticeships and proposed new 'T;' Levels designed to create an alternative qualification and career options to 'A' levels. The FE and the skills sector should play a major role in the new system. In February 2018 the government announced a review of post-18 education funding in England, which UNISON responded to. In March 2018 the Minister for Skills announced a separate review of 16-18 education funding in England.

In Scotland despite overwhelming opposition the Scottish government decided to press ahead with changes to governance structures and transfer a number of local authority responsibilities to Head teachers and regional bodies. UNISON Scotland expressed particular concerns at moves to undermine the role of local government in schools. UNISON also responded to government consultations on: a Ten Year Strategy for the Learning Provision for Children: Young People with Complex Additional Support Needs 2017-2026 and Poverty and attainment.

UNISON Scotland welcomed new government guidance 'Supporting children and young people with healthcare needs in schools'. This clarified roles and responsibilities between health service and schools, making clear that medical needs are primarily the duty of NHS boards and staff undertaking healthcare tasks must be satisfied that they are confident and competent to carry out tasks. UNISON Scotland issued a briefing highlighting key bargaining issues and the need for extensive partnership working to ensure that relevant agreements are agreed.

In Cymru/Wales UNISON began assessing the potential impact on support staff of the devolution of teachers' terms and conditions from Westminster. Focus has been on the potential negative impacts on support staff from agreements such as the Teacher Workload Agreement.

UNISON training and education

UNISON's Learning and Organising Services re-designed their training offer for regions and branches. Over 350 members took part in UNISON Wales' and the Open University's professional development programme for school support staff in 2017. Eighteen courses were due there in the first half of 2018 and they continued to be an effective recruitment tool.

The national school seminar in Gateshead saw over 150 delegates discuss behaviour management, pupil health needs, organising in schools, pensions and apprenticeships; feedback was very positive. In September over 100 delegates attended UNISON Cymru/Wales's school support staff seminar addressed by the Education Minister, who reassured delegates that the government valued them.

Early years

Unions and employers continued to challenge governments' (notably England and Scotland) proposals to increase free childcare hours for parents, whilst underfunding providers and underestimating staff numbers necessary.

The report 'Education at a Glance: OECD Indicators' showed the importance of investing in early years. The educational outcomes of 15-year-olds were linked to the quality of provision and length of attendance in an early setting. The report found that accessing provision for over two years is associated with positive outcomes later in life.

An independent report sponsored by UNISON Scotland 'Early Learning and Childcare' confirmed the link between staff qualifications and performance. However it also broke the myth that teachers have the best impact on outcomes. The report noted that best outcomes came from settings with a range of staff with complementary skills and that those services led by early year's staff offered as good and comparable a service as those run by teachers.

In England a report by Ofsted 'Bold Beginnings' that recommended introducing school style teaching practice into early years settings, received a hostile reception. Most international research suggests play based learning is best for very young children and in many European countries school does not start until pupils are aged 6 or 7. UNISON co-signed an open letter with 20+ other leading early years' organisations and unions, highlighting our concerns.

UNISON worked with the Families and Childcare Trust on developing future funding and workforce models for the early years workforce that properly reflect their professionalism and the demands of their work. An analysis of the Family and Childcare Trust annual survey of childcare costs has shown that they have increased by over a third for most parents over recent years. Backing up UNISON's campaign a Sutton Trust report showed that more than 1,000 (30%) of Sure Start children's centres had closed over the last few years.

There are additional reports on further education, Ofsted, careers and schools later in this annual report.

5. Sector Committee Reports

5.1 NJC Committee

UNISON, GMB and Unite submitted the 2018 NJC pay claim to the Local Government Association (LGA) in June 2017. The claim called for the deletion of NJC Spinal Column Points (SCP) 6-9 to reach the Foundation Living Wage of £8.45 (UK) and £9.75 (London) and a 5% increase on all NJC pay points.

The claim ran alongside the NJC pay spine review triggered by the introduction of the National Living Wage and the voluntary adoption of the Foundation Living Wage by over 200 councils. This has led to compression at the bottom of the pay spine but there is joint recognition between the LGA and unions that the NJC pay spine needed revising and 'cleaning up'.

The LGA began their consultation exercise with the intention of responding by late September 2017. They then decided to await the Chancellor's autumn statement before making a pay offer. UNISON used this period to maximize political pressure on council and school staff employers, along with meeting Government and Shadow Ministers to press the case for funding the NJC claim and pay spine review. A model pay motion to councils was agreed with GMB and Unite.

The NJC pay offer was received on 5 December 2017 and was the product of significant political campaigning and strong support from the LGA Labour Group and the Shadow Cabinet. The key features of the offer are:

- A two-year offer from 1 April 2018 – 31 March 2020
- A new NJC pay spine from 1 April 2019
- Cumulative increases on scp's 6-28 range from 15.65% to 4.32%
- Cumulative increase on scp's 29 and above is 4.04%

Given the complexity of the offer, the UNISON NJC Committee deferred making a recommendation to members on it until after Regional pay briefings were held. The Committee then met on 23 January 2018 to agree UNISON's position. In a vote of 12:11, the NJC Committee decided to recommend that members reject the pay offer. The Committee felt the offer fell short the unions' claim – but recognised the offer was the best that could be achieved by

negotiation and that nothing short of substantial, all-out strike action could make the employers consider improving their final offer.

UNISON consulted members on the offer – through branches – between the end of January and beginning of March 2018. GMB and Unite consulted their members by postal ballot during the same period. Unite recommended members reject the offer, while GMB left the decision to members.

UNISON's NJC Committee met again on 16 March, to look at the consultation results, which were:

- 50.44% of members voted to reject the offer
- 48.66% voted to accept (with 0.89% of ballots spoilt)
- 165 branches (68.18%) voted to accept the offer
- Three Regions – Greater London, North West and South East – voted to reject the offer
- All other Regions voted to accept it

Since the offer was very narrowly rejected overall, but accepted by the majority of branches and Regions, the Committee reluctantly agreed to amend its recommendation to acceptance of the pay offer.

The Committee agreed to seek feedback from those branches who had responded to the consultation, asking them: 'Do you agree with the NJC Committee's revised decision to accept the 2018-20 NJC pay offer: Yes /No.' Branches were not asked to re-consult members on the pay offer, but to seek member feedback on the NJC Committee's question. (At the time of writing the feedback response is unknown. Unite has rejected the pay offer, while have GMB accepted.)

Whatever the outcome, it is very clear from the Regional pay briefings that a minority of current organisers and activists have been trained in job evaluation and pay and grading. Both will be crucial to the roll-out of any second-year assimilation proposals and ongoing equal pay considerations. The Service Group is therefore planning a further round of Regional training on job evaluation and pay and grading this spring/summer.

UNISON has made it clear to the LGA that we will want to return to cleaning up the whole NJC pay spine and extending it.

In August, the NJC and Wales Chairs teams met to scope the work needed to report back to Conference on the remitted 2017 Local Government Conference motion 7 – National Pay Bargaining for Wales/a Welsh NJC. It was agreed the report to Conference should cover the following dimensions:

- Social policy
- Political and industrial dimensions including membership density and potential for industrial action
- Bargaining power – what will Wales NJC get from the Welsh Assembly
- The relationship each Welsh council has with its unions
- An analysis of Welsh pay and grading structures
- Variations in cost of living indicators in Wales
- What bargaining institutions would look like for Wales and England/Northern Ireland, including checks and balances
- How devolution can make us stronger – rather than lead to internal markets between nations
- How the LGA and NJC can take more account of devolution
- If Wales stays in the NJC what scope there is to make the NJC work better for Wales – with the WLGA etc having greater input?

It was recognised that realistically the research could not be completed in time to submit a final report to conference 2018. A full report will be given to conference 2019 setting out all the considerations and a recommendation on whether to ballot members.

The NJC Term Time Working Group has continued to meet through 2017. The group has drafted guidance on issues affecting term time workers. The Group is currently working on guidance on maternity and other types of parental leave and on sick pay and leave for term time workers. It is hoped that a final version of the guidance will be published later in 2018.

5.2 Scottish Joint Council

SJC pay 2018/19

At the time of writing the pay claim outlined below has been submitted by the SJC Trade Union Side for the period 1 April 2018 to 31st March 2019. The detailed points of the claim are:

- A settlement that runs for the period 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019

- A £1,500 flat rate increase to all spinal column points, or 6.5%, whichever is greater (based on a 37 hour working week). This includes an above inflation increase plus an element of restoration and should be applied after the Scottish Local Government Living Wage increase has taken effect
- An equivalent percentage up-rating of the Scottish Local Government Living Wage (SLGLW), with the SLGLW being used as the minimum pay level for pay and all allowances
- An equivalent percentage or, the median paid where the base salary increase is paid as a flat rate, up-rating of all allowances
- A commitment to redress the imbalance in pay, caused by previous pay awards which have been below the rate of inflation, over a period of not more than 5 years

The trade unions welcome the Scottish Government's stated intention to lift the public sector pay cap for public service workers. Our members, working hard to deliver a good public service in local authorities across the country, should be covered by this commitment. The trade unions argue that an above-inflation increase is therefore both realistic and in line with the Government's stated objective of lifting the pay cap for public sector workers.

The trade unions and COSLA have separately written to the Cabinet Secretary for Finance, pressing him for more money for local government and emphasising the need for parity of treatment across the local authority bargaining groups – members covered by the SJC for local authorities, teachers, craft and chief officials. We have sought negotiations in pursuit of our full claim.

In preparation for organising around our pay campaign an online pay survey was undertaken. Branches excelled in engaging members in the survey, with an amazing return of 9,263 member responses from across the country. At the time of writing the data is still being analysed and will be reported at a forthcoming Scottish Local Government Conference.

5.3 Chief Officers & Senior Managers Committee

The Chief Officers and Senior Managers Committee met three times over the last year.

Pay and conditions

In February 2018, UNISON and the GMB submitted a pay claim on behalf of members covered by the Chief

Officers Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC), for the period from 1 April 2018. The claim was for a substantial cost of living increase, with an expectation of parity with the other bargaining groups in local government, and for a joint survey on workloads and stress. The Employers told us that they would make an offer once the NJC had settled, so at the time of writing we were waiting for that.

The JNC also agreed revisions to the JNC handbook, to reflect changes made to the way the most senior officers are disciplined. The revised handbook has been circulated to all UNISON branches and local authorities.

In February 2018, UNISON published research on chief officers' pay: a detailed comparison of chief executives' salaries with equivalent pay rates in the private sector, and the results of a survey of local authority chief officers on pay, grading and training issues. Among the key findings, UNISON's research revealed that average pay for the 10 sample council chief executives was a fraction of the average pay for the 10 sample FTSE chief executives. The ratio of the highest pay rate to the lowest was 10.5:1 in councils; in the FTSE companies it was 111:1. Meanwhile, only 39% of chief officers believe their council is effective at attracting high calibre people to top jobs, and 72% said this is due to salaries. 40% of senior council officials earn between £40,000 and £60,000 – not the 'gold-plated' salaries that get talked about. The research obtained a lot of coverage in the sector media.

Recruitment and organising

The Chief Officers and Senior Managers Committee submitted a paper to the NEC's Development and Organisation Committee in 2017, on a range of proposals aimed at increasing membership and activism among this group. As a result, it was agreed that the union would produce a series of short briefings for branches and organisers on issues that chief officers and senior managers often experience; to hold a one day seminar for members; and to develop our social media profile among this group.

5.4 Youth & Community Workers Committee

The Youth and Community Workers Committee met three times over the last year.

Pay, conditions and the Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC)

At the time of writing, the Committee were consulting members on the contents of the next pay claim for members covered by the Joint Negotiating

Committee (JNC), for the period from 1 September 2018. The Committee is clear that members need and deserve a pay increase that at least keeps up with RPI inflation, and introduces a real living wage for all youth workers and youth support workers.

The Employers' intentions regarding the future of the JNC are still unclear, and the trade unions on the JNC have continued to stress the importance of retaining the joint professional qualifications framework provided and negotiated by the JNC. While re-structures and cuts in services have led to many local authorities reducing the number of qualified youth workers they employ, and some universities have stopped providing youth work degrees, UNISON has continued to campaign for genuine youth services provided by qualified workers.

Recruitment and organising

Early in 2018 the Service Group Executive selected youth work as one of its focus occupations for new organising materials, and at the time of writing these were in development.

Over the last year, UNISON has embarked on a campaign of recruitment among youth work students, as it is important that we bring students into the union at an early point, and get them involved. This work will be stepped up still further in autumn 2018.

UNISON recently surveyed youth work members on their views on training, skills and development. It is hoped that the results of the survey will be helpful in our campaign to protect and speak up for the youth work profession, and will also help us engage with regional youth work units.

The Youth and Community Workers Committee hopes to visit meetings of youth work members in various UNISON regions in 2018.

Cuts and service delivery

Youth services have continued to be hit hard by the Government's massive cuts in local authority funding. Most local authorities have drastically reduced or outsourced their youth services, and many more have re-structured, combining youth services with other services and providing an increasingly generic multi-disciplinary approach, without any specialist youth service provision.

UNISON has continued to campaign to defend youth services. In summer 2017, we met with the Office for Civil Society to impress on it the damage that government policies on youth services were causing for young people. In November 2017, as part of the Choose Youth coalition we held a parliamentary event, asking politicians to sign up to a pledge to

defend and promote youth services. We played a key role in influencing the Labour Party to change its policy, so that Labour now supports a statutory duty on local authorities to provide youth services, Of course, this will require proper funding.

In Cymru/Wales, in 2017 the remit of the Education Workforce Council was extended so that youth workers and youth support workers are now registered. The Service Group and the Region have continued to monitor how well this has worked and its impact on members, and a report will be produced in due course.

5.5 School Sector Committee

Stars in our Schools

The Schools committee continued to produce materials and guidance to support branches and regions, of note new leaflets and posters called join the experts. The committee also organised another successful Stars in our Schools day, which showed an increase in the number of events across the UK and good involvement from branches, regions, schools and MPs; with excellent coverage on social media and some press. A new social media based campaign week in March 2018 aimed at science technicians called #Techognition (<http://techognition.org>) which UNISON sponsored, was warmly welcomed and supported.

School meals workers

In November 2017 UNISON conducted a survey of all staff working in school kitchens. The survey showed that 21% were on the national minimum wage and that over 40% were in debt due to low pay. A press release received good coverage and provided a breakdown of the survey report to regions to use for local organising.

Cymru/Wales

The majority of Wales' Local Government branches signed up to a fighting fund project for 2018 to provide extra capacity for organising in schools. Fighting fund organisers helped branches get the message about the 2018/20 pay offer into schools, which boosted recruitment and branch participation amongst the schools workforce.

UNISON Cymru Wales also began work on the potential impact on support staff of the decision to devolve teachers' pay and conditions in Wales.

England

UNISON produced a range of campaigning and organising materials for branches and regions to use

in academies. The schools committee oversaw negotiations with 36 national multi-academy trusts (MATs) and was involved in a number of high profile campaigns. One successful dispute was with the David Ross Education Trust over the employer's plans to introduce shared services and put a significant number of members at risk of redundancy. As a result of the dispute and talks at ACAS we secured a commitment to no compulsory redundancies and the protection of all existing terms and conditions.

Two long running disputes came to a head in 2017. Durham members accepted an offer to end their term time dispute, which saw a delayed implementation date and a new career progression board. Unfortunately an agreement in Derby unravelled due to disputed JE evaluations by Hay and the refusal by the council to address annualised hours, so a local school based campaign continued.

UNISON also secured agreements with a number of school employers, which saw them agree to pay significantly higher rates of pay than the legal minimum to their apprentices.

Scotland

After a dispute lasting twenty months, janitors in Glasgow's schools won a 6% pay rise which saw all janitors receive an annual pay increase of £1,184. Job vacancies will be filled, five additional relief posts will be created plus 35 new Senior Janitors who will receive a staged £4,000 annual pay rise over two years.

UNISON Scotland was consulted by the government on the production of guidance on 'Supporting children and young people with healthcare needs in schools'. This clarified roles and responsibilities between NHS and schools and made it clear that school management teams and staff undertaking healthcare tasks must be satisfied that training gives staff sufficient knowledge, understanding confidence and competence to carry out tasks.

Northern Ireland

UNISON along with other unions and organisations made the government reverse its decision to remove uniform grants. A campaign was also mounted against the Education Authority's (EA) plans to close four of the eight existing statutory residential outdoor education centres. Due to the pressure brought to bear by UNISON and allies, in October 2017 the EA announced that the centres would be retained, but will be adapted and developed to extend provision for vulnerable young people for whom specialist services are needed. Whilst welcome this has not fully resolved the issue.

5.6 FE & 6th Form Colleges Committee

Another year of turmoil and UK wide systematic underfunding saw further changes to the FE and skills sector, not least the UK wide introduction of the apprenticeship levy for employers, which provides potential funding opportunities for the sector

Cymru/Wales

The government consulted on proposals for a single body to oversee strategic planning for the post compulsory education and training (PCET) system, following the Hazelkorn and Diamond reviews. UNISON has long campaigned for an integrated and comprehensive post-16 system to redress long-standing imbalances in FE and HE. The merging of different agencies has started discussions about structures and governance to achieve a balance of influences.

UNISON rejected a 1% pay offer for 2017/18, in a consultation ballot, however turnout was lower than hoped for. Whilst UNISON was keen to progress to a statutory ballot the other FE unions voted not to take further action. Effective action was not deliverable without the joint unions campaigning together and taking account of the low turnout, the Cymru/Wales FE Forum decided not to progress to an industrial action ballot. The joint unions were due to decide on the next pay claim by the end of April 2018. UNISON has begun work looking at support staff pay scales.

England

Major and confusing policy changes to apprenticeships saw numbers decline and began to impact on college finances. A UNISON survey on apprenticeships will be used in pay talks with the Association of Colleges. UNISON's apprenticeships charter launched in 2017 was signed up to by some FE colleges. The TUC ran a seminar on apprenticeships at UNISON's 2018 FE seminar.

After negotiations, the employers made a final pay offer of 1% or £250 whichever was greater; a working group on staff training and apprenticeships; a working group on non-lecturer curriculum delivery staff and a recommendation that colleges talk to unions about the Living Wage and reviewing agency use. The employers also committed to joint campaigning with the unions for improved funding for the FE sector.

Following consultation on the offer the FE sector committee agreed a statement: "Following the FE (England) pay consultation the UNISON FE committee considered the outcome. With members having voted to reject the offer, but with responses being varied, the committee decided to proceed by seeking to

pursue disputes on pay on a local college basis in collaboration with sister unions". At the time of writing, discussions continued with some colleges, but no disputes had started.

UNISON continued to campaign on pay, putting in freedom of information requests, producing resources and running sessions at the FE seminar. The pay claim for the 2018/19 year is expected to comprise a percentage increase, a flat rate underpinning and the Foundation Living Wage.

The Area Review process concluded in 2017, but college mergers continued, with 29 in 2017. There were 450 colleges in 1993, but only 273 now. A small number of mergers between FE colleges and universities were also underway. A number of colleges announced significant redundancies, with Hull College the highest, putting 231 FTE posts at risk. UNISON has been working with UCU to avoid job cuts and support members in colleges which are seeking to make job cuts.

The FE seminar in April 2018 was due to be addressed by the FE Commissioner and the President of NUS. New guidance for FE support staff on managing behaviour in colleges was to be launched along with other sessions including tackling low pay; campaigning; promoting good mental health in colleges; term-time working; autism and special needs; and apprenticeships.

Scotland

In June 2017 Colleges Scotland finally made a pay offer of £425 and five additional days annual leave, after much campaigning and hard negotiation by UNISON. This was put out for consultation with a recommendation to accept and was backdated to 1 April 2017. The 2018 pay claim for FE college support staff in Scotland will be for a £1,500 pay rise, Living Wage foundation accreditation in all colleges and for 49 days annual leave.

UNISON campaigned for trade union seats on college governing boards in Scottish colleges and has since been lobbying for this to be implemented. Work is starting on a job evaluation scheme for colleges in Scotland. UNISON representatives are now meeting college employers regularly to progress the harmonisation of national terms and conditions.

Northern Ireland

Direct workforce members are currently covered by a two-year pay deal. This includes discussions on implementation of the award, increases in allowances up to levels paid in other parts of the education sector; a commitment to take account of the review of term time working and a real living wage. A

separate pay claim has been produced for members in privatised services in further education

Sixth form

UNISON members in sixth form colleges received a pay increase of 1%, with additional increases for the lowest paid. Work continues on the joint review of pay and grading arrangements in colleges and it is hoped that the report will be published in 2018. Unfair funding for colleges remains a major issue in the sector and we continue to campaign along with the SFCFA for an improved funding settlement for sixth form colleges.

5.7 Care Quality Commission (CQC) Committee

UNISON continued to represent and negotiate on behalf of CQC members in 2017 and 2018.

Earlier this year UNISON reps secured a very positive outcome for members by convincing the CQC to reverse a decision that would have seen inspectors' names published on inspection reports. Reps successfully argued that the move would have compromised the safety and well-being of inspectors in particular circumstances, and that reports were often not the sole responsibility of one inspector, but were often subject to considerable changes decided upon by others within CQC. UNISON persuaded the CQC that these concerns outweighed the additional transparency that the employer felt the change would have brought.

The fact that the initial proposal was robustly and effectively challenged is down to the responses made by union members, which enabled UNISON and the other unions to challenge the decision. We also thank senior staff for listening to members' concerns and acting on them.

UNISON reps have also supported members through a number of restructures within the organisation and have effectively raised concerns about excessive workloads, particularly within the Adult Social Care directorate. The trade unions have been assured that more staff will be recruited to the directorate over the coming year to help tackle the problem.

Trade union members accepted the pay offer for 2017/18. UNISON members voted 81% in favour of the offer. Aggregated across the other unions (UNITE, RCN and Prospect) 75% of trade union members voted in favour of the offer. The headlines of the pay deal were:

- A 1% progression award – all staff below band maximum who were in post on 1 September 2017 moved up to the next pay point in their band

- A new minimum rate of £8.45 an hour at the bottom of band G – with remaining pay points adjusted to maintain 1% intervals
- A non-consolidated 1% for those who do not get the 1% progression award because they are on the band maximum
- London allowance (which is added on to national pay points) up-rated by 1%
- Operational car user and homeworking allowances both up-rated by 1%

Whilst a few new reps have been recruited within the CQC over the last twelve months, the longstanding Chair of the UNISON National Committee Darren Smith has decided to stand down from his trade union duties. Darren has been a superb UNISON activist for a number of years and he will be very sadly missed.

5.8 Ofsted Committee

Early years inspection

Early years inspection was brought back 'in-house' in April 2017. Since then, UNISON has been working with Ofsted on the re-integration of early years services.

Ofsted has decided to undertake significant re-organisation of the early years inspector role. This will be abolished and all staff will be required to undertake an assessment to become an early years regulatory inspector. If staff are successful in their applications, they should receive significant pay rises. However, staff who are unsuccessful may face redundancy. UNISON has been negotiating with the employer and is committed to supporting members through this process.

We have continued to raise issues affecting the early years inspectors with Ofsted, in particular excessive workloads, unrealistic tariffs and excessive travel.

Social care inspection

There have been problems with staff shortages among the social care inspectorate and knock on effects on the rest of the staff. We have also raised issues around excessive workloads and travel with Ofsted.

Pay

An offer within the 1% civil service pay envelope was made for 2017/8, giving consolidated flat rate increases of up to £642. The lowest paid staff received an increase of 2.7%, plus additional non-consolidated payments. This offer was accepted by UNISON members.

5.9 FSA / FSS Committee

Our FSA membership is predominantly based in slaughterhouses and in a small number of offices in England, Cymru/Wales and Northern Ireland. We also have some members in Food Standards Scotland. This year, the FSA/FSS Sector Committee has been busy defending member's rights and fighting privatisation. The Food Standards Agency (FSA) is still trying to reduce the number of directly employed employees, despite a series of high-profile food scandals.

During the course of this year, we have seen meat dropped on the floor, picked-up and placed on the conveyor belt to your plate. We have seen well-known chains like JD Wetherspoon and Jamie Oliver change suppliers, due to the scandal at a major UK supplier of meat, Russell Hume, where use-by dates were inaccurate. It is also possible that meat is not from its labeled origin, with all the potential consequences associated with poor animal welfare standards and hygiene practices.

Due to our hard-working members, we have seen one in four slaughterhouses exposed for poor hygiene practices. Out of the 323 slaughterhouses in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, 86 failed to implement the required hygiene standards as major hygiene breaches were found. This means Meat Hygiene Inspectors, Official Veterinarians and the members who support them, stopped carcasses making contact with the floor, decomposing organic material from entering the human food chain as well as unsterilised or unwashed equipment being used to create your Sunday roast or cooked breakfast. They stopped contaminated water spreading faeces from carcass to carcass. They uncovered scandals. They protected all of UNISON's meat-eating members and their families, as well as those of us that consume dairy products.

However, their reward from the FSA is to be told to go and work for worse terms and conditions, fewer hours and a poorer pension in the private sector or watch as slaughterhouses and cutting plants are left to their own devices in slaughtering, cutting-up and sending to your dinner table a product that no independent person has checked to make sure it is safe.

Meanwhile, UNISON is fighting hard to inform the public understanding of what is at stake. We have challenged the FSA and given written evidence to the House of Commons Environment, Food & Rural Affairs Committee, where MPs criticised the FSA for its lack of "intelligence". The FSA admitted that UNISON was again right when we said that auditing of a slaughterhouse on an ad-hoc basis is limiting – in

fact so limiting that a plant in the West Midlands (2 Sisters), the largest supplier of supermarket chicken in the UK, suspended production at their West Bromwich plant because they were caught changing the slaughter dates of poultry.

Bullying and harassment of our members continues to silence and prevent them from raising public safety concerns. In the 2018 UNISON FSA member survey, 66% witnessed bullying or harassment in the last year and 52% have been subjected to it. One of our members had to take the FSA to the Civil Service Commissioner over his whistleblowing complaint about manipulation of the recording of contamination figures by a private contractor which the FSA was covering it up.

The Commission report subsequently vindicated our member. It found that:

- Although there was no direct risk to public health, there was an indirect risk because the FSA did not take appropriate action in regard to the allegations of falsification of contamination data
- Our member faced pressure to dissuade him from pursuing the complaint
- The FSA failed to investigate the concerns and failed to take them seriously
- The FSA ignored inconvenient truths
- Our member suffered a detriment and was penalised for raising the complaint
- The FSA's original grievance investigation failed to meet the standard of objectivity required by the Civil Service Code

This is only the fourth complaint to ever be upheld by the Commissioners. UNISON then worked with the Bureau for Investigative Journalism to publicise the breach of the code.

Finally, our campaign to force the FSA to recruit new Meat Hygiene Inspectors by asking the public to sign our petition, fronted by the Nash Family, now stands at over 103,000 signatures. The petition can be viewed and signed by visiting www.meatinspection.org/petition.

6. Occupational Groups

6.1 Libraries and Cultural Services

Public libraries are at the forefront of local government cuts. Consistently seen as a 'soft' target, spending on libraries has declined for the seventh year running, falling by £66 million during 2016-17. UK libraries lost 869 staff members in the last twelve months and 105 more libraries closed, including mobile libraries. Meanwhile volunteer numbers have risen by 8% this year or 43% since 2012.

In many areas we are witnessing the large scale handover of local authority libraries to communities to run. In Somerset, 15 out of 34 libraries are to turn volunteer or close, with a further 7 to seek volunteers. This is despite a 2011 High Court ruling that the council should not withdraw funding from some of their libraries. Aberdeenshire council has approved plans to hand over control of libraries and museums to a charitable trust to save £1 million. In Wales, there was a 20% drop in full time library workers from 2012-13 to 2016-17.

UNISON branches continue to run successful campaigns in the face of cuts. After dedicated campaigning by UNISON Pembrokeshire County branch, the council threw out plans to outsource local Leisure Services (including libraries) to a charitable trust last year. Due to continued persistence by the branch, a further attempt to allow an arms-length company to deliver Leisure Services late in 2017 failed and services remain in-house.

Following the collapse of Carillion, Croydon has taken its libraries back in-house. Ealing and Harrow have brought their libraries under direct council control while long-term provision is reviewed. A petition against out-sourcing, supported by the UNISON branch in Ealing, has garnered over 3,200 signatures.

In June, UNISON representatives met with both the Chief Executive of the Libraries Taskforce, Kathy Settle, and the DCMS policy lead. Key concerns discussed included: closures, alternative delivery methods, particularly the promotion by the Taskforce of mutuals and trusts, volunteering, open libraries, co-location, community management benchmarking and skills. We also lobbied for union representation and involvement on the Taskforce, but to no avail.

Cuts to libraries were the theme of last year's Save Our Services Campaign throughout the year. The campaign culminated in a successful SOS Libraries

Day on 19 October with branches running events and campaigns across the UK. The campaign was heavily promoted across social media.

Meanwhile UNISON is conducting a major study alongside researchers at Cardiff University into the impact of volunteers on the library service. FOI requests have been sent to UK councils, a survey drafted and interviews with library members and volunteers planned.

UNISON is also organising a national demonstration against cuts to libraries and cultural services, and has obtained agreement in principle from Unite the Union to be involved. Meetings have taken place with PCS at national level.

A meeting has also been arranged between library members from across UNISON Regions with the Deputy Leader of the Labour party to lobby the Secretary of State for DCMS on Labour's policy on libraries and to ensure Labour hear first-hand accounts from library workers of the realities of working in a sector torn apart by cuts.

UNISON continues to work with The Library Campaign to distribute the twice yearly magazine to members.

6.2 Social Work

UNISON continues to oppose the introduction of the National Assessment and Accreditation System for children and family social workers in England. This is a major plank of our Stand Up for Social Work campaign. UNISON's petition calling for the test to be scrapped has now attracted more than 3,000 signatures. A Facebook live event to raise awareness of the test and UNISON's opposition to it was held in October. This featured social worker members who took part in the piloting of the test.

In December the Government issued their formal response to their consultation. Just 34% of the 396 respondents agreed with the proposal to accredit all social workers by 2020, while 59% were split between being uncertain that it would work and flatly saying it would not. The Government is proceeding, but has scaled back its plans. The scheme will be piloted over summer 2018 in five councils – Bury, Leeds, Manchester, Oldham and Wigan. It is then to be rolled out to a further 12-15 councils in Spring

2019, before the rest of England.

The Service Group and North West and Yorkshire/ Humberside Regions are working with the first phase branches to encourage members not to participate. This first phase provides UNISON with an important and geographically defined campaigning opportunity. At this stage the government is saying that participation is voluntary – so if insufficient numbers agree to participate this has the potential to significantly inhibit progress of NAAS.

The Service Group is developing materials to support the campaign. In addition to our petition, there is now a campaign postcard and poster. A briefing for members in first phase councils is being drawn up explaining why UNISON is opposing NAAS and how to resist employer pressure to complete it. Legal advice will be sought if employers pressurise members to take part. The National Secretary has also written to all council leaders asking them to withdraw their local authority.

Social Work England will be new regulator for social workers in England, operating as a non departmental public body. It will be based in Sheffield with about 120 staff and is not expected to be regulating the profession before Spring 2019.

UNISON has a seat on the Social Work England advisory board which provides an input to the design and development of SWE. The Children and Social Work Act 2017 sets out the broad legal framework for SWE but much of the detail is to be set out in regulations. UNISON responded to the Government consultation on the policy underpinning those regulations. Points made included:

- All social workers currently registered with HCPC should have their registration transferred. Current fitness to practice cases should be completed by HCPC to ensure consistent and fairness
- SWE should respect the autonomy of HEI decision-making and there should be multi professional inspection
- There is not enough information about the proposed fitness to practice inquiry approach
- UNISON opposes any increase in registration fees other the next years. They should be proportionate to other healthcare professionals and proportionate to earnings. Nor should social workers be charged for annotations.

We are discussing with Community Care running another Social Work Watch in May. This snapshot survey of all social workers across the UK captures the various challenges they face as well on a certain day as the positive differences they make. Its findings

get us good media coverage and are useful for national and regional campaigning.

Social work issues in Scotland are outlined in the Scotland report.

6.3 Residential Care

UNISON launched its Residential Care Charter during the 2017 Local Government Conference. We hope that it can be used by branches to improve the working conditions of residential care workers and the treatment of residents, as well as serving as an effective recruitment and organising tool.

Events to help promote the Residential Care Charter have been held in the Scottish Parliament and the Welsh Assembly, and we are exploring holding a similar event in Westminster.

Comprehensive mapping information of the location of every residential care establishment across the UK has been provided to branches and Regions to help them to engage with workers in the residential sector.

The union held a cross-Service Group seminar on social care in mid January. It involved discussions about the range of work currently being carried out across the union on both homecare and residential care issues. It also contributed ideas to what UNISON's future priorities should be on social care issues and structures needed to support this work. The Local Government Service Group delegates emphasised the need for the union to do more to try and reverse the widespread levels of privatisation that exist in the sector.

The Local Government team has been working to support branches and residential care workers over the issue of sleep-in shifts and compliance with the National Living Wage. Working with other Service Groups and the legal team, new guidance on the National Living Wage has been supplied to branches and Regions. UNISON has also engaged with the Government throughout the year in order to prevent employers failing to consider sleep-in shifts as working time that must count when calculating payment of the National Living Wage.

Concerns about the impact of Brexit on both social work and social care across the UK have been fed into a series of ongoing consultations to which UNISON has contributed. If EU nationals were no longer able to work in social work or social care settings after Brexit, it would have a very destabilising effect on both workforces. Around 15% of care workers in the Greater London and South East regions are from the EU. UNISON will continue to make the case for all these workers to be given the right to remain in the UK after Brexit.

6.4 Homecare

UNISON's campaign to improve standards for homecare workers and to promote the Ethical Care Charter continued to build momentum over the last year. Following the provision of oral evidence by National Secretary Heather Wakefield, the cross-party Local Government Select Committee in Westminster endorsed the Ethical Care Charter and called upon the Government to use it as a template for improving the treatment of care workers in order to help them deliver better levels of care.

Councils across England and Scotland continued to adopt the Ethical Care Charter. Fife, North Lanarkshire, Hackney, Haringey, Sheffield, Manchester, Halton, Hartlepool, Stirling and Lewisham councils all signed up to the Charter, bringing the total to 35. Guidance has been provided to branches to help ensure compliance with the Charter as a condition of adoption of it.

UNISON also commissioned a report evaluating the impact of the Ethical Care Charter. It documented the positive impact the Charter has had on care workers, employers and service users. It has been used to encourage other councils to adopt the Charter.

Following lobbying efforts over the last few years from the Cymru/Wales region, UNISON is hopeful that the Welsh Government will soon introduce legislation which will limit the use of zero hours contracts in the homecare sector, alongside measures to make pay more transparent and to improve rotas.

UNISON's '15 Minute Care Makeover' film, which drew attention to how many homecare workers are expected to provide personal care within 15 minute timeslots, was viewed 3.6 million times and shared over 50,000 times on social media. It helped to raise more awareness of this big problem. Over 30,000 people signed the accompanying petition calling on the Government to take steps to outlaw the practice.

UNISON has continued to call upon the Government to force care employers, particularly homecare providers, to give workers more transparent and understandable payslips to enable them to determine whether they have been paid properly for all the work that they have carried out. A lack of payslip transparency is a key factor in cheating care workers of all of the earnings they should be paid. The Government was forced to introduce legislation to try and improve pay transparency in April 2018, but UNISON believes that it will not go far enough in helping to end this problem.

In 2018, UNISON homecare members at Birmingham Council took industrial action in defence of their jobs and terms and conditions. 99% of members voted to

strike after the council announced plans to reduce the workforce by 40% and to introduce a new rota system that would see many homecare workers doing three shifts a day.

The North West Region has continued to make positive progress in their major project aimed at recruiting and organising social care workers. They have persuaded a number of councils to pass motions which have granted UNISON access to the social care workforce at every provider commissioned by those councils. The positive practices from the project have been shared with branches and Regions across the rest of the union.

6.5 Careers Forum

The Careers Forum's focus has been on campaigning, recruitment and organising and political developments in the UK. Funding, job cuts and fragmentation remain problems for the sector.

England

The long awaited Government "careers strategy" was finally published in December 2017. The strategy contained laudable recommendations including recognition of the value of careers guidance and professionals, but little funding. The strategy is patchy and has holes in it. For instance it proposes that schools appoint 'careers leaders', without clarity on who would do it and what they will do, with token amounts of training. It could lead to additional work for already overworked staff. There is also no reference to the importance of early intervention work particularly in the prevention of NEETS.

A new set of adult careers service contracts went out to tender in early 2018 and successful bidders will take up the role in the autumn of 2018. Any changes could lead to more instability and job insecurity for our members.

UNISON began a project working with the University of Derby on research that explores the impact the devolvement of the duty to the careers service in England to schools has had on the quality, type and access to careers provision for young people. The research will also look at the challenges facing careers professional, local authorities and careers companies arising from the strategy.

Scotland

The Scottish Government's Enterprise and Skills Review included proposals for the greater alignment of the enterprise and skills agencies, including Skills Development Scotland (which employs careers staff). The review also looked at the 'Learner Journey' and

the SDS role in progressing careers and options. UNISON will continue to respond to the review and related consultations and try to influence future directions for the benefit of members and the Scottish public.

A pay claim of £6.5% or £1500 whichever is the greater (which includes compensation for a proposed change in pay date) has been submitted.

Wales

UNISON continued to challenge significant funding cuts, through public and political campaigns to ensure that staff working for Careers Wales can deliver a quality service.

The pay offer of 1% for 2017/18 was agreed in February 2018. A restructure of Careers Wales took place. Middle and senior managers were allowed to go, but not careers advisers, because the company is expecting to be awarded a large contract for adult work in 2019/20. The company began recruiting careers advisers after a recruitment freeze which had lasted several years. A partial merger with Business Wales (a business advice service made up of civil servants and sub-contractors) has been suggested this would not affect terms and conditions of staff.

6.6 Craftworkers

Despite having a significant number of members, UNISON is not recognised by the Craft JNC for collective bargaining purposes. It is UNISON policy for craftworkers to be covered by the NJC negotiating body.

In December 2017, Unite and GMB submitted a pay claim for at least a 5% increase across all trades, a 35-hour working week, an additional day's holiday, tool allowance to be doubled from current rates and tool insurance to be paid to a minimum of £2,000. At the time of writing, the pay claim was being considered by the employers, who unanimously agreed to defer responding to the pay claim until the main NJC pay round is settled.

UNISON has written to councillors calling for councils to sign up to UNISON's Apprenticeship Charter which calls for apprentices to be paid the rate for the job. UNISON is monitoring apprenticeship rates of pay, including craft apprenticeships, as they are advertised. Currently one local authority, Islington, has been identified as paying above the real Living Wage for an electrician apprenticeship.

It is evident from monitoring of pay and grading reviews in England and Wales that craft workers are being harmonised onto NJC terms and conditions.

6.7 Fire and Rescue

The Fire and Rescue Forum has continued its work to highlight the key issues that our members working in fire and rescue services face. The Forum continues to work on developing networks to support regional recruitment, organising and campaigning work with fire and rescue members by promoting UNISON's existing recruitment and organising materials and building contacts locally.

At time of writing, a survey of members was being prepared to reassess key issues for staff such as workplace stress and heavy workloads.

Lobbying

This year has seen the implementation of the Policing and Crime Act, which became law in January 2017.

The Policing and Crime Act allows the Government to abolish a Fire and Rescue Authority (FRA) to enable a Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) to take responsibility for local fire and services. Essex became the first fire and rescue service to have its fire and rescue authority. Reassuringly, the PCC did not opt for the single employer model, which would enable the merging of fire and rescue support roles. Instead, the 'governance model' was adopted. This sees the PCC become the employer of fire and rescue staff. Support staff are still at risk, with redundancies a key feature of PCCs' proposals to take over FRA's.

At the time of writing, three PCCs had been granted governance of FRAs – Cambridgeshire, Staffordshire, and West Mercia. The outcome of three other bids – Hertfordshire, Northamptonshire, and North Yorkshire – had not yet been announced.

The Forum has worked with the Police and Justice Service Group to co-ordinate responses to takeovers, through a meeting of affected fire and police branches, and developing guidance on dealing with takeovers. UNISON has also met with the Fire Brigades Union to discuss their response.

Following on from last year's lobbying work, UNISON has:

- Met with Karen Lee MP, the new Shadow Fire Minister to discuss how we can work together on the implementation of the Act and raise the profile of fire and rescue staff
- Written to the Minister for Policing and Fire to discuss concerns for fire and rescue support staff

7. Regional Service Group Reports

7.1 Eastern

For a number of years now in Local Government in the Eastern Region, the picture regarding cuts and redundancies has been the same – it's been a constant erosion of services, and the slow but steady reduction in the number of jobs. For services, it's often been small closures here and there, a tightening of the criteria for access to those services, or the introduction of charges where there were none previously. As for job losses, they are frequently as a result of organisational change, with a considerable number wanting to go if they get the chance, and small numbers of compulsory redundancies. What is noticeable though is those who remain in work often have an increased workload, or find they have been redeployed into a lower graded post, leading to an increase in work related stress, financial pressure, and low morale.

Not all local authority employers in our Region are on NJC terms and conditions, and we find ourselves dealing with employers who sometimes have a bizarre approach to pay and grading. Late last year, we were invited into negotiations with Essex County Council regarding a new pay and grading structure. Part of their proposals would have lifted many of the lower paid onto the Foundation Living Wage, which UNISON welcomed. But there was a stumbling block, the pay structure was put forward before the job redesign and evaluation had been completed, so staff didn't know where they would fall on the new scales. Unsurprisingly, members rejected this approach, as yet we don't know if the employer will dismiss and re engage, and pay protection is at risk.

Throughout 2017 branches constantly raised the issue of pay, poor reward for the dedication of our members who work tirelessly to provide essential public services. We asked to address the national employers pay road show when it came to the Region. We decided to take a different approach, rather than do the standard facts and figures presentation. We wanted to make it more real, more personal. So, Mark Johnson – Branch Secretary of the West Suffolk branch, asked two of his members to write a statement about how the years of austerity and the lack of a decent pay rise had affected them. Mark read out the words of a refuse collector, and I read the words of an admin member of staff – their stories were moving to listen to. The employers

thanked us for a powerful presentation, but whilst they were sympathetic, they still said – we would like to do more, but we have to think about where the money comes from, with ever reducing money from central government, the financial pressure on local authorities is huge.

Privatisation has also been steady – primarily in schools, where the growth of academies presents us with many challenges, particularly with collective bargaining and maintaining branch communication links with members. This is why we decided to put in a Fighting Fund bid to support recruiting and organising in schools across the Region. Branches from across all Service Groups recognised the need for this work and contributed generously to the Fighting Fund. Fighting Fund Local Organisers started working in the Autumn term, working with branches with schools members. We agreed which Multi Academy Trust schools (MATS) to target, with the aim of increasing the recruitment of members and reps, so those reps could attend the negotiating forums in the MATS and ensure members were appropriately represented. Early indications are this project will achieve good results.

Another area where we decided to focus a specific resource is in relation to apprentices. With the apprentice levy, local authority employers will have to increase the number of apprentices they have eight-fold. Over the whole of the Region this adds up to large numbers of potential new members. With funding from the Union Learning Fund, we have appointed a temporary Learning Organiser. Part of her work is to liaise with employers to let them know what training opportunities we can offer, and to liaise with branches to make sure they welcome apprentice members into the branch. This work has been well received by a number of local authority employers, some who have previously been reluctant to engage with trade unions.

2017 was the first year we made a serious attempt to recruit student social workers, and this was a great success. We attended eight recruitment events and recruited 134 students. This is something we intend to build on in coming years.

As in previous years the Regional Joint Secretaries were called in to assist in resolving disputes before they escalated. One issue was about the introduction of a staff council to replace a negotiating forum, the

other about the movement of a district council offices and the increased travel costs for the majority of staff. Each Joint Secretaries' intervention was successful, with progress identified where both trade unions and employers were content with the suggested resolution.

7.2 East Midlands

Cuts and redundancies

In February 2018 Northamptonshire County Council issued a section 114 notice. This notice is the legal responsibility of a local authority's chief finance officer to report, if it appears that the authority's expenditure (including expenditure it proposes to incur) is likely to exceed the resources (including the funds borrowed) available to the authority in a financial year. A section 114 notice is not taken lightly and it is believed the Northamptonshire County Council notice is the first such notice to be issued in more than 20 years.

In Northamptonshire, the financial pressures on local authorities was compounded by what government inspectors have described as the county council's loss of financial control. Instead of regaining control, the council adopted a 'Next Generation' council structure model as a solution to its problems. This new model proposed making all of its services either a traded service, or a charity, or a Community Interest Company. The inspectors said there was no council "business plan or justification to support these proposals" yet the Council "authorised scarce resources in terms of people, time and money to develop them".

The government inspectors have made it clear that the county council staff are good, hardworking and dedicated and that the problems of the council are not the fault of its staff. However the council's failures will likely impact staff as commissioners are appointed to take direct control over the council's financial management and overall governance.

In other parts of the East Midlands the pressure to make savings remains high. In a roll call of losses, East Midlands' shire county and unitary authorities experienced the largest losses and the future offers no relief: Nottingham City council expects as many as 200 staff to be made redundant and in Derby, the City Council library and care home staff face redundancies. These savings are not coming solely from the loss of jobs but from the services themselves. Nottingham City council is cutting £5 million from public health services, in particular drugs and alcohol support services, sexual health and healthy lifestyle services which will inevitably impact on vulnerable service users.

Pay and conditions – including Public Health

Some East Midlands councils continue to make savings by squeezing the terms and conditions of their staff. Nottinghamshire County Council is proposing to reduce annual leave, reduce additional leave for certain groups of staff, reduce pay protection and reduce the redundancy package.

Some local authorities are pursuing alternative ways of working, like East Northants council, which is considering "agile" working practises and introducing the increased use of technology to assist staff.

The use of HR contractors is presenting concerns for some as staff policies are redrawn or reinterpreted losing hard won flexibility and fairness in favour of the more draconian.

Privatisation and service delivery issues

Most – if not all – East Midlands' authorities are undertaking organisational service reviews, some of which include adoption services, finance, human resources, corporate, property and facilities management, information technology, regeneration services, welfare rights and sports services.

Shared services continue to be an avenue for cutting costs with human resources and waste services the focus for two authorities. Meanwhile leisure services remain a focus for continued privatisation in two others. Yet councils, such as Bassetlaw, have seen the value of bringing services back in-house, which has brought A1 Housing back in-house.

The momentum of maintained schools converting to academies remains unchecked. Larger multi-academy trusts continue to offer economies of scale and support to draw in single academies.

Recruitment and organising

The East Midlands has the second smallest public sector workforce of the nine English regions. In 2017, East Midlands' local government membership has decreased by 2.5 % over the previous year despite the efforts of branches and staff alike. Shire county and unitary authority branches suffered greater losses in 2017 than their smaller shire district counterparts, reflecting the local authorities' reductions in staffing.

Local government branches have faced challenges recruiting and organising. The large volume of organisational reviews and the attendant support for members as a consequence of the cuts have all impacted on branches' time to organise and recruit. In spite of this almost a third of branches expanded.

7.3 Greater London

Cuts and redundancies

We continue to have problems across many services provided within local government. Local campaigns are on-going by branches in various boroughs. The extent of the cuts in London is demonstrated by the significant decrease in membership over the last ten years despite recruitment remaining high.

Pay and conditions

The Regional Local Government Committee organised a well-attended lobby of the Local Government Association on 14 August, pay being a key focus at the branch briefing on 22 September. The region also promoted a TUC lobby of Parliament and rally, both on 17 October. Both events were well attended, with a strong UNISON presence by local government branches and members.

Trade union rights to be consulted on reorganisation and changes to terms and conditions have been strengthened following a historic legal judgement on a case based in the Greater London Region. A landmark judgement by the Court of Appeal on 28 July supported UNISON's claims that trade unions should be automatically consulted by employers around any issues that affect their members. The Court of Appeal ruled that unions should be consulted over collective redundancies, and generally where the terms and conditions or rights at work of those they represent are affected (*Unison: Vining and Francis v LB Wandsworth*).

Ten London boroughs are now signed up to UNISON's Ethical Care Charter: Islington, Southwark, Camden, Hammersmith & Fulham, Tower Hamlets, Barking & Dagenham, Greenwich and Croydon. Hackney and Haringey were the most recent to sign up. The Charter commits employers to ensuring contractors delivering home care services pay at least the London Living Wage, stop 15 minute visits, stop using unnecessary zero hour contracts, pay occupational sick pay and pay travel time.

UNISON continues to pursue an ET case on behalf of home care workers in Haringey, formerly working for Sevacare, who the union believes have not been receiving the National Minimum Wage. Some workers, giving live-in care and working 168 consecutive hours living in someone's home, have an hourly rate of pay on their payslip of £3.27, significantly less than half the Minimum Wage rate. Most workers are on zero hours contracts, and have been too scared to raise the problem for fear of losing their hours. The claim, which now includes 43 members, is long running and complex. A preliminary hearing was held from 19-21

June 2017, which decided there had been a TUPE transfer of home care workers from Sevacare to other providers. However, two providers have gone on to appeal the decision and so this issue needs to be clarified before UNISON can move on to the next stage of the case. The appeal hearing is scheduled for 2018. Regardless of the appeal outcome, there will still be a case to be fought on the National Minimum Wage issue, and it will be for the Tribunal to consider if there was a failure to pay the minimum wage and, if so, what arrears are owed to our members.

Privatisation and service delivery issues

Richmond and Wandsworth have now published final proposals in relation to a shared staffing structure to cover both boroughs. This is significantly improved from earlier proposals. Shared service provision continues to operate across a number of other boroughs including Newham/ Haringey/Bexley in OneSource. Leaders from the three councils recently announced proposals to work up a business case for OneSource to potentially transition into an arms-length trading entity by 1 April 2019. The business case is likely to be considered by the three councils in the autumn. Westminster City Council and Kensington & Chelsea have served notice on the Tri-borough arrangements that were established in June 2011. The decision has been taken in the face of uncertainty caused by one borough, Hammersmith & Fulham, appearing to make alternative in-house plans without any formal engagement with the other two local authority partners about key services. UNISON continues to engage with these enterprises to ensure members' interests are represented. Southwark Council has in-sourced housing repairs from Mears and IT services from Capita in a shared arrangement with Lewisham and Brent. The collapse of Carillion demonstrated the continued failures of privatisation. In some areas, for example Croydon, staff were taken back in house by the council.

Recruitment and organising

Recruitment remained steady during 2017, but this has still resulted in a net loss of members in local government over the year. Recruitment in the first two months of 2018 is slightly improved on 2017 figures. Ongoing service cuts and redundancies means recruitment continues to be a very high priority. We are considering this year how we might use specific campaigns to aid recruitment across branches and reintroducing recruitment weeks to tie in with national advertising campaigns.

Political work

Labour gained four additional constituencies in the snap General Election held on 8 June. Labour now holds 49 of London's 73 constituencies. Labour topped the poll in London with over two million votes, the highest of any region or nation, equating to 54.5%. The results set the region in good stead for the council elections which are due to take place on 3 May 2018.

Housing

The Housing & Planning Act received Royal Assent on 12 May 2016, in spite of campaigning to defeat it. Earlier this year, over 1,200 members from different areas of the public sector replied to a survey from UNISON's national policy unit to determine the realities facing Londoners in the current housing market. The report, which was launched at the Houses of Parliament on 28th November, showed that two thirds of workers in London (63%) spend more than 30% of their income on housing. This figure rises to 82% for private renters. This in turn has created a desire among two thirds (62%) of workers to want to leave the capital because of the cost of housing. UNISON is calling for a greater proportion of properties available for social rent and for the Government to commit to investment in social housing. A recent study by the Chartered Institute of Housing shows that 79% of government spending on housing subsidises the private housing market. John Healey MP (Shadow Secretary of State for Housing), Melanie Onn MP (Shadow Housing Minister), James Murray (Deputy Mayor of London) and Yvonne Green (UNISON GLR Regional Convenor) spoke at the launch of the need for housing supply to allow the people who work in London and support our services to actually live in the capital.

7.4 Northern

Cuts and redundancies

Local government continues to see significant funding cuts from central Government, which threatens the very existence of many council services. All North East Councils are facing a massive gap between expenditure and income and this is especially so in social care provision. The change to Business Rate Income will further reduce funding for the councils in the North East.

Due to the funding gap there continues to be jobs at risk of redundancy, which are causing damage to services, reducing the scope of service provision, and weakening the social fabric of local communities and local economies. No posts are immune from risk of

redundancy.

Branches have undertaken successful campaigns to reduce and mitigate these redundancies, however the numbers of council employees continues to fall.

Within the Northern Region a successful library event was held in Gateshead Town Centre to link in with the National 'Save our Services' day. It highlighted the importance of councils maintaining their library provision, as well as highlighting the importance of UNISON.

Branches continue to use all the internal UNISON tools to help co-ordinate campaigns against these cuts by lobbying cabinet/council meetings, working with Councillors, MP's and stakeholders to try and stop the redundancies.

Pay and conditions

Pay for local government has been a key organising and recruitment item. Our Region continues to lead the way in engaging with our local government members on key issues affecting them. Within the Northern Region the Branches have ensured that there is no movement to local or regional pay. Branches have continued to campaign for the introduction of the 'real' Living Wage, and we were successful in getting 11 Councils to pass the UNISON model pay motion.

Some councils have tried to attack terms and conditions, although these have been resisted through campaigns, it is very challenging for local branches. The local branches share information to help branches resist such attacks.

Further Education Pay – As it is only a recommendation by the Association of College (AoC) there has still not been full implementation for all Colleges in the Northern Region. This pay claim is still being pursued, with some colleges awarding the 1% and one making a 3% award.

Service delivery and privatisation

Councils across the region are still exploring handing services to external organisations. An example of this is Newcastle City Council, exploring the parks and allotments being run by a charitable trust. This is despite there being plenty of evidence that outsourcing is often bad for public services, yet local government is doing more of it than ever before. There is also a growing trend of more shared services being proposed, with transactional services being shared between Newcastle and Northumberland Councils. This could be a further challenge if the North of Tyne Devolution proposal comes into force.

Three Regional Adoption Agencies are being formed, and UNISON is a key stakeholder in these negotiations.

The rationale still being presented by Councils to explore alternative service delivery models is:-

- Pressure to cut costs and falling budgets from central government
- Ideology – the idea that private is better, even when there is plenty of evidence this is not the case. This is the case with many schools in the region becoming part of Multi Academy Trusts
- The challenges of providing public services and the need to make improvements

Regionally work has been ongoing with branches to ensure that procurement agreements have been negotiated to ensure that if any services are outsourced then our branches are involved at the earliest stage as key stakeholders.

More progressive councils, such as Gateshead, are working with UNISON and have been determining which services are being in-sourced to increase income generation, and are bringing services back in-house.

The use of different service delivery models and integrated services is being monitored across the Region we are undertaking a mapping exercise to ascertain what arrangements Local Authorities currently have. This will help maximise and strengthen the Region's work around putting forward alternative proposals when negotiating and bargaining with employers.

Recruitment and organisation

Schools recruitment and organisation was a key priority for local government in the last twelve months. The Region and branches continued to utilise the national 'Stars in our Schools' event to increase our membership. A regional schools project team was formed to lead on recruitment and organisation within schools, concentrating on the professional standards for school based staff. All schools in the Region were visited during the last 12 months. Overall, there was a net gain of 786 members in schools from March to December 2017.

Branches have actively participated with Regional recruitment campaigns. Specific recruitment initiatives in conjunction with the Branch Assessment process, have given branches an opportunity to develop targeting recruitment campaigns. These recruitment campaigns are being jointly co-ordinated by branches and LO's/AO's/Ro's and Fighting fund organisers are proving to be a useful tool to assist with recruitment.

Finally, the work of the PSA (Public Services Alliance) and Area Forums continues to strengthen, allowing UNISON to work with other unions and community groups to campaign to save our members jobs and services to be retained within the public sector. This is especially true with work on challenging the cuts.

7.5 Northern Ireland

Campaigns in our Education Services

Budget cuts

Last year our concern was at the impact of cuts to the 2016/17 education budget. A further massive cut of £105 million has been announced for the 2017/18 allocation. The allocation of funding to offset this deficit was announced in a March guideline budget set out by the NI Secretary of State and is drawn from the confidence and supply, post election arrangement, between the DUP and the Tory government.

We have already seen an attack on the extended schools programme which makes vital provision for disadvantaged children. This is an ongoing campaign. The decision to remove the uniform grant was met with strong resistance from UNISON and many other groups in society and was recently reversed.

However, this new set of cuts is likely to now deeply affect our members, particularly cleaners, transport drivers, technicians, catering staff in the school meals service and classroom assistants. There has already been a declaration by school principals that they will not implement further cuts. However, by protecting the curriculum and the classroom many may decide that support services are where the cuts will fall.

While we are again hampered by the collapse of Government here, we did challenge the previous new Education Minister, as we were particularly concerned that decisions on the future of education were not being taken within an equality and rights framework.

The unacceptable cuts that have been made to our education services were a key message that we delivered as part of our 2017 NI Assembly Election Manifesto. We asked what steps parties and candidates would take to:

- Support an education system that delivers to disadvantaged areas, is non-selective, and promotes equality
- Challenge disadvantage and support improvement by taking forward a new approach to the funding formula that not only restores recent cuts, but targets objective need and inequality

- Protect and strengthen the work of classroom, nursery and special needs staff
- Protect cleaning, catering and schools based staff against the threat of privatisation
- Ensure that all staff in schools are employed on fair contracts
- Stop plans to curtail Special Educational Needs services for pre-school children
- Ensure that future area planning processes consider workforce issues and maintain job levels

Common funding formula

We continue to press for greater transparency in the NI Education Funding Formula. The Common Funding Scheme for the local management of schools is the means by which the education budget is distributed.

UNISON made detailed recommendations to the last review of the common funding formula, some of which were taken on board by the previous Education Minister in 2016. It is clear that the funding formula will now not address the growing poverty of our children and this will be taken forward in the UNISON 2018 programme.

Area planning

In April 2017, the Education Authority (EA) published its first Regional Strategic Area Plan for school provision across NI for the period 2017 – 2020. It was accompanied by an Annual Action Plan (2017-18) which identifies those schools that will be subject to 'developments' over a 12 month period, which could be proposed closures or mergers.

This Annual Action Plan was not subject to public or trade union consultation. We are clear that where UNISON has substantial membership in a school that is threatened with closure, and there is demonstrable local community support for the school to remain open, UNISON will give full support to anti-closure campaigns.

Threats to outdoor education centres

In November 2016, the EA announced that it intended to close four of the eight existing statutory residential outdoor education centres, with a threat to a fifth centre.

UNISON has opposed these unjustified closure proposals and the unacceptable process undertaken by the EA in terms of consultation and engagement with unions and staff.

Due to the pressure brought to bear by UNISON and our allies, in October 2017 the EA announced that

some centres will be retained, but will be adapted and developed to extend provision for vulnerable young people for whom specialist education services and provision are required. This development presents its own problem and this issue is far from resolved.

Local government and education service group

There are 20 members of the Local Government and Education Service Group representing six branches. Its composition currently stands at 75% women. The group has met three times since last Regional Council.

In education, UNISON is on full alert and we recognise that £110m privatisation in-year is a very real threat as the EA struggles with the huge budget deficit. There is a growing trend in voluntary grammar schools to withdraw from EA provided support services and introduce private contractors.

Members of the Local Government Service Group have now taken up responsibilities inside the new EA structures, across five Directorates, and are part of the UNISON negotiating team with the central negotiating body. Negotiating issues include:

- Contractual issues for classroom assistants
- Temporary workforce numbers in the EA
- School transport re-configuration
- School meals service re-configuration
- Impact of school closures on existing staff
- Re-configuration of the youth services and decline of statutory provision
- Resisting the extension of the Civil Service Voluntary Exit Scheme to facilitate redundancies on the cheap in education
- Pay protection for all workers affected by the cuts

We have been engaged in high profile campaigns against cuts and in support of a living wage.

Further education sector

Our direct workforce members are currently covered by a 2-year pay deal which took effect in April 2016. This includes:

- The application of the two year pay award for 2016/2017 and 2017/2018
- Allowances to the levels paid in other parts of the education sector
- A commitment to take account of developments from the joint reviews of term time working, with particular reference to a real living wage.

As in the Higher Education sector, UNISON is launching a pay claim for our members in privatised services in further education.

Higher education

Our membership at the two universities works in a combination of in-house and outsourced services. Earlier this year we supported our UK Higher Education Service Group in the campaign for a decent pay rise. UNISON NI has launched a pay claim for our members working in privatised services in this sector.

The NI Library Authority

Despite assurances from the previous Minister, secured as a result of the 2016 campaign to halt reductions in opening hours, there will be a further 6% budget cut to the opening hours of the 14 largest libraries, as well to training and books purchases.

UNISON NI is pledged to campaign against cuts and demand that:

- Adequate funding is needed to maintain book stock, embrace technological advances, improve all existing premises and extend opening hours
- Staff, users and local communities should be fully involved in shaping services
- All libraries should ensure they are responsive and welcoming to local communities, as the best already do
- Staff training should be expanded and professional development encouraged, to support the delivery of a responsive and high quality service
- The proposals are now on hold. However, Libraries NI has stated its intent to make further savings in 2018 of £2.143 m (7.28%).

7.6 North West

The Regional Service Group has continued to meet regularly and over the past year attendance has increased on average, both in terms of branches represented and delegate numbers.

Pay remains a key priority for the Region. Yet again the North West delivered a significant consultation outcome to reject the NJC pay offer by 73% to 27%. Turnout also increased and in some branches it was double the previous consultation. However, we recognise there is much room for improvement and the Regional Service Group will be dedicating a future meeting to analysing returns and learning so that

turnouts can be further increased across all branches (for both local and sectoral consultations). Activists from all our branches are increasingly concerned at the ongoing decline in real term NJC pay values and are seriously questioning the worth of the NJC as a collective bargaining machinery for our members, and the future direction for the North West, after a decade of falling pay that shows little prospect of halting never mind reversing.

The Region has continued to prioritise a social care campaign, targeting private and voluntary employers which in the main are located within our local government branches. Some valuable lessons have been learned, combining new approaches with back to basics. A similar focussed campaign is being prepared for the housing sector, which was a traditional stronghold for the union but has somewhat dissipated as a result of arms length delivery and stock transfer. At the time of writing, recruitment of new members in local government in North West is up by 11% on last year, which is a real achievement with ongoing budget cuts in most key employers.

Engagement on devolution issues has continued in Greater Manchester and has delivered some tangible benefits and commitments. Progress in Liverpool City Region has been somewhat slower, but key breakthroughs have been delivered in recent months. But as a Regional Service Group we remain extremely conscious that 'devo' developments are only a part of the geographical spread and importance of our branches. The strength of our Service Group lies with the commitment of activists from all areas of the Region and all types of branches be that district, shire or unitary and the open and frank discussions we hold.

7.7 Scotland

Membership of the Scottish Local Government Committee (SLGC) is the same as the Scottish Joint Council.

The Committee continues to meet on a quarterly basis, with additional meetings when required. This is supplemented by the Chairs Group and when required meetings with branch secretaries. The Scottish Local Government Conference also meets four times per year. Much of the Committee's focus has been directed towards pay and campaigning against the cuts.

Cuts and redundancies

The SLG Committee has given an absolute commitment to support branches with actions appropriate to their circumstances, including vigorous political campaigning to defend services and when

branches consider taking industrial action.

The SLG Committee also re-affirms its primary political demands in calling for fair funding across public services and to address the unfairness of Local Government year-on-year being hit the hardest. A lobby of Scottish Parliament took place in December to coincide with the budget setting process.

The SLG Committee has begun obtaining feedback on successful strategies adopted in local campaigns against the cuts and receiving suggestions for developing a co-ordinated Scottish wide anti cuts approach. This is a standing item during our round table discussions at the Scottish Local Government Conferences.

Branches should be congratulated for their activities in fighting these cuts – in particular Clackmannanshire, Glasgow, West Dunbartonshire and East Dunbartonshire for their campaigning work against some of the worst cuts proposals this year.

Scotland's discretionary block grant from the UK Government will have gone down by £2.6billion or 8% in real terms between 2010/11 and 2019/20, affecting all services. The next two years see real terms cuts of more than £500m. The Scottish Budget 2018/19 is more bad news for councils. The big loser from the budget is yet again local government. Despite an additional £159.5m of revenue funding, councils are getting a standstill budget in 'real terms'. Over the last 5 years 15,000 FTE – approximately 30,000 people – have lost their jobs.

Despite the spin, even a 3% increase in the Council Tax does not equal a real terms revenue increase. In real terms it is a £135m cut, probably much higher, because 'real terms' assumes only 1.4% for inflation. COSLA estimates that councils need an additional £545m, just to stand still. Small businesses get around £100m extra relief on business rates, despite the limited evidence that it has any impact on economic growth. The only good news is more money for new housing.

Social Work Issues Group

The work of the Group continues and welcomes a number of new faces joining SWIG and contributing to the extensive agenda we have going forward. We continue to engage with the Scottish Social Service Council (SSSC), namely in the application of the Codes, how they apply to both Registrant and employer, the increased fees and the range of cases still be referred to the SSSC.

The SWIG Group set a realistic work plan in 2017/18, looking at and feeding into the Scottish Government's "Vision for Social Work" and we continue to influence

debate on the Social Work Services Strategic Forum, where UNISON has a seat. SWIG continues to work towards organising opportunities with personal assistants through the WEA. We also support and encourage delegates' to push the UNISON Ethical Care Charter, with some notable successes. We have established a small working group to look at the issue of residential care qualifications and work is ongoing on the Review of Secure Residential Services across the UK and Scotland. John Watson, North Lanarkshire, has agreed to take up the representation of SWIG at the union's National Social Care Forum.

SWIG continues to work with the SLGC and Health Committee to inform a strategy of working towards integration which will protect and develop the role of social care in Scotland and our members' terms and conditions. We are currently engaging with colleagues in drafting a UNISON Scotland response to the Social Care and NHS Workforce Commission Consultation launched by the Scottish Labour Party, which will reflect the real pressures impacting on our membership at a time of yet more cuts to public service budgets and the challenges of dealing with an ever increasing mature workforce.

A warm thanks to all our SWIG colleagues who have taken the time and effort to attend meetings and to contribute so much, which has raised the profile of UNISON and our members not only at Scottish level but at UK level.

Education Issues Group

UNISON Scotland is very conscious that our school support staff members are living with the dispiriting prospect of more argument and confusion about the structure of education at government level. Meanwhile they have to get on with the day job, despite continued cuts and ever greater demands. The Scottish Government's focus is entirely on structural reform, ignoring the report written for them by the OECD, responses to their own consultation and the evidence of the impact of £300 million in cuts to school budgets since 2012.

The Scottish Government is pressing ahead with the Education Governance Review, which emphasises structural reform to create large regional collaboratives to oversee schools. UNISON, like most other consultees, believes this is a distraction from the main issue, which is the pressing need to properly resource effective action to reduce the attainment gap for young people. Tackling the attainment gap effectively requires the whole education team. All staff need access to high quality training and adequate resources.

UNISON does not believe that the government

proposals are the best way to tackle the issues in Scottish education. Key problems in Scottish education are budget cuts, a teacher shortage and loss of support staff. Pupil Equity Funding can't hide those cuts. The government should focus on tackling the real problems: funding cuts, poverty and inequality, rather than restructuring. What is needed is more funding in education and wider local government services which support children and families.

As things stand, there is no spare capacity in schools, all staff are working long hours. There is no time for reflection far less personal development and collaborative exchange. Distancing schools from wider children's services will also make it harder to deliver wider support for children and/or their parents.

UNISON Scotland firmly believes that education, including early years and childcare, should be both comprehensive and delivered free at the point of use by local authorities. Delivery via local authorities offers democratic local accountability and efficiency through economies of scale. It also ensures that education services are embedded in wider children's services.

There is a rare glimmer of good news. We have much better guidance for school staff on healthcare needs of young people in schools. This topic has caused confusion in school settings, with some staff being expected to undertake tasks they are neither trained nor feel competent in. UNISON Scotland has been involved in drafting the new guidance, and it contains the clear statement that school staff providing healthcare should receive appropriate training from a health professional or an accredited source.

The Scottish Government has now published their "Supporting Children & Young People with Health Care Needs in Schools" guidance document. The prospect of better guidance on healthcare in schools shows that UNISON is an effective voice for school support staff, acting on the issues that matter to this key group of education staff.

Housing Issues Group

The Housing Issues Group continues to meet on a regular basis and has become a very influential group in respect of housing issues. The Group continues to respond to a number of national issues including:

- The Scottish Government's commitment to double the money available for work that helps bring long-term, privately-owned empty homes back into use
- The Scottish Government's Best Start Grant (Early Years Assistance) Illustrative Regulations that outline current policy thinking on how they

intend to use the powers in the Social Security (Scotland) Bill to take forward the Best Start Grant. Best Start Grant's three cash payments aim to improve children's wellbeing and life chances providing support to low income families at key transition points in early years – maternity and new baby, nursery and early learning and starting primary school.

- The Scottish Government's findings from the Experience Panels "About Your Benefits and You" survey on 13 November. 1,144 panel members from across Scotland responded to the survey, which took place between July and September 2017. 60% of respondents rated their experience of the current UK benefits system as "poor" or "very poor", with 71% confirming that "advice and support about claiming" must be a priority for Scotland's new social security system.

The Group also responds to branch issues where reduced resources impact on the delivery of services. Recruitment and organisational issues continue to be high on the Group's priority list, particularly with smaller associations being subsumed into large nationals.

Delegates to the Group reported continuing problems with reduced resources, continuous restructures, poor communication, down-grading of posts, lack of consultation with employees and inconsistent direction and leadership by senior management. Dunedin, Canmore and Barony Housing associations – based in Edinburgh – are now part of Wheatley Group. GHA and Edinburgh branches have met to sort out recruitment activities. Potential staffing issues with the role of Universal Credit in future service delivery are still a serious concern. Extensive discussion and debate continues on the homelessness crisis throughout Scotland.

Privatisation and service delivery issues

A minimum of £250m could be saved over ten years, with billions more pounds of potential savings, if the Scottish Government properly tackled the financial scandal of PPP/PFI. This could be achieved by rigorously monitoring the delivery of PPP/PFI contracts, restructuring them and, preferably, buying back contracts where it makes sense to do so – restructuring and refinancing loans to take advantage of much lower interest rates than when they were taken out.

UNISON Scotland is calling for the Scottish Government to act on buying back the most expensive PPP/PFI schemes, working in partnership with councils if it has insufficient capital allocations, as councils can use prudential borrowing powers.

There are a range of examples around Scotland including Highland council saving £2.5m through PPP contract renegotiation and Aberdeen City Council raising £370m by becoming the first Scottish council to issue a bond, which will support a £1 billion capital programme, investing in vital infrastructure for the city.

In addition, investing in renewable energy generation would save money, with enormous potential for income generation, as well as savings on energy costs. Two councils are receiving a combined £450,000 annual income from renewable energy generation and £500,000 in annual savings made by three councils which restructured PPP contracts. Others are doing good work looking into taking similar action.

Recruitment and organising

Scottish Local Government Service Group figures show a decline of 1.5%. However, against the backdrop of 30,000 people exiting Council's employment, branches are maintaining – and in some cases – exceeding growth.

Residential and Ethical Care Charter

The Residential Care Charter was promoted in the Scottish Parliament on 31st October 2017, resulting in a motion being tabled to encourage public, third sector and private organisations to sign up.

DOCAS deductions

Through the SJC Pay Strategy Group, discussions are taking place on a Scotland-wide agreement on DOCAS, including the level of charges. These discussions will not interfere with any local facility or recognition agreements already in place which do not specifically relate to DOCAS.

7.8 South East

Local government in the South East is shrinking.

With increasingly tight budgets, discretionary services in many county and unitary authorities such as youth work and libraries are being diminished or disappearing entirely at an alarming rate, simply to be able to set balanced budgets.

After a lull, there appears to renewed interest by councils in moving away from national pay and conditions, at a time when over half the councils in the Region are already on local pay arrangements, with no guarantees of matching any nationally negotiated pay deals. With some of the highest housing and transport costs outside of London, members struggle to make ends meet, relying on food banks to get through.

Increasingly desperate councils appear to be casting around for the next magic solution to their problems, with local authority trading companies (LATCOs) now emerging as the latest initiative becoming popular – with proposed transfers of services and staff in areas such as waste collection, parks and open space management, housing services and residents parking all seen as ripe for change.

The trend of councils sharing administration continues, though councillors themselves show no apparent appetite to formalise municipal integration and reduce their numbers as a consequence.

There is also more anecdotal evidence of members quitting permanent employment in some disciplines, such as social work, only to return to the work as more highly paid agency staff with, it is said, less stress.

As a union we face the challenge of more “hollowed out branches”, without activists in significant branch officer roles, amongst smaller district council-based branches, of which there are many in the Region – but not exclusively.

The on-going push towards Sustainability and Transformation Partnerships is, of course, not related just to the NHS. The South East region has four of the eight new Integrated Care Systems which came into being in England in April this year. Add to that the much-denied back room deal which saw Surrey County Council back-down on a threatened council tax referendum in exchange for a new “Surrey Devo” agreement with the government, leading the council to follow the same path.

A continuation of these trends will soon make democratically accountable local authorities and services wholly unrecognisable to that which had existed and taken for granted for so long.

7.9 South West

Cuts and redundancies

Voluntary redundancy schemes have continued throughout the year in some authorities as a means of achieving savings. Increasingly service provisions are now being looked at more on a closure, rather than reduction basis, meaning more compulsory loses are occurring. The pattern of outsource provisions making redundancies within 12 months of the contract award also continues.

Pay and conditions

Many local authorities have indicated they will look at their pay structures, regardless of the outcome of the NJC pay award. As a Region we hope to meet with

the Regional Employers to agree some broad principals to ensure consistency of approach, particularly as high turnover in HR departments means many authorities no longer have staff familiar with the work that was done during Single Status agreements.

Privatisation and service delivery issues

We are seeing more examples of local authorities either merging together, such as is planned in Dorset, or creating 'shared services' as a means of achieving savings. These savings are usually at the expense of jobs.

Whilst outsourcing of services from local authorities continues, the rate is slower than in previous years. What is now more noticeable is the number of retenders that are occurring, whereby one company is taking over from another. This poses some difficulties to keep track of, where our organisation is not as strong as we would like, with social care being a particularly difficult sector for us to operate in.

Recruitment and organising

Whilst our Branches are facing some difficulties from local authorities over issues of facilities time, the main issue remains that of organising within non local authority employers.

Councils are unwilling to release our reps to service within these employers, yet the number of members that sit outside of the council in some cases now exceeds the number that sit within. In many cases, the total number of members within these employers is in single digits, and there is no rep in place. Finding a way of solving this remains a priority for branches within the Region.

7.10 Cymru/Wales

The Cymru/Wales Local Government Committee meets five times a year and its work programme is determined and updated at an autumn two-day seminar and meeting. In between meetings the work programme is monitored and progressed by a secretariat made up of the Committee's Chairperson and Vice Chairperson and the Wales representatives on the SGE and the NJC committees, along with the Cymru Wales Head of Local Government. Cymru/Wales sector committees exist in Further Education, Careers, Social Services, BAOT, Youth and Community Workers and Schools, which are supported by organising staff and these sector committees meet on average three times a year. The Cymru Wales Local Government Service Group works with the other NJC trade unions and the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) through the Joint

Council for Wales and with the Welsh Government through the Local Government Group of the Workforce Partnership Council.

Cuts and redundancies

UNISON Cymru Wales called an all-Wales #SaveOurServices rally in the constituency seat of the Secretary of State for Wales, Alun Cairns, on Saturday 4 November, assembling at King's Square, Barry. On the day, Barry hosted its biggest political rally in a decade as public services union, UNISON, brought hundreds of people to the constituency seat of the Secretary of State for Wales.

King's Square was awash with colour, placards, banners and flags as families crowded to hear that public services are rapidly disappearing as a direct result of UK Conservative government savage spending cuts. Speakers included Margaret Thomas – UNISON Regional Secretary, Jane Hutt – AM, Wales footballing great – Neville Southall, Attila the stockbroker – poet and activist, Paul James – comedian, Patrick Jones – poet, WTUC President – Mike Jenkins and Sandra Perkes, local councillor and UNISON member. Music was provided by a Caledonian pipe band.

UNISON Cymru Wales has drawn attention to the fact that it has more members in Alun Cairns' constituency than the size of his majority. Alun Cairns MP has a majority of 2,190 in a constituency with 2,789 UNISON members. The trade union is planning a series of events continuing the campaign for fair funding for Wales.

UNISON Cymru Wales invited all Welsh MPs, of all parties, to meet with a delegation of members at the House of Commons on 17 October. UNISON was pleased to meet with numerous Labour MPs and a Plaid Cymru MP. No Conservative MP, including the Secretary of State for Wales, accepted the invitation to meet.

Pay and conditions

Support workers at Bron Afon housing association in Cwmbran took nine days of strike action across July and August in protest at the decision to reduce annual salaries by more than £3,000.

Support workers at the not-for-profit organisation provide assistance to vulnerable people over the age of 50 in their own homes, helping them access benefits and acting as their advocates with housing and financial problems. They provide practical support too to those with mental health issues, addictions and those who have experienced domestic abuse.

As well as losing £3,000 a year, Bron Afon attempted

to remove staff pay increments, placing workers on spot salaries and extended service hours – moves it deemed necessary despite winning the biggest older persons contract in Wales. The dramatic increase in client numbers under the new contract meant staff having to work even harder for significantly less money.

As well as receiving wide support from local politicians, Labour Leader Jeremy Corbyn MP also intervened in the long-running Bron Afon housing association industrial dispute, telling the workforce they have his personal support. He has praised the professionalism of housing support workers and commended the valuable role they perform in Torfaen. Jeremy Corbyn's involvement came on the ninth day of industrial action and was a welcome boost on the picket line.

The long-running campaign by Bron Afon staff had a successful outcome, with UNISON negotiations reaching an agreement which resolved the dispute.

The devolution of school teachers' pay and conditions from Westminster to the Welsh Government takes place in 2018. UNISON will be assessing the potential impact upon support staff as teachers' terms and conditions are renegotiated in context with the Welsh education system. UNISON will pay particular attention to agreements that impact upon support staff, like the Teacher Workload Agreement, to resist any detrimental impact on our members.

Privatisation and service delivery issues

UNISON developed a local government manifesto for the elections which took place in May 2017 – "Strong local government services are the beating heart of communities", in which it called on prospective councillors to oppose cuts and commit to delivering quality public services. Councillors were asked to sign up to our three main objectives: (1) No to any form of outsourcing; (2) The payment of at least the Living Wage Foundation rate to all staff providing local government services and (3) no use of tax payers' money to employ private consultants to advise on service cuts.

The manifesto was supported by 150 prospective councillors from across Wales and we have maintained contact with those who were successful at the election on local government campaign issues.

Recruitment and organising

2017 was a reasonably successful recruitment year with a number of branches outperforming their 2016 results. The schools campaign has made a large contribution to this success to such an extent that, in some branches, school support staff makes up over

half of the branch membership. Retaining members however remains an uphill task, as the overall workforce is being significantly reduced year on year. The aim in Wales is to build on the good work detailed in this report and ensure that all branches are using the profile that this provides us to maximise our recruitment opportunities.

In November, social housing experts, residents, workers and community campaigners gathered for a landmark conference in Cardiff to discuss the future of social housing in Wales. UNISON convened the first conference of its kind in Wales against the backdrop of the Grenfell disaster, in what it is describing as a critical time for social housing. The #SocialHousingNow event examined the need for a housing charter for Wales

In September over 100 delegates attended UNISON Cymru/Wales's school support staff seminar. This was addressed by the Education Minister, who assured delegates that the government valued them. Updates were also given about professional registration of education workers (including 34,000 support staff in schools and FE) and the importance of collaboration between employers, government and unions.

Over 350 members have taken part in UNISON Wales' and the Open University's professional development programme for school support staff. 18 more courses are scheduled between January – July 2018 and they continue to be an effective recruitment tool. Twelve branch school forums are now in operation in Cymru Wales.

Influencing the Welsh Government

UNISON holds the Staff Side Secretary position for both the Joint Council for Wales and the Local Government Group of the Workforce Partnership Council – a tripartite public sector consultation and negotiation body, bringing together the Welsh Government, public sector employers and the trade unions.

Over the past 12 months, UNISON Wales has submitted consultation and inquiry responses to the Welsh Government and National Assembly Wales committees on the following: Reform of School Governance, Regulatory Framework, Nurse staffing levels, Trade Union (Wales) Bill, School Workforce Data Collection, Reforming Local Government: Resilient and Renewed, Review of Health and Social Care Wales, Making the Economy work for people on low incomes; Phase 2 – implementation of the regulation and inspection of social care Wales Act 2016 – workforce aspect; A reformed post-compulsory education and training system; Phase 2 implementation of the Regulation and Inspection of

Social Care (Wales) Act 2016, Services fit for the future – Quality and Governance in Health and Care in Wales Care & Support at Home ‘from strategy to action’, Strategic Plan 2017 – 2022; Electoral Reform in Local Government in Wales; Transforming care in the 21st Century: A consultation document

7.10 Cymru/Wales

Mae Pwyllgor Llywodraeth Leol Cymru yn cwrdd pum gwaith y flwyddyn ac fe bennir ei raglen waith a'i diweddarau mewn seminar a chyfarfod deuddydd yn ystod yr hydref. Rhwng cyfarfodydd, mae'r rhaglen waith yn cael ei monitro a'i symud ymlaen gan ysgrifenyddiaeth sy'n cynnwys Cadeirydd a Dirprwy Gadeirydd y Pwyllgor a chynrychiolwyr Cymru ar y pwyllgorau SGE ac NJC, ynghyd â Phennaeth Llywodraeth Leol Cymru. Mae pwyllgorau sector Cymru yn bodoli ar gyfer Addysg Bellach, gyrfaoedd, Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol, BAOT, Gweithwyr Ieuencid a Chymuned ac Ysgolion, sy'n cael eu cefnogi gan staff trefnu ac mae'r pwyllgorau sector hyn yn cwrdd ar gyfartaledd dair gwaith y flwyddyn. Mae Grŵp Gwasanaeth Llywodraeth Leol Cymru yn gweithio ag undebau llafur NJC eraill a Chymdeithas Llywodraeth Leol Cymru (CLILC) trwy Gydbwyllgor Cymru ac â Llywodraeth Cymru trwy Grŵp Llywodraeth Leol y Cyngor Partneriaeth Gweithlu.

Toriadau a diswyddiadau

Galwodd UNSAIN Cymru am rali #AchubEinGwasanaethau Cymru gyfan yn sedd etholaeth Ysgrifennydd Gwladol Cymru, Alun Cairns, ar ddydd Sadwrn 4 Tachwedd, yn ymgynnull yn Sgwâr y Brenin, y Barri. Ar y diwrnod, cynhaliodd y Barri ei rali wleidyddol fwyaf yn ystod y ddegawd ddiwethaf wrth i undeb gwasanaethau cyhoeddus, UNSAIN, ddod â channoedd o bobl i sedd etholaeth Ysgrifennydd Gwladol Cymru.

Roedd Sgwâr y Brenin yn frith o liwiau, placardiau, baneri a fflagiau wrth i deuluoedd ddod ynghyd i glywed fod gwasanaethau cyhoeddus yn diflannu'n fuan iawn o ganlyniad uniongyrchol i doriadau gwariant llym llywodraeth Geidwadol y Deyrnas Unedig. Ymhlith y siaradwyr oedd Margaret Thomas – Ysgrifennydd Cyffredinol UNSAIN, Jane Hutt – AC, Arwr pêl-droed Cymru – Neville Southall, Attila the stockbroker – bardd ac ymgyrchydd, Paul James – comedïwr, Patrick Jones – bardd, Llywydd y WTUC Mike Jenkins a Sandra Perkes, cynghorydd lleol ac aelod o UNSAIN. Darparwyd cerddoriaeth gan fand pibellau Caledonaidd.

Mae UNSAIN Cymru wedi tynnu sylw at y ffaith fod ganddo fwy o aelodau yn etholaeth Alun Cairns na maint ei fwyafrif. Mae gan Alun Cairns AS fwyafrif o

2,190 mewn etholaeth â 2,789 o aelodau UNSAIN. Mae'r undeb llafur yn bwriadu cynnal cyfres o ddiwyddiadau i barhau â'r ymgyrch am gyllid teg i Gymru.

Gwahoddodd UNSAIN Cymru holl ASau Cymru, o bob plaid, i gwrdd â dirprwyaeth o aelodau yn Nhŷ'r Cyffredin ar 17 Hydref. Roedd UNSAIN yn hapus i gyfarfod â nifer o ASau Llafur ac un AS Plaid Cymru. Ni dderbyniodd yr un AS Ceidwadol, yn cynnwys Ysgrifennydd Gwladol Cymru, y gwahoddiad i gwrdd.

Cyflog ac amodau

Bu gweithwyr cymorth yng nghymdeithas dai Bron Afon yng Nghwmbrân yn gweithredu trwy streicio am naw niwrnod ar draws Gorffennaf ac Awst i brotestio yn erbyn y penderfyniad i leihau cyflogau blynyddol o fwy na £3,000.

Mae gweithwyr cymorth yn y sefydliad dielw yn darparu cymorth i bobl fregus dros 50 oed yn eu cartrefi eu hunain, i'w helpu i gael mynediad at fudd-daliadau ac yn gweithredu fel eu heiriolwyr i ddatrys problemau tai ac ariannol. Maent yn darparu cymorth ymarferol hefyd i'r rhai hynny â phroblemau iechyd meddwl, problemau caethiwed a'r rhai hynny sydd â phrofiad o gam-drin domestig.

Yn ogystal â cholli £3,000 y flwyddyn, ceisiodd Bron Afon gael gwared ar godiadau cyflog staff, gan roi gweithwyr ar gyflogau penodol ac oriau gwasanaeth estynedig – camau yr ystyrwyd eu bod yn angenrheidiol er gwaethaf sicrhau'r contract pobl hŷn mwyaf yng Nghymru. Golygai'r cynnydd dramatig yn niferoedd cleientiaid dan y contract newydd fod staff yn gorfod gweithio hyd yn oed yn galetach am swm sylweddol llai o arian.

Yn ogystal â derbyn cefnogaeth helaeth gan wleidyddion lleol, fe ymyrrodd arweinydd y Blaid Lafur Jeremy Corbyn AS yn anghydfod diwydiannol maith cymdeithas dai Bryn Afon, gan ddweud wrth y gweithlu fod ganddynt ei gefnogaeth bersonol. Canmolodd broffesiynoldeb gweithwyr cymorth tai a rhoi clod i'w rôl werthfawr yn Nhorfaen. Daeth cyfraniad Jeremy Corbyn yn ystod nawfed diwrnod y gweithredu diwydiannol, ac roedd yn gryn hwb i'r picedwyr.

Cafwyd canlyniad llwyddiannus i'r ymgyrch hir gan staff Bron Afon, â thrafodaethau UNSAIN yn dod i gytundeb a ddatrysodd yr anghydfod.

Mae cyflogau ac amodau athrawon ysgol yn cael ei ddatganoli o San Steffan i Lywodraeth Cymru yn ystod 2018. Bydd UNSAIN yn asesu'r effaith bosibl ar staff cymorth wrth i amodau a thelerau athrawon gael eu hail-negodi yng nghyd-destun system addysg Cymru. Bydd UNSAIN yn talu sylw arbennig

i gytundebau sy'n effeithio ar staff cymorth, fel y Cytundeb Llwyth Gwaith Athrawon, i frwydro yn erbyn unrhyw effaith ar ein haelodau.

Preifateiddio a materion cyflawni gwasanaethau

Datblygodd UNSAIN fanifesto llywodraeth leol ar gyfer yr etholiadau a gynhaliwyd ym Mai 2017 – “Gwasanaethau llywodraeth leol cryf yw calon ein cymunedau”, ble galwodd ar ddarpar-gynghorwyr i wrthwynebu toriadau ac ymroi i gyflawni gwasanaethau cyhoeddus o safon. Gofynnwyd i gynghorwyr ymrwymo i'n tair prif nod: (1) Na i unrhyw fath o gontractau allanol; (2) Talu o leiaf cyfradd y Sefydliad Cyflog Byw i holl staff yn darparu gwasanaethau llywodraeth leol a (3) peidio â defnyddio arian trethdalwyr i gyflogi ymgynghorwyr preifat i gynghori ar doriadau gwasanaeth.

Cefnogodd 150 o ddarpar-gynghorwyr ar draws Cymru y manifesto, ac rydym wedi cadw mewn cysylltiad â'r rhai oedd yn llwyddiannus yn yr etholiad ar faterion ymgyrchu llywodraeth leol.

Recriwtio a threfnu

Roedd 2017 yn flwyddyn recriwtio rhesymol lwyddiannus â nifer o ganghennau yn rhagori ar ganlyniadau 2016. Gwnaeth yr ymgyrch ysgolion gyfraniad mawr i'r llwyddiant hwn i'r fath raddau fel bod staff cymorth yr ysgol, mewn rhai canghennau, yn gyfrifol am dros hanner aelodaeth y gangen. Fodd bynnag, mae cadw aelodau yn parhau i fod yn her, wrth i'r gweithlu yn gyffredinol gael ei leihau'n sylweddol flwyddyn ar ôl blwyddyn. Y nod yng Nghymru yw adeiladu ar y gwaith da a ddisgrifir yn yr adroddiad hwn a sicrhau bod ein canghennau i gyd yn defnyddio'r proffil mae hyn yn ei roi i ni i uchafu ein cyfleoedd recriwtio.

Ym mis Tachwedd, daeth arbenigwyr tai cymdeithasol, preswylwyr, gweithwyr ac ymgyrchwyr cymunedol ynghyd ar gyfer cynhadledd arbennig yng Nghaerdydd i drafod dyfodol tai cymdeithasol yng Nghymru. UNSAIN oedd y cyntaf i gynnal cynhadledd o'r fath yng Nghymru, â thrychineb Grenfell yn gefndir, yn ystod yr hyn mae'n ei ddisgrifio fel cyfnod allweddol ar gyfer tai cymdeithasol. Archwiliodd y digwyddiad #TaiCymdeithasolNawr ar yr angen am siarter dai i Gymru.

Ym mis Medi, mynychodd dros 100 o ddirprwyon seminar staff cymorth ysgolion UNSAIN Cymru. Cafwyd anerchiad gan yr Ysgrifennydd Addysg, a sicrhodd y dirprwyon fod y llywodraeth yn eu gwerthfawrogi. Cafwyd diweddariadau am gofrestrriad proffesiynol gweithwyr addysg (yn cynnwys 34,000 o staff cymorth mewn ysgolion ac

AB) a phwysigrwydd cydweithio rhwng cyflogwyr, llywodraeth ac undebau.

Mae dros 350 o aelodau wedi cymryd rhan yn rhaglen datblygiad proffesiynol UNSAIN Cymru a'r Brifysgol Agored ar gyfer staff cymorth ysgolion. Mae 18 o gyrsiau eraill wedi eu trefnu rhwng Ionawr – Gorffennaf 2018, ac maent yn parhau i fod yn offeryn recriwtio effeithiol. Erbyn hyn mae deuddeg o fforymau cangen ysgolion yn weithredol yng Nghymru.

Dylanwadu ar Lywodraeth Cymru

UNSAIN sy'n gyfrifol am swydd Ysgrifennydd Ochr y Staff ar gyfer Cyd-gyngor Cymru a Grŵp Llywodraeth Leol y Cyngor Partneriaeth y Gweithlu – corff ymgynghori a thrafod sector cyhoeddus tridarn, sy'n uno Llywodraeth Cymru, cyflogwyr y sector cyhoeddus a'r undebau llafur.

Yn ystod y 12 mis diwethaf, mae UNSAIN Cymru wedi cyflwyno ymatebion i ymgynghoriadau ac ymchwiliadau i Lywodraeth Cymru a phwyllgorau Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru ar y canlynol: Diwygio Llywodraethu Ysgolion, Fframwaith Rheoleiddiol, Lefelau staffio nyrsys, Bil yr Undebau Llafur (Cymru), Casglu Data Gweithlu Ysgolion, Diwygio Llywodraeth Leol: Cadernid ac Adnewyddiad, Adolygiad o Iechyd a Gofal Cymdeithasol yng Nghymru, Gwneud i'r economi weithio i'r rheini sydd ag incwm isel; Cam 2 – gweithredu Deddf Rheoleiddio ac Arolygu Gofal Cymdeithasol (Cymru) 2016 – elfen gweithlu; System addysg a hyfforddiant ôl-orfodol wedi'i diwygio; Cam 2 gweithrediad Deddf Rheoleiddio ac Arolygu Gofal Cymdeithasol (Cymru) 2016, Gwasanaethau sy'n addas i'r dyfodol – Ansawdd a Llywodraethu ym maes iechyd a gofal yng Nghymru a Chefnogaeth yn y Cartref 'o strategaeth i weithredu', Cynllun Strategol 2017 – 2022; Diwygio etholiadol ym maes llywodraeth leol yng Nghymru; Trawsnewid gofal yn yr 21ain Ganrif: Dogfen ymgynghori

7.11 West Midlands

Cuts and redundancies

There have been significant redundancies in the large authorities for the sixth year running. Budget cuts saw reduction in many areas of local government, but particularly across school support staff.

In Birmingham, a high profile fleet and waste dispute gained national media coverage. This would have seen 100 grade 3 loaders downgraded to grade 2. Following months of dispute the council agreed for the grade 3 jobs to remain.

Resistance to the effects of the cuts has also come from 350 home care workers who are campaigning against a new shift rota brought about because of a 40% cut to the service. The branch was able to organise members so that when balloted for industrial action they were able to cross the 50% turnout threshold. At the time of this report they have taken two lunch time strikes. We anticipate a successful outcome to the campaign.

Academisation grows at a pace, with increasing multi-chain academies announcing streamlining and efficiencies around staff and staff services. Where Trusts span branches this brings its challenges for local activists and Regional staff to ensure regular communication with all members. The Region has set up a Multi-Academy Trust team to deal with these issues across MATs that span branches.

Pay and conditions

Wyre Forest, the only West Midlands council completely outside of the NJC, reached a 3-year pay settlement with the trade unions. The branch used this as an opportunity to organise and recruit.

The Region organised a well attended lobby of West Midlands Employers in respect of UNISON's pay claim. Several large authority branches in the Region passed council motions in support of UNISON's claim.

Privatisation and service delivery issues

Two councils are moving Children's Social Care services into new "Trusts" – Sandwell into an independent Trust from April 2018 which staff will TUPE into. A campaign in Birmingham has meant that their children's trust has been created as a wholly owned company, meaning greater security for staff transferring.

The leisure services at Redditch council are transferring into an arms length organisation, despite lobbying and pressure from the branch.

Recruitment and organising

Recruitment in branches which had invested in fighting fund organisers stayed steady against 2016 figures. The number of leavers has risen by 11% from 2016. The Region has undertaken a commitment to visit every school, this is around 2,400 schools. In 2017 we visited 1,434 schools with a drop off. We have recruited 136 contacts and 5 reps on these drop offs

Other matters

2017 saw the election of the first West Midlands

Combined Authority Mayor, Andy Street. UNISON produced a manifesto of 'asks' and since the election, we have met Andy Street to hold him to account on six of the asks that he agreed to implement. The Region will continue to put pressure on the Mayor in respect of this.

The Region is coordinating activists to participate at Pension Committee, Pension Board and Pool / Common Investment Vehicle levels.

7.12 Yorkshire & Humberside

Cuts and redundancies

Although local authority spending cuts continue unabated, the situation across many councils is that this does not appear to be resulting in huge numbers of redundancies such as those that we have seen in previous years. However, a number of councils are currently undertaking public consultation around service delivery, predominantly in adults and children's services, which may result in redundancies.

Pay and conditions – including public health

Some councils have put forward proposals to cut to terms and conditions, but these have been met with resistance. However, other employers within the Service Group now seem to be implementing cuts to terms and conditions, including those of outsourced members within private companies, housing associations and leisure trusts.

Fourteen councils pay a Living Wage rate that raises the minimum rate of pay above SCP6. However, only three councils pay the Foundation Living Wage and the remainder pay a variety of rates between £7.85 and £8.75.

Five councils have adopted UNISON's Ethical Care Charter.

Privatisation and service delivery issues

The past year has seen significant service remodelling, including the increasing prevalence of shared services arrangements, the establishment of a social enterprise under the Community Right to Challenge, mergers of housing associations and FE colleges and a number of sixth form colleges becoming academies. The collapse of Carillion has affected members in the Region, as has the failure of the Wakefield City Academies Trust, which ran 21 schools.

The large volume of TUPE transfers (particularly in respect of academisation) continues to present a significant challenge for branches.

Recruitment and organising

Recruitment performance has been encouraging within an ever more challenging context of continuing and deepening cuts. Branches that have bought in to the Fighting Fund have generally seen above average levels of recruitment. Some Fighting Fund resources have been provided specifically to support activity within academies across the region.

Trade Union Act

Ensuring that DOCAS provision continues through Service Level Agreements has been a significant challenge, which has been an unwelcome distraction over recent months. A small number of academies within the region have used the exercise as an opportunity to cease DOCAS.

APPENDIX A – COMPOSITION OF NATIONAL SERVICE GROUP COMMITTEES AND UNISON REPRESENTATIVES ON NATIONAL NEGOTIATING BODIES 2017/18

Local Government Service Group Executive

Helen Astley (West Midlands), Liz Bailey (Yorkshire and Humberside), Carol Ball (Scottish Local Government Committee), Kris Black (South West), Alison Boshier (Cymru/Wales), Sharon Campion (West Midlands), Gabrielle Carton (Northern Ireland), Gavin Cartwright (FE and 6th Form Colleges Committee – from November 2017), Jane Doolan (NEC), Andrea Egan (NEC), Mark Ferguson (Scotland), Caroline Firmin (Greater London), Karen Fisher (FE and 6th Form Colleges Committee), Jane Gebbie (Cymru/Wales – from November 2017), Paul Gilroy (NEC), Samina Grant (FE & 6th Form Colleges Committee – from January 2018), Daphne Harper (Northern Ireland), Paul Holmes (NEC), Pam Howard (Shadow Schools Committee), David Hughes (West Midlands), John Hughes (Chief Officers & Senior Managers Committee), Jane Illes (NJC Committee), Edwin Jeffries (NJC Committee), Jeanette Lloyd (East Midlands), Alison MacCorquodale (Scotland), Janet McKenna (East Midlands), Ann MacMillan Wood (NJC Committee), John McLoughlin (Greater London), Diane Peacock (Northern Region), Hugo Pierre (Shadow Schools Committee), Sue Plain (Greater London), John Price (FSA/FSS Committee), Claire Ransom (South East), Dave Rees (Youth and Community Workers Committee), Shazziah Rock (NJC Committee – from February 2018), Shirley Scott (Northern), Jane Slater (North West – from November 2017), Polly Smith (Eastern), Lorraine Thomson (SJC Committee), Carolyn Thompson (Ofsted Committee), Kevin Treweek (South West), Rebecca Tye (Eastern), Angela Waller (Yorkshire and Humberside), Glen Williams (North West), Jon Woods (South East), Rena Wood (North West), Claire Wormald (Eastern)

Secretary: Heather Wakefield

Senior National Officer: Mike Short

Committee Administrator: Indira Patel

SECTOR COMMITTEES

FE Sixth Form and Colleges Committee

Samina Grant (Eastern), Yvonne Costello/Dawn Casey (East Midlands), Jim Delaney/Simon Steptoe (Greater London), Gavin Cartwright (West Midlands), Sarah Jan Robertson/Alan O'Donnell (Scotland), Anna Williams-Price/Joanne MacMillian (Cymru/Wales), Michael Wilson/Maxine Rowden/Joanne Miller (Northern), Graham Walmsley/Fran Murray (North West), Karen Fisher (South East), Jeanette Kitteringham (Yorkshire & Humberside), Andrew Beech (HESGE observer).

FE Support Staff Trade Union Side

Samina Grant, Michael Wilson, Gavin Cartwright, Maxine Rowden and Karen Fisher (substitute)

Sixth Form Colleges Trade Union Side

Jeanette Kitteringham and Robert Stoker

Secretary: Ben Thomas

UNISON NJC Committee

Wendy Bond (West Midlands), Alison Boshier (Cymru Wales) Linda Boyer (North West), Seán Fox (Greater London), Jeff Grace (Eastern), Irene Graham (Northern Ireland), Janet Green (Northern), Steve Hibbert (Cymru Wales) Jason Horan (Craft Workers) John Hughes (Chief Officers) Jane Illes (Cymru/Wales), Edwin Jeffries (Northern), Caroline Johnson (West Midlands), Diana Leach (South East), Jeanette Lloyd (East Midlands), Jo Mace-Butler (South West), Anne MacMillan Wood (East Midlands), Kath McHendry (Yorkshire & Humberside), Lorna Mooney (South East), Elaine Mullan (Community and Voluntary Sector), Sue Plain (Greater London), Tony Rawlings (Youth and Community), Shazziah Rock (West Midlands) Val Rogacs (Eastern), John Routley (Public Sector), Steve Ryles (South West), Danielle Samuel (Private Sector), Irene Stacey (Greater London), Mick Stowe (Yorkshire & Humberside), Chris Tansley (East Midlands), Mandy Toal (Northern Ireland) Angela Waller (Yorkshire & Humberside), Glen Williams (North West), Rena Wood (North West), Diane Wright (Northern Region)

Secretary: Heather Wakefield

National Officer: Gill Archer

Assistant National Officer: James Bull

Committee Administrator: Phena Symons

UNISON NJC Trade Union Side

Wendy Bond (West Midlands), Alison Boshier (Cymru Wales) Linda Boyer (North West), Seán Fox (Greater London), Jeff Grace (Eastern), Irene Graham (Northern Ireland), Janet Green (Northern), Steve Hibbert (Cymru Wales), Jane Iles (Cymru/Wales), Edwin Jeffries (Northern), Caroline Johnson (West Midlands), Diana Leach (South East), Jeanette Lloyd (East Midlands), Jo Mace-Butler (South West), Anne MacMillan Wood (East Midlands), Kath McHendry (Yorkshire & Humberside), Lorna Mooney (South East), Elaine Mullan (Community and Voluntary Sector), Sue Plain (Greater London), Shazziah Rock (West Midlands) Val Rogacs (Eastern), John Routley (Public Sector), Steve Ryles (South West), Danielle Samuel (Private Sector), Irene Stacey (Greater London), Mick Stowe (Yorkshire & Humberside), Chris Tansley (East Midlands), Mandy Toal (Northern Ireland) Angela Waller (Yorkshire & Humberside), Glen Williams (North West), Rena Wood (North West), Diane Wright (Northern Region)

Secretary: Heather Wakefield

National Officer: Gill Archer

Assistant National Officer: James Bull

Committee Administrator: Phena Symons

UNISON NJC Trade Union Side Executive

Heather Wakefield (Trade Union Side Secretary), Gill Archer (Assistant Trade Union Side Secretary), Jeanette Lloyd, (East Midlands), Jane Iles (Cymru/Wales), Chris Tansley (East Midlands) Sarah Pearce (Trade Union Side Secretariat), Phena Symons (Trade Union Side Secretariat)

Scottish Local Government Committee

General Seat: Scott Donohoe, Mark Ferguson, Steven Larkin, Phil McGroggan, Martin Murray, Kenny McCallum, Arthur Nicol, Stephen Smellie

Women's Seat: Brenda Aitchison, Carol Ball, Susan Shannon, Pam Robertson, Inez Kirk, Lorraine Thomson, Marie Quigley, Lorraine Needham

Low Paid Women's Seat: Susan Kennedy (until December 2017), Jackie Bence

Pay continues to be the predominant issue within the Scottish Joint Council.

Chief Officers and Senior Managers Committee

John Hughes (Cymru/Wales), Vacancy (South East), Vacancy (South West), Vacancy (Eastern), Vacancy (East Midlands), Sean McLaughlin (Greater London), Andrew Haysey (Northern), Vacancy (North West),

Vacancy (West Midlands), Jonathan Mordecai (Yorkshire & Humberside)

Secretary: Mike Short

Assistant National Officer: Marilyn Bailey

Care Quality Commission Committee

Pauline Marshall/Stephanie Richards (Eastern job share); James Pitts, (Greater London); Susannah Cooke, (Northern), Vacancy (North West); Vacancy, (South East); Vacancy (South West); Martin Brown, (West Midlands); vacancy (Yorkshire and Humberside) Vacancy (East Midlands) Darren Smith (NHS Professionals)

National Officer: Matthew Egan

Assistant National Officer: Sharan Bandesha

Administration Support: Colette Whitehead

FSA/FSS Sector Committee

Graeme Anderson (FSS), Richard Collier (FSA-Northern), John Price (FSA-Yorkshire & Humberside), Alan Colson (FSA-South East), Graham Cross (FSA-Cymru/Wales), John Rowland (FSA-South West), Mark Haylett (FSA-East Midlands), Martin Hope (FSA-North West), Terry Shinton (FSA-West Midlands), Alan Howarth (FSA-Yorkshire & Humberside), Chris Tozer (Eastern)

Secretary: Paul Bell

OFSTED Committee

Sam Colderwood (Greater London), Melissa Cox (South West), Carys Millican (North West), Keith Riley (South East), Carolyn Thompson (West Midlands), East Midlands (vacant), Northern (vacant), & Yorkshire and Humberside (vacant), Eastern (vacant)

Secretary: Ben Thomas

School Sector Committee

Margaret Barwell (Eastern), Christine Smith (Eastern), Jackie Dean (East Midlands), Suzanne Bonser (East Midlands), Hugo Pierre (Greater London), Tracey Adnan (Greater London), vacant (Northern), Tom McCulley (Northern), Gabrielle Carton (Northern Ireland), Marianne Buick (Northern Ireland), Cathryn Baggaley (North West), Pam Howard (North West), Carol Ball (Scotland), Avril Brady (Scotland), Mary Moore (South East), Patrick Kenny (South East), Belinda Burton (South West), Craig Martin (South West), Michelle Reeve (Cymru/Wales), Juan Antonio Garcia (Cymru/Wales), Nigel Brindley (West Midlands), Carol Garfield (West Midlands), Donna Willoughby (Yorkshire & Humberside), Lisa Smith (Yorkshire &

Humberside), Wendy Bond (NJC), Diane Wright (NJC)

National Officer: Chris Fabby

National Officer: Leigh Powell

Assistant National Officer: Jennifer Mitchell

Youth and Community Workers Committee

David Rees (Cymru/Wales), Robin Konieczny (Eastern), Vacancy (East Midlands), Julie West (Greater London), Vacancy (Northern), Paul Walsh (North West Representative1), Eddy Redmond (North West Representative2), Tony Rawlings (South East), Vacancy (Northern Ireland), Vacancy (South West), Vacancy (West Midlands), Gail Kilner (Yorkshire & Humberside)

Secretary: Mike Short

Assistant National Officer: Marilyn Bailey

SERVICE GROUP WIDE FORUMS

Careers Service/Connexions Forum

Sarah Cawston (South East), Derek Cheyne (Scotland), Charlie Friel (West Midlands) Vacancy (Yorkshire and Humberside), Gareth John – job share (Wales), Tony Mclean – job share (Wales), vacancy (North West), Terry McPartland (Northern) Tina Roche retired and therefore SGE Vacancy (SGE), Ali Sheriff (Eastern), Nigel Szymczyk (East Midlands retired April 2018), Vacancy (South West)

Secretary: Jon Richards

Senior National Officer: Donna Rowe-Merriman

Assistant National Officer: Denise Bertuchi

Fire and Rescue Forum

Janet Farrell (Eastern), Tony Philips (Greater London), David Drummond (Northern), Jonathan Cooper (North West), Derek Jackson (Scotland), Mark Todd (South East), Andy Fowler (South West), Ian Smith (Cymru/Wales and Chair), Angela Johnson (West Midlands), Carl Pike (Yorkshire and Humberside), Carolyn Thompson (SGE)

Assistant National Officer: Nona Buckley-Irvine

Committee Administrator: Phena Symons

Home Care Forum

Polly Smith (Eastern); Kaye Aris (East Midlands); Caroline Firmin (Greater London); Joan Laverick (Northern); Vacancy (Northern Ireland); Maggie Hindle (North West); vacancy (Scotland); Joan Richardson (South East); vacancy (South West); vacancy (Cymru/

Wales); Sue Brealey (West Midlands); Kathleen Walsh (Yorkshire/Humberside); Andrea Egan (Service Group Executive); vacancy (Private Agency Representative – 1); vacancy (Private Agency Representative – 2); Chris Tansley (Social Care Forum); Graeme Ellis (Community & Voluntary Representative)

National Officer: Matthew Egan

Administration Support: Colette Whitehead

Social Care Forum

Alison Birmingham (Eastern); Chris Tansley (East Midlands); Kerie Anne (Greater London); Juliet Giddins (Northern); Vacant (Northern Ireland); Andrea Woods (North West); Angela Longmate (Scotland); Cathy Roblin (South East); Jo Mace-Butler (South West); Jane Gebbie (Cymru/Wales); Sue Brealey (Homecare Representative to the Social Care Forum 1); Lorna Foster (Yorkshire/Humberside); Glen Williams (Service Group Executive); Sharon Campion (Service Group Executive); Carl Greatbach (Additional Seat 1); David J Lambert (Additional Seat 2); Arlette Kelly (Additional Seat 3); Kevin Jackson (Community & Voluntary)

National Officer: Gill Archer

WORKING GROUPS

LGPS Working Group

Glen Williams (SGE Chair), Carol Ball (SGE Vice Chair), Paul Holmes, Tina Roche, Jane Gebbie (England and Wales), Mark Ferguson and Alison MacCorquodale (Scotland), Gabrielle Carton (Northern Ireland)

Pay and Service Conditions Working Group

Glen Williams (SGE Chair), Carol Ball (SGE Vice Chair), Angela Waller, Polly Smith, Edwin Jeffries, Ann MacMillan Wood (as SGE representatives from English Regions); Gabrielle Carton (as SGE representatives from Northern Ireland); Alison MacCorquodale and vacancy (as SGE representatives from Scotland) and Jane Gebbie (as SGE representatives from Wales)

Recruitment and Organising Working Group

Carol Ball, Alison Boshier, Caroline Firmin, Jeanette Lloyd, Dave Rees, Gavin Cartwright, Glen Williams, Claire Wormald

Service Delivery Working Group

Glen Williams (SGE Chair), Carol Ball (SGE Vice Chair), Andrea Egan, Sue Plain, Jeanette Lloyd (English Regions); Gabrielle Carton and Daphne Harper (Northern Ireland); Mark Ferguson, Alison MacCorquodale (Scotland); Alison Boshier, Jane Gebbie (Wales)

Chairs of Sector Committees are also invited to attend meetings of this group.

SGE/National Self Organised Groups Liaison Committee

Pam Howard (SGE), Polly Smith (SGE), Jeanette Lloyd (SGE), Vacancy (SGE), Jackie Lewis (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Committee), Vacancy (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Committee), Kim Johnson (National Black Members' Committee), Lillian Adani (National Black Members Committee), Penny Smith (National Women's Committee), Natalie Birkett (National Women's Committee), Carl Phillips (National Disabled Members Committee), Bev Miller (National Disabled Members Committee)

APPENDIX B – 2017 LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE GROUP CONFERENCE DECISIONS

1. Food Standards Agency – pay, terms & conditions
Carried
2. Youth work
Carried
3. The impact of the Policing and Crime Act on fire and rescue support staff
Carried
5. Apprentices
Carried as Amended: 5.1, 5.2
6. Inclusive equality policies in local government
Carried
7. National pay bargaining for Wales / a Welsh National Joint Council
Remitted
8. Closing the gender pay gap in local government
Carried
9. NJC pay claim and campaign 2018 onwards
Carried
10. LGPS – Tier 3 ill-health pension to be paid for life
Carried
- 10.1 **Withdrawn**
12. Pension Fund costs and charges
Carried
13. Saving the LGPS and good pension schemes for our members
Carried as Amended: 13.1
- Composite A (Motions 14, 19 and related amendment) – Workplace mental health in local government
Carried
16. Bullying and harassment of local government workers must stop
Carried
18. Bullying of Black workers in the workplace
Carried as Amended: 18.1, 18.2
20. Apprenticeships and new employers/new models of public service delivery
Carried as Amended: 20.1, 20.2

21. Recruiting and organising Black members in the fragmented workforce

Carried

22. Organising in homecare

Carried as Amended: 22.1

23. Facility time

Carried

24. Schools Funding and Facility Time Arrangements

Carried

26. Defending our libraries

Carried as Amended: 26.1, 26.2

Composite C (Motions 28, 29, 30 and related amendment) – Local government and the cuts

Carried

31. The LGBT impact of cuts to local government services

Carried

34. The crisis in social care

Carried as Amended: 34.1

35. Sustainability and Transformation Plans (STPs), health and social care integration and the funding crisis in social care

Carried

36. Crisis in social care – call for a special conference

Carried

38. Funding for health and social care integration

Carried

39. Social care is now beyond a crisis

Carried

42. Funding for schools

Carried

47. Privatisation

Carried as Amended: 47.1

48. Housing

Carried

Motions not reached

4. Disabled members and local government pay and conditions

11. Local government pension funds: divestment from fossil fuel extraction

15. Dying to work campaign

17. Mental health & local government

17.1

Composite B (Motions 25 and 43) – Schools and MATs – developing our strategy

27. Brexit and Further Education

32. FE colleges and area reviews

33. Keep local government services local

33.1

37. Social care and sustainability and transformation plans (STP)

40. Crisis in social care

41. Academies, grammar schools and selection

44. Academies and free schools

45. Prevention of outsourcing of support services in N Ireland schools

46. Special education funding in N Ireland

