

Our ref: CJ/DF/LCC

Your ref:

When telephoning please ask for: Chris Jenkinson

1 May 2020



BY EMAIL

Nicholas Rushton
Leader
Leicestershire County Council
County Hall
Leicester Road
Glenfield
Leicester
LE3 8RA

UNISON Regional Centre
Vivian Avenue
Nottingham
NG5 1AF

Tel: 0800 087 7857

Fax: (0115) 847 5422

Text: (0115) 847 5462

www.unison.org.uk/eastmidlands

Dear Councillor Rushton

I am writing on behalf of UNISON members who are former local authority care workers employed across 13 residential care homes across Leicestershire which are now operated by Leicestershire County Care, a subsidiary company of Johnson Care.

As a local authority you previously operated these homes before transferring the premises and staff to Leicestershire County Care. 910 workers are employed across the 13 homes of which approx 100 are former local government workers who remained in service after the transfer.

Last week in the middle of the Covid-19 crisis Leicestershire County Care proposed to cut the terms and conditions of the staff in their homes. They claim revenue into their business has reduced significantly during the Covid crisis as occupancy levels have fallen and costs relating to agency staff and PPE have increased.

Their proposals will see some staff lose 30% of their weekly earnings, two weeks less annual holiday entitlement, the removal of all occupational sick pay, reductions in maternity, paternity and adoption leave, and the removal of disturbance payment that compensate workers for excess travel costs when moving between homes.

As workers they're engaged on the 'front-line' caring for the most vulnerable people in our community. It is not hyperbole to say that each day they put their own lives at risk in the interests of others.

I hope you agree with me that it is preposterous for proposals such as this to be brought forward at anytime least of all in the middle of a national crisis.

UNISON rejected the proposals, but this has not prevented them writing to staff directly, inviting each individual employee to 'voluntarily' agree to the cuts. Our members are being told that unless these savings are made homes could close, jobs would be lost, and residents would be without a home. This is a level of emotional blackmail that has no place in a modern workplace.

These were once your staff and your homes, you now commission these services on behalf of local communities, and you are the seat of government with responsibility as the principal community leader.

We hope that you will assist us in trying to resolve this situation. It seems simple, if there is insufficient revenue to maintain the homes more money must be found, the staff should not be the ones paying the price. And if it isn't a question of revenue, we jointly owe a duty to staff and the wider community to shine a light where an organisation supported by public funds is playing fast and loose with the terms and conditions of essential public service workers.

I hope you will take immediate steps to investigate and use the offices of the Council to bring about a swift resolution.

I am available for a telephone call or video conference at anytime my contact details are set out below.

I am putting this letter in the public domain given this is an issue of overwhelming public interest.

Kind regards

Chris Jenkinson

Regional Secretary

Tel: 07545 659782 (o) 07944 191821 (m)

Copy: John Sinnott, Chief Executive, Leicestershire County Council