

January 2017



Southampton City Council spends £1.3 million in 6 months on.... consultants

UNISON members working in Southampton City Council will know that there is often a joke about the use of consultants. Even in a recruitment freeze, or members are facing redundancy there always seems to be lots of them around. Some of these consultants are charging the council £800 per day and have shown very little efficiencies that were not already put forward by our members.

The Branch have expressed deep concerns about the lack of progress made with programmes such as Digital and the constant push by the Transformation team to launch systems that don't work correctly and cannot be used by staff. This comes as the Council starts to embark on Phase 3 of Transformation, resulting in a reduced service and potentially more redundancies.

UNISON and Unite will be submitting a robust Freedom of Information Request to find out more detail about where and why this money is being spent when our members are facing further redundancies.

Are you 26, or younger?

The Branch needs a Young Members' Officer who must be under 27 years of age for the whole of their term of office. The role is ideal for someone who is interested in becoming more active in the union. The post may be a stepping stone to becoming a steward or taking on wider roles.

The responsibilities include:

- recruiting new members and organising and encouraging existing young members to become active in the branch and in UNISON campaigns;
- building a branch young members' organisation and making sure there are potential new young members' officers in the future;
- making sure issues of concern to young workers are raised through the branch;
- acting as a focal point for all young workers in the branch and workplaces;
- receiving and distributing UNISON young members' information.

Other branch officers will help in these tasks.

If you would like to fill this vacancy, please complete a paper copy of the 'Nomination Form for Branch Officers 2017' and return it to the Branch office by 1 February 2017.

Branch Annual General Meeting

Wednesday, 8 March 2017

12.30 to 1.30pm

Conference Rooms 3 / 4, Civic Centre

You're invited

- Sandwiches will be available from 12 noon.
- A free prize raffle will be held with a total of £250 prize money.

Free Will Service

UNISON members can have a will drawn up free of charge by Thompsons Solicitors. This service is based upon the completion of a simple questionnaire which is then sent to Thompsons Solicitors who will draw up the will on your behalf. Contact the Branch office on 023 8083 2740, e-mail branchsecretary@soton-unison-office.org.uk or find it online at <http://www.unionsouthamptondistrict.org.uk>.

Recruit a new member and get a £25 reward

For every new member recruited, you will get a £25 reward. Application forms and further information are available from the Branch office. New members need to have paid their first subscription before any advice can be given but, in any case, cannot be advised on pre-existing issues.

Southampton Solent University LGBT Staff Network

The LGBT Staff Network at Southampton Solent University has held two recent events, both generously supported by UNISON Southampton District Branch, which has many members at Solent University.

On the 1st November, the Network launched its new Allies programme at the University's Artisan Café. Vice Chancellor, Graham Baldwin, kicked off the event, reaffirming Solent's commitment to inclusivity and the importance of all of us trying to understand each other's needs and support one another in order to create a workplace where staff and students feel able to achieve their full potential.

The Allies initiative is a key element in Stonewall's Workplace Equality Index – a scheme designed to help foster more LGBT-friendly workplaces. An ally can be anyone who believes in equality and is happy to stand up and be counted in supporting colleagues and students who are LGBT. They help challenge offensive language, raise awareness of LGBT issues and contribute to creating a supportive workplace. Allies receive regular newsletters highlighting current topics in the LGBT communities and are invited to key events organised by the network throughout the year.

For World AIDS Day on 1 December, the Solent LGBT Staff network welcomed the Southampton Gay Men's Chorus to the University. The concert – and the sale of red ribbons throughout the day - helped to raise over £260 for [Positive Action](http://www.positiveaction.org.uk/), <http://www.positiveaction.org.uk/>, a local charity

offering support to individuals and their families who have been affected by HIV.

Despite advances in prevention and treatment, around 6,000 people in the UK are diagnosed with HIV each year, adding to the more than 100,000 in the UK and the estimated 34 million people globally who have the virus. More than 35 million people have died of HIV or AIDS since 1984, making it one of the most destructive pandemics in history.

While the LGBT community has always been most proactive in raising awareness and campaigning for action to counter the threat posed by the virus, HIV and AIDS are not just problems for our community; almost half of the people receiving HIV care in the UK were exposed to the virus through sex between a man and a woman. This emphasises the need to educate as many people as possible about how to protect their sexual health, and what it really means to live with HIV.

Positive Action provides emotional and practical support for individuals and their families who are affected by HIV. This includes everything from advice on disclosure and treatment, to mental health support and employment rights. With the prospect of significant cuts to government funding, the charity relies more than ever on fundraising events like this to continue its work.

If you would like to know more about becoming an LGBT Ally, or if you want to know more about the Solent LGBT Staff Network, we would love to hear from you! Drop us an email at lgbt.network@solent.ac.uk and ask to be added to our mailing list.



Southampton Gay Men's Chorus

There for You Winter Fuel Grants

Get help staying warm this winter

With rising fuel costs and another cold winter looming, many members are worried about how they're going to pay this year's Winter fuel bills.

Help is at hand

There for You, UNISON's own charity has set up a limited fund to help UNISON members on low income by way of a one-off payment of £50 per household. To be considered eligible you must either be in receipt of housing benefit or your household net income is less than £18,000.

To apply download the form at <https://www.unison.org.uk/get-help/services-support/there-for-you/there-for-you-winter-fuel-grants/> or simply contact your UNISON branch office.

Completed applications need to be sent to There for You, UNISON Centre, 130 Euston Road, London, NW1 2AY, to be received by Friday 17th February at the latest.

there
for you

supporting UNISON members
when life gets tough

Noonans

My name is Tansy, I am a senior team leader for a cleaning company called Noonan's. I am also a UNISON Steward for my staff. I work at Southampton Solent University and I have a team of 90 cleaners working across the whole of the University. In 2015, the University decided to fund the money for my cleaners to be given a pay rise up to the foundation living wage, over the following year in two instalments. This was widely publicised by the University and they specifically referred to "social justice" and "economic regeneration". All staff received a letter informing them of this, myself included:

"We are writing to advise you of a wage increment to be awarded to all employees at the Southampton Solent University contract as from August 2015. Southampton Solent University is firmly committed to social justice and economic prosperity and in recognition of this, they are implementing a move to the payment of the Living Wage for staff employed by their main contractors. The University will finance the uplift in wages to staff working across the Solent campuses. The Living Wage will be brought in through a two stage process, the first increase being in August 2015 and full alignment with the Living Wage in September 2016.

This will directly impact upon the standard weekday pay rates and drive corresponding increases in other rates. You will be provided with these revised rates nearer the time."

In August of 2015 their hourly rate went from £6.63 to £7.34, this was the first increase. The second increase was going to be in September 2016. This was to go from £7.34 to £8.25. As we moved nearer to the date of the second stage increase, my Branch Chair, Tomasa Bullen, started asking both Noonan's and the University for confirmation of the pay uplift. Just six weeks before the uplift was due to take effect, Tomasa was told that the University had changed its mind. The reasons given were:

- The cleaners had had a pay rise last year;
- The University could not control the Foundation Living Wage rate; and
- The University could not afford it.

Tomasa stated that UNISON was outraged and that this was shameful action by the University. The reasons given were spurious.

The University has spent £30m on a new building "The Spark" and have committed to spending several million on a new sports complex, but they claimed to be unable to afford to fund a pay rise for the people who they expect to clean the new buildings.

The University's annual income is roughly about £122 million, the cost of the pay rise is roughly £52,087. This works out at roughly about 0.04% of the university's annual income. The University's aim is to make a "surplus" of 6% per annum and they regularly achieve it.

Whilst the University was quick to see the costs of the pay rise, it did not see the value of ensuring that staff received their promised pay rise and the potential damage not paying it would do to their reputation.

The cleaners were angry and so was everyone else. Tomasa and I organised a meeting and we came up with a plan of action which included contacting the local press and media, the Board of Governors, local councillors, protests with placards and leaflets outside working hours and a strike ballot. Tomasa stated that we could win this fight. I contacted BBC South Today who contacted the University. Our local Labour Councillor, Satvia Kaur, contacted the Vice-Chancellor and the Chair of the Board of Governors. Within a week the University had changed its mind.



UNISON Southampton District Branch is a referral agent for Southampton City Mission Food Bank. Please email Claire Ransom, in confidence, to request a voucher. Her email address is claire.ransom@southampton.gov.uk.

Southampton City Mission Food Bank venues and opening times:

- Monday 10am-3pm**, Above Bar Church, Ogle Road
- Tuesday 10am-3pm**, St Mary's Church, St Monica Road, Sholing
- Wednesday 10am-3pm**, Old Chemist, Bitterne Triangle
- Thursday 10am-3pm**, Swaythling Methodist Church, Burgess Road
- Friday 10am-3pm**, Lordshill Ecumenical Church, Lordshill District Centre

I recruited lots of new members and we learnt that by sticking together and standing up for what we knew to be right, we could be successful.

I would like to thank Southampton District Branch for their unflinching support and the support of individual members across the University.

2017 National Young Members' Weekend

Crowne Plaza Hotel, Newcastle

12 – 14 May 2017

UNISON's young members' weekend brings together more than 100 young members from across the UK to find out more about the union and, more importantly, how they can play a part in the union's campaigning to defend public services.

If you are 26, or younger, and interested in attending please contact the Branch office.

Southampton gets its Pride back!

Sunday 28 August saw Pride finally return to Southampton after a break of 20 years. And what a proud day it turned out to be for the city!

Organised in an astonishingly short space of time (discussions only really began in earnest in June) the event showed what can be achieved when communities and local organisations pull together for a common cause.

Stallholders and a volunteer crew of around 70 people, faced early morning challenges of trying to set up gazebos in a **very** strong breeze – and, of course, the inevitable intermittent bank holiday weekend rain showers followed soon after! However, there was already a small crowd gathering when the event was opened by the Mayor of Southampton at 11am with a minute's silence in memory of all those murdered in the attack on the Orlando Pulse nightclub in June.

Generous financial support for the event came not only from UNISON but also from Unite and the GMB and all three unions were present on the day. Community groups were well represented, amongst them LGBT youth groups; the trans community; alternative gay and lesbian



communities and people living with HIV and AIDS. Local and national organisations also took their place to demonstrate their commitment to their LGBT staff and service users – the NHS; Hampshire Police and Fire Services; Southampton F.C; the University of Southampton and official Pride sponsor, Southampton Solent University and their catering partners, Sodexo. Donations from proceeds were made to three local LGBT charities – Chrysalis; Breakout Youth and Positive Action.



Music and entertainment followed and the crowd grew. By the time of the parade itself at 3pm, the weather was dry and warm and a throng of people set off through the city for a lively and colourful parade. The atmosphere was joyful and welcoming and the diversity of the crowd was plain for everyone to see. In troubled times, it gave you

hope to see so many young people and families – supporting and caring for each other and able to be themselves without the shadows of fear that still hang over our communities in too many parts of the world.

Cheered and tooted on by shoppers, business owners, pedestrians and drivers along the way, the parade wound through the city centre and back to the Pride site. There, the party atmosphere continued throughout the late afternoon and evening, with a line-up of local acts that included the Southampton Gay Men's Chorus; the Ukelele Jam orchestra; the fabulous female vocal trio, Timeless; BBC voice contestant, Harry Fisher and X-Factor runner up Marcus Collins. There was something for everyone to enjoy.

Huge credit goes to the small team of organisers and Southampton's Stage Door cabaret bar for getting the event up and running and making it such a memorable day for all involved.



We hope you'll join us next year on Saturday 26 August 2017 for an even bigger and better Southampton Pride.



Find us on Facebook—Southampton District Unison

UNISON 2017 Annual General Meeting—8 March 2017

Election of Branch Officers 2017

The Annual General Meeting of the Southampton District Branch of UNISON is being held on Wednesday 8 March at 12.30pm in Conference Rooms 3 / 4, Civic Centre. The meeting will confirm the election of Branch Officers, Stewards and Health and Safety representatives for the next twelve months. The following are the nominations for Branch Officers being put forward by the current Branch Committee which were ratified at December's Branch Committee meeting on 15 December. Nominations for any post can be put forward on the form below by 9.00am on Monday 1 February. If you would like more information about what is involved in any of the Branch Officer roles, contact the UNISON office for an informal discussion.

Branch Committee Nominations

| Post | Name | Directorate |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Chair | Tomasa Bullen | Southampton Solent University |
| Branch Secretary | Hayley Garner | Full time secondment |
| Deputy Branch Secretary | Cathy Roblin | People |
| Treasurer | Claire Ransom | Place |
| Health & Safety Officer | Vacant | |
| Education Co-ordinator | Martin Merritt | People |
| Learning Reps Co-ordinator | Martin Merritt | People |
| Equalities Co-ordinator | Cathy Roblin | People |
| Women's Officer | Cathy Roblin | People |
| Communications Co-ordinator | Vacant | |
| Voluntary Sector Co-ordinator | Lyn Berry | SARC |
| Young Members' Officer | Vacant | |
| International Relations Officer | Cathy Roblin | People |
| Welfare Officer | Claire Ransom | People |
| LGBT Officer | Tansy Marshall | Noonans |
| Auditors | Joe Alsford Andy Kennesion | Retired City Catering South |
| Retired Members Officer | Vacant | To be elected by retired members |
| Labour Link Officer | Cathy Roblin | People |

Election of workplace representatives

Nominations are being sought for UNISON workplace representatives – Stewards, Health and Safety Representatives and Learning Representatives. Every workplace organised by the Branch is entitled to elect UNISON representatives in each category. Paid release from work is given to carry out the duties of each role, as well as training. Support is given to new representatives.

For more information about what is involved and a nomination form, contact the Branch office on 8083 2740.

Vacancy for Branch Health and Safety Officer

Promoting health and safety at work is one of the functions of the Branch. Even though employers have clear legal duties to make sure that employment does not cause death, injury or ill-health, health and safety is a trade union issue and not something which can be left to management.

The Branch Health and Safety officer's role includes:

- making sure members, safety reps and branch officers are aware of health and safety issues;
- co-ordinating the activity of safety reps, including making sure that there are enough reps in the workplaces organised by the branch, and convening regular meetings of safety reps;
- organising the information held by the branch on health and safety;
- acting as a link between safety reps and other branch reps to make sure that health and safety issues are treated as an integral part of the work of the branch;
- reporting on health and safety issues at branch meetings, committee meetings and annual meetings;
- liaising with relevant branch officers about priorities for health and safety training, campaigns and publicity materials;
- keeping contact with the region and regional service groups, for example via the regional health and safety committee and the national health and safety structures;
- liaising with the equalities officer(s) to make sure that equal opportunities aspects of health and safety issues are taken into account and vice versa.

If you would like to fill this vacancy, please complete a paper copy of the 'Nomination Form for Branch Officers 2017' and return it to the Branch office by 1 February 2017.

Nomination Form for Branch Officers 2017

Branch Officer Post:

Name:Workplace:.....

| Name of Nominee | Proposer (please sign and print name in block capitals underneath) | Seconder (please sign and print name in block capitals underneath) | Signature of Nominee |
|-----------------|--|--|----------------------|
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To be returned to the UNISON Office, Civic Centre by 9.00am on Wednesday 8 February 2017.

UNISON Southampton District Branch

Annual General Meeting

Wednesday 8 March

12.30pm Conference Rooms 3 / 4, Civic Centre

Sandwiches from 12.00 noon
Stalls from UNISON Affinity Groups

A G E N D A

1. Welcome / Election of Tellers
2. Minutes of the AGM 17 March 2016
3. Review of 2016
4. Branch Accounts 1 January to 31 December 2016
5. Amended Branch Rules
6. Election of Branch Officers
7. Election of Stewards
8. Election of Health and Safety Representatives
9. Branch affiliations for 2017
10. Election of Branch Appeals Panel
11. Honorarium payments to Branch Officers
12. Branch Levy
13. Prize draw for £250 in prize money

Free Prize Draw

£250 prize money

1st prize - £50

2nd prize x 4 - £25

10 prizes of £10 each

Prize money donated by
LV = Liverpool Victoria and others

Please join us for the meeting.