

Cheshire East Council to Privatisise Shared Services

On 31st March 2010 Cheshire East UNISON Officers met with council representatives at a regular Shared Services

joint committee meeting. UNISON were alarmed to hear that Cheshire East Council has already agreed that HR, finance, ICT and occupational health shared services should form a separate legal entity. This essentially lays the foundations for a full privatisation of Cheshire East Councils Shared Services.

Cheshire East Branch Officers have demanded to know why UNISON have received no consultation at all on these proposals, why these proposals had been kept off the agenda of meetings until now and UNISON demanded full disclosure on these proposals and the effects that these proposals will have on staff.

Information and Advice Session Dates Announced

Cheshire East UNISON will be holding information and advice sessions on 18th & 19th May 2010. We held similar sessions last autumn which were well attended. We dealt with a range of issues and some people came along just to meet the branch officers. From the feedback we received members clearly found the sessions useful and now we are holding more. The details of dates, times and venues are on page 4 of this newsletter. We hope that you will take the opportunity to come along and see us, either for advice and information, or just to say hello. You can attend any of the sessions which are easiest for you.

If you have colleagues who are not in UNISON then they are welcome to come along too to find out more information about UNISON and they can join on the day.

Cheshire East UNISON Website to Launch

After months of hard work by the Communications Team, the Cheshire East UNISON website is almost ready to go live! Branch Staff are currently busy populating the website with information and it should be live and available for use in early May.

The website will include latest news from Cheshire

East UNISON Branch, advice for members as well as frequently asked questions, details of events that are coming up and details on how to contact the appropriate people.

If you have any information or articles that you would like including or any suggestions then please contact us. Details and more information on how to do this will be on the website.

Please visit the site and bookmark it now.

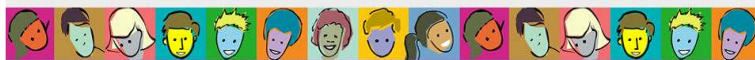
www.cheshireeastunison.org.uk

Cheshire East UNISON

Welcome to Cheshire East UNISON

Our new website is currently being developed. The new website will include the Latest News & Press, Campaigns, What's On, Member Benefits from the Cheshire East Branch and much much more...

Please bookmark this page.



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Update: Redundancies in Cheshire East Council

Cheshire East UNISON branch officers attended a meeting with councillors and the council chief executive on 8th April 2010 to discuss redundancies in the council and their effect on staff. Questions were asked of the councillors including why agency staff remain in employment while making permanent staff redundant?

Cheshire East UNISON did point out that staff are facing huge amounts of

stress, many staff continue to operate under uncertain conditions with the threat of redundancy hanging over them. Phil Mason (Branch Chairperson of Cheshire East UNISON) pointed out that he, "knows a number of members who have put their lives on hold including not moving house or starting families whilst Cheshire East Council sorts itself out." Phil stated, "within the Places directorate of Cheshire East Council over half the staff remain in an uncertain position." The Chief Executive claimed not to know about this situation. Phil added, "we have a good negotiating relationship

with management but the time this is taking means staff are seriously affected. The council should be proactive in addressing this."

Local Government Pay Update

Cheshire East UNISON Officers have raised the 2010 pay claim with council management. UNISON pointed out that staff face ever increasing costs with inflation at over 3%, record fuel prices and of course a council tax rise. Staff may not receive any pay rise in 2010 which for many will cause genuine hardship.

Nationally UNISON is continuing to press the case with the employers and politicians. An overwhelming majority of Labour councillors support an increase while around

half of Liberal Democrat councillors support an increase. The other half of Lib Dems sympathise but offer no support. The Tory councillors support a pay freeze.

UNISON wanted a 2.5% increase or £500, whichever is greater, hardly an unreasonable claim. The Labour group on the Local Government Association support a 1% rise. The Liberal Democrats support a £400 rise for all grades with the Tories calling for a pay freeze for 60% of local government workers.

More on the pay claim can be found on the UNISON national website.

Dispelling the myths about local government pensions

Hardly a day goes by where there isn't some sort of attack from the media and politicians about the cost to the taxpayer of the LGPS. Time to set the record straight by examining some of the common arguments.

They say: there is a pensions "black hole" that amounts to billions of pounds.

We say: This is scaremongering. All public sector workers will not retire on the same day and claim their pension, which is how the so-called pensions "black hole" is calculated.

They say: Public sector pensions are gold plated!

We say: The average pension is £4000 a year and £2600 for women. Hardly gold plated.

They say: Pensions are too expensive and unaffordable.

We say: Public sector pensions have recently been reviewed and found to be fair, affordable and sustainable. Income exceeds expenditure by £4-5 billion a year.

They say: Scrap final salary schemes.

We say: Public sector workers should not be dragged down because unscrupulous private sector employers choose to swindle it's employees out of a decent pension. The real time-bomb for the taxpayer is the means-tested benefits bill, and increased take up of social care and health services, to support people shut out of saving for their retirement through a decent pension scheme. Closing public sector schemes would see this bill skyrocket by billions.

Getting involved in UNISON

If you are reading this and you aren't a UNISON member and if you work in public services with the prospect of cuts looming, there's never been a better time to get the support of UNISON - the UK's leading public service union. You can join online at www.unison.org.uk/join or alternatively contact the branch office on 01244

346894 to request a membership form. Forms can also be downloaded from the national or branch website.

Members are the union and union reps are UNISON's eyes and ears. If you feel strongly about protecting your job, your terms and conditions and those of your colleagues then why not become a workplace contact or steward. For more information please view the UNISON national

or branch website or give the branch office a call.

There are many different types of UNISON reps such as a steward, health & safety rep or a learning rep and all UNISON reps receive full training which you are entitled to paid time off from work to attend.

National Website:
www.unison.org.uk

Branch Website:
www.cheshireeastunison.org.uk

Public services. Don't wait till they've gone to defend them.

a million
voices
for
public
services

Why should hard working public service workers and local communities pay for the recession when the bankers who caused the crisis are still paying themselves million pound bonuses?

Big spending cuts are not inevitable; they are a political choice that you can speak out against.

**Add your voice to
UNISON's campaign at
www.million-voices.org**

**I've
added
mine!**

ADVICE AND INFORMATION SESSIONS FOR ALL UNISON MEMBERS

Would you like to speak to UNISON for help & advice?

Would you like more information about UNISON?

**Would you like to find out more about the issues which
could affect you?**

**Then drop in and speak to us at one of the
following venues:**

Tuesday 18th May 2010

12.00 – 2.00pm United Reform Church, Chapel Lane, Wilmslow

4.00 – 6.00pm Town Hall, Market Place, Macclesfield

Wednesday 19th May 2010

12.00 – 2.00pm Municipal Buildings, Crewe

4.30 – 6.30pm Westfields, Sandbach

**Application forms will be available on the day if you wish
to join and take advantage of the advice and knowledge
available to UNISON members. Non-members are welcome
to attend to find out more about UNISON.**

**For more information, please contact the Branch Office on
01244 346894 or email to mail@cheshireeastunison.org.uk**