

UNISON
Newcastle City Branch
BRANCH COMMITTEE MINUTES
2nd April 2012

Present: N Ramanandi, K Bensley, C McGuinness, E Wilson, M Foster, I Royal, C Graham, P Gregory, N Oliver, K Nesbitt, L Jackson, V Suddes, A Gregory, J Jarvis, A Lamb, J Liepins-Hall, N Proudlock, S Herron, J Yugire, J Arnold, W Aitman (WA), R Nelson, B Oliver, T Cook, A Watt, S Hicks, M Wilkinson, J Kennett, L Patterson, L Walker, G Burin, J Nicholson, J Shortt (Retired Member), L Alderson, M Temperley, M Symington (MS), C McArdle (CMc), L Hardie, J Bird (Chair), P Gilroy (PG)

1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence

R Clarke, L Ashbridge, A Armstrong, B Metters, S Rounthwaite, B Turnbull, L Hannon, J Dunlop, R Dixon, J Flood, J Musham, P Keenan, M Clark, D Tree, R McGrath, N Bone, A Carson, B Brownsmith, M Dobson, I Mackintosh

Round of introductions from all stewards, and chair thanking re-election of branch leadership.

2. Affiliations and Donations
AGREED

3. Branch Rules and Standing Orders – Update from AGM

Agreed at AGM. L Hardie elected Deputy Branch Secretary, therefore, cannot remain as job share Welfare Officer. Continue to support until new officer appointed – **AGREED**

4. Council Budget 2012

Redundancy Update - Informed 106 potential compulsory redundancies; 60 business as usual – worse situation than previous years. Pressure on council for trawls, need to extend redeployment. Lead officers have weekly meetings with HR. Monitor situation next month then publicise. – **ACTION – PG**

Lobby Report – Poorly attended; activists and members need to attend and support these events, otherwise they are not effective. Responsibility lies with everyone.

Special Branch Committee Report – Priority needs to be on maintaining the redundancy scheme – minimise and protect; need the council to commit for more than 1 year.

ENDORSED

5. Pensions Campaign Update

Local Government Service Group Exec met last week. Outline agreement to be signed off from Treasury – branches to get details – will then report back. Hope to have info before next Branch Committee - mass meetings to be organised. Ballot possible end of April/May.

Calculator should be included with info. Special Branch Committee to be held if needed.

ACTION - PG

6. Pay

Nothing significant to report. Update given re no pay rise this year; £250 payment announced by Govt. has not been implemented in Local Govt; branch favours living wage, although this will impact on single status – legal advice required. **ACTION – PG**

7. Part Year Working

Final offer received – members balloted – closes 13 April. If accepted, proposals will be backdated to 31st March 2012.

8. **Workforce Development and Learning**

Update given on Sims training, security training and the next Organising Stewards Course in August. Adult Learners week 14th May – includes Stress Awareness – contact WA if interested.

Proper training required for redeployed staff. Keep promoting fund for access training.

9. **Colombia**

C McArdle gave a presentation and update on Colombia visit in September 2011.

Presentation included: risks to trade unionists - 4,000 killed since 1986; displacement of indigenous people; the impact of corporate greed and how solidarity makes a difference. A motion has been submitted to conference to encourage affiliation to Colombia Solidarity Campaign. A more comprehensive report will be given at the International Committee meetings in the branch this year.

ACTION – CMc – Report to be put on branch website

10. **National Delegate & Local Government Conferences**

Preliminary agenda out – available in branch office. Timetable open to amendments to motions – none currently proposed.

Conference policy – table list of recommendations at June's Branch Committee - **AGREED**

If issues arise after this decision making will be delegated to Senior Branch Officers and delegation – **AGREED**

11. **Directorate Reports**

Adult Services – Update given on Hill Court; Community Mental Health; Older Persons Units; Welford – DJC in May - **ACTION – MS – send info to reps**

Culture – Ongoing issues with City Library re volunteers, clarification is needed on policy – UNISON is opposed to volunteers replacing staff. Library staff meeting scheduled 4th May.

Children's Services – Update given on Connexions lease, budget, staff rotas/ Reps meeting 4th May.

Chief Execs – Monthly meetings being arranged for reps.

Enviro & Regen – 89 possible redundancies (40 in Neighbourhood Srvs); weekly HR meetings; 6 successful redeployment; N2 grades a problem; query in technical services.

Admin – Resource Manager covering both Adult and Children's Services.

Tyne Tunnel – 2 tunnels complete, have lost 44% of staff during working period; 2% pay increase in form of bonus – one off payment. 4 apprentices now employed full time.

CVS – Austerity affect on CVS - 'Heart of the City' report commissioned by branch – formal launch 16 April, 5pm, Civic Centre.

12. **Health & Safety**

Nothing to report – Health & Safety Branch Officers can be contacted if required.

13. **Membership**

Decrease of 18. Encourage non members to join.

14. **Correspondence - Noted.**

15. **Minutes for Confirmation**

Branch Committee 5 March – **AGREED**

Special Branch Committee 19 March – **AGREED**

H&S Meeting February 2012 – **NOTED**

Branch Education 22 February & 21 March – **NOTED**

16. Any Other Business

- Mayoral Referendum 3rd May – UNISON campaigning for ‘no’ vote – writing to members, including flyer. **ACTION – Admin to contact stewards to distribute flyer.**
- Branch Lottery – change prize allocation, so there will more winners, but a smaller 1st prize: 1st x £500 (approx); 2nd 2x £250; 3rd - 2 x £100; 4th – 3 x £50 – **AGREED**
- Unison Shop Steward Enquiry Sheet – **ACTION – Admin distribute to Shop Stewards**
- Maternity Pay issue – poor pay – revisit – **ACTION - PG**
- Thanks given to Liz Walker who is moving to Cambridge and has secured a job with Unison as a School Organiser.

17. Next Branch Committee Meeting – Monday 14th May 2012