



Danger: Pensions Black Hole looms

If large numbers of ECC staff leave the pension scheme as a result of outsourcing there will be a 'black hole' in the scheme.

This will require council tax payers in Essex to pay much more and/or pensioners will get less when they retire and/or employee contributions may rise dramatically.

Staff previously transferred to the private sector, for instance to Excelcare and WS Atkins are no longer in the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). Promises made when they transferred have been

broken. Legal action by Unison is still being pursued.

ECC could insist that contractors taking over its work must sign up to the Admitted Body status with in the LGPS.

Of course, this is no concern to Lord Hanningfield with his income from Essex and the House of Lords.

His Lordship will not be affected by this and can look forward to a considerably more prosperous retirement than the rest of us.

In Brief....

Guarantees

We are working to establish a protocol for Unison to be involved in future discussions with the Council.

Key issues we need guarantees on are pensions, terms and conditions of staff, no compulsory redundancies and trade union recognition. We will keep you informed of progress.

Legal Action

Unison is speaking to top barristers to challenge the Council's breaches of procurement practices and regulations.

District Auditor

The District Auditor (the legal watchdog for local government) is now investigating Unison's complaint about the ECC's actions.

A 2nd bite of the cherry?

The Tata Group were ruled out of the tender process, but suddenly, they're back in as part of the 'T Systems' bid.

Is this a tender process you can't fail? Are they making it up as they go along?

D-Day for Council decision Tuesday 21st April Lobby the Council

Meet 9am, outside County Hall, Chelmsford
Bring your colleagues, friends, family and supporters!

Let Hanningfield know -

"We don't want your sell-off!"

If you are not already a Member of UNISON - you need us more than ever! Please join us and strengthen the campaign by calling 01245 354044.

What You can do

Lobby the Council on 21st April from 9am

Council makes final decision – don't let the Council think you don't care or that you support their views.

- **Get your Postcards in well before 21st April**
 Hundreds are already coming in to the Unison office
- **Street Stalls:** Pitsea market 21st March
 Others to be confirmed
- **Seminar on 6th April 10- 3** in Council Chamber- Independent consultant (APSE) will analyse the implications of the Council's plans
- **Volunteers needed to help** - why not get involved in Unison. We provide training and support for activists , time off backed by law
- **Leaflets available** to give to friends, neighbours from the Branch Office – 70 Duke Street Chelmsford

Two tier workforce Your future pay and conditions

If the Council outsources work without guarantees against a 'two tier' workforce pay and conditions are only guaranteed on the day of transfer only under TUPE (Transfer of Undertakings Protection of Employment).

For example anyone starting new after the transfer will be on different (inferior) pay and conditions This is one of the ways ECC will save the £200m over 3 years.

Council staff would have to work alongside others paid less for the same job - and our own terms and conditions would soon be undermined.

Excelcare ,Balfour Beatty and WS Atkins have already broken their promises that TUPE applied for the duration of their existing contracts. WS Atkins are part of the T Systems consortium who are currently bidding for our jobs and services!

Outsourcing...Offshoring...We want answers!

UNISON has reacted strongly to a suggestion from Nick Bell, Deputy CEO of Essex County Council, that potential contractors appointed under the current procurement exercise may relocate the provision of these services outside the UK..

The disclosure was made by Bell through the pages of the Local Authority magazine the 'Municipal Journal' where he refused to rule out the relocation of services to other countries, such as India.

UNISON has written directly to Lord Hanningfield, the Tory peer

in charge of the proposed sell off of council services, asking for an urgent reassurance that no Essex jobs will be exported abroad,

UNISON Regional Officer, Kumar Sandy said:

"The proposal to export local authority jobs and services from Essex would be extraordinary in the best of times, and as even Lord Hanningfield may have noticed from his comfortable seat in the House of Lords, these are not the best of times.

At a time of steeply rising unemployment and hardship

across the County, a proposal which involves the potential export of key jobs and key services of vital importance to the people of Essex, is quite frankly, bonkers."

He: "As a matter of urgency, I have asked his Lordship to provide either a categorical assurance that no job will be exported to any location outside the UK or, that he please tell the people of Essex which jobs will be relocated, and where they are going."