

# Branch Secretary Report 2026



Report for the Annual General Meeting

Date: 24.02.2026

Attending Branch meetings is vital for activity so, a huge thank you to everyone who has taken the opportunity to attend, in person or online, and take part in the Branch democratic process. Your presence is a step closer to the Branch operating a quorate meeting, meaning that the decisions you take today, will be passed.

## **The Branch**

The Branch is thriving in terms of membership. The last 12 months has seen over 1000 new members joining. Unfortunately, leavers remain stubbornly high but the resulting total growth is around 16%. Given the National target was a 1% increase, we have smashed it!

Membership growth in the main has been from the Care sector, and in particular our International worker growth has contributed to growth more than any other area. This may well be as a result of the Beaumont Healthcare work we did and our continuing success in supporting those on Certificate of Sponsorships.

Members requiring support 'feels' to have grown, but the number of cases we have recorded is down on last year to 291. This figure only reflects cases which have needed representation and the actual number of members who have received advice and guidance probably is closer to the 1000 mark.

A high percentage of our cases come in from the Care sector and Schools. They are usually time intense as they require multiple visits and in-person meetings. This is putting a strain on the Branch staff who continue to work over and above, showing a true commitment to protecting members.

The results of that work are the increase in membership and a growing reputation; our letters of appreciation are proof of that.

## **Staff shout out!**

The Branch could not run as effectively as it does, without the Branch Staff. The Branch has a new Administrator, Carmen Wingate. Carmen came to the Branch from CCC Registration services and has proved extremely competent in this role, keeping us all on track!

The Case Worker Team consists of newly appointed Alan Costello. Alan is an ex GMB Regional Officer. Alan is well known to the Branch, he supported CCC for several years and comes with a wealth of expertise. Alan is heading up our campaign at Huntingdon District Council, expect to hear much more on this in 2026.

Phil Gooden has recently reduced his hours, but not his excellent results. Phil largely handles our Ill Health Pension claims, and has achieved remarkable results. Cases that even our Solicitor's have refused, Phil has taken on and won on his own.

John Toomey continues to be our 'Rock'. Whenever a cool head is needed, or a second opinion, John is the go-to person. Again, his results speak for himself, no matter how complicated or confusing the case, John not only supports our members but the Branch Staff Team as well.

Isobel McGrath has returned to the Branch from a brief spell with Eastern Region. Suffice to say, both parties are delighted to be reunited. Issy is the School lead and supporting members on all issues, including the introduction of the School Support Staff Negotiating Board. The SSSNB will represent the greatest opportunity for our School members to change their terms and conditions. No one is better to support our School members through this process.

My immense gratitude to you all for the work you do, it is immeasurable.

## **The Public Sector**

The Public Sector under Labour has continued to suffer a lack of funding under Labour. The Council has identified a saving of £19 million for 2026-2027, the reorganisations are set to continue for as long as CCC exists.

This leads to Local Government Reorganisation. The biggest change in Local Gov since 1974. We should not be standing waiting watching, but be active in that reorganisation, it will happen. The Branch website will be updated as we gain information, so please do keep tracking it.

The 7 Councils have submitted their option, with CCC submitting an option that divides the County into 2, roughly along the lines of the 'old' North and South Teams. At the 11<sup>th</sup> hour, Peterborough has submitted a plan for 3 Unitary Authorities, the Branch believes this is the most likely option.

Staff from CCC will transfer into a new Unitary on vesting day April 1<sup>st</sup> 2028. We know transferring to anyone of the new Unitary Authorities is a huge concern, so the Branch will be preparing members with this process in 2026 and throughout 2027. Indications from Councils who have already gone through this process, indicate that not a lot changes during the first weeks, months, perhaps years. With the whole process of change going into years 5 or 6 not uncommon.

## **Pay**

The Pay settlements in those employers such as Cross Keys Homes has been settled, all staff balloted confirmed their acceptance the deal. Thanks to Robert and Riasat for organising this deal, a huge 7.5% for their Care Staff and a 3.8% pay rise for the rest. No wonder it was a 100% acceptance.

The NJC pay claim is out. The NJC Committee is asking for a £3,000 or 10% increase, a reduction of 2 hours from the working week, increase of 1 day A/L and the abolition of L1 Teaching Assistants as well as a few other requests.

With the NHS receiving an offer of 3.3% for this year, I doubt that Local Gov will see anything close to the request being offered. This will inevitably end up in a round of meetings, indicative ballots and Industrial Action ballot. Here, I ask all to vote and encourage your colleagues to vote. The Branch has a huge engagement with members through face to face and online meetings, multiple email communications, yet the results of this work are depressingly low in members voting.

The Ballot rules mean for action to be valid; we need to get at least 50% of our members voting. If we doubled our usual return, we would easily surpass that mark, so continue to take part and fight to improve your terms and conditions.

Thank you.

Rob Turner

Branch Secretary