

UNISON
Newcastle City Branch
BRANCH COMMITTEE MINUTES
11th June 2012

PRESENT: J Bird (JB), L Patterson, L Hardie (LH), R N Holland (RH), B Metters, N Bone (NB), V Suddes, D Tree, A Armstrong, J Liepins-Hall (JLH), M Dobson (MD), P Gregory, K Nesbit (KN), M Temperley, S Rounthwaite, J Yugire, R Dixon, C McArdle (CMc), C McGuinness, E Wilson, T Cook, L Ashbridge, P Gilroy (PG), S Doyle (SD), M Wilkinson, R Nelson, R Fenton, A Hamilton (AH), R Sheikh (RS)

APOLOGIES: B Oliver, S Hicks, J Kennett, N Slade, J Carden, J Nicholson, N Oliver, S Barnes, E Whitby, L Hannon, A Watt, V Powell, J Jarvis, J Imhoof, J Reed, I Mackintosh, A Hall, L Alderson

1. AFFILIATIONS, DONATIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE

Recommendations – **AGREED.**

AH – No explanation to why we have rejected some.

JB –MAP - We donate a lot to them and get a request every month.

Miners Lodge Banner – Although we support their cause, we have no link to them and they have requested off every branch in region.

Additional - RS – 17 May IDAHO – ran a very good event – helped a lot on the day by Body Positive – should donate as a thank you – Body Positive only received £68 in total donations last year. **£150 – AGREED**

2. MINUTES FOR CONFIRMATION

Branch Committee minutes – **AGREED**

Matters Arising – **NONE**

Health and Safety minutes – None tabled. Matters Arising – **BM** – Weight of boxes for Cash in Transit are within the legal weight.

Branch Education minutes – **NOTED** No matters arising

3. COUNCIL BUDGET

Staff still at risk:

Chief Exec – 3 people in Chief Exec – 2 gone in last week – positive result. Chief Executive has said extending people's redeployment in 1st week of June – still happening as long as it fits in legally.

Children's Services – 5 on redeployment – further 3 to be put on (8 in total)

E + R – Substantially higher 45-50 (classed as business as usual) particular issue in Leisure (N2's bump opportunities) hopefully numbers will reduce in next few weeks.

Adult and Culture – 3 people – 2 in Welfare Rights.

4. REDUNDANCY SCHEME

Council still has not implemented a new redundancy scheme, but initial offer was x1.25, negotiations currently underway: Branch Committee not happy with a reduction – x1.5 is minimum they would accept with longer redundancy scheme. Labour now talking about a plan for 'Newcastle 2016' – UNISON asked Council to consider 3 year redundancy deal. Existing Redundancy Scheme ended. Trying to get a longer term deal so people can plan ahead, give people a little bit of certainty. No firm offer – but council likely to offer x1.4 with 2 year protection. Possibly take cap off after year 1 to encourage people. Seem unwilling to go to a x1.5 scheme – push as close as can get. A Special Branch Committee will be called when we get an offer, this will probably be part of a wider proposal including disciplinary and grievance procedures.

MD – Access to Elected Members – have to keep that – Elected Members are more unbiased.

PG – We wouldn't accept no Elected Member process – Get a better hearing from Elected Members especially around mitigation.

NB – What is knock on effect for other people – after successful redundancy appeals?

PG – If you win case – doesn't mean you get your job back – job already gone – if the Council are found at fault – they reinstate to a different job – can't unpick whole process.

RS – Low paid workers – difference between x1.75 and x1.4 is a lot.

PG – Totally agree – bear in mind we need are negotiating up from a proposal of x1.25, not down from x1.75.

5. **PENSIONS**

Proposals now available, ballot likely to be throughout July.

Briefings will be taking place, Outlines to go out to all members. **ACTION - PG**

Facility time has been requested. Need to encourage people to vote. With offer – vast majority of people won't pay more or get less. All working population will have to work longer. Info to be put on website. Offer now is a lot better than the one we started with. Info going out in today's News in Brief.

MD – Union has not got position to accept or reject – will there be a recommendation coming out after conference? People will look at union for help on decision.

PG – Service Group Exec would give recommendation. There will be a SGE meeting – a lot easier to get people to vote with a recommendation.

JB – Following briefing please can Shop Stewards go back and inform the workplace members.

6. **EQUALITY MONITORING FORMS**

RS – Gave presentation.

First branch doing this. Showed form to be completed, hard copies are available and can be emailed. Specifically for members only – could be used to talk about the benefits of being a member.

AH – Microsoft Office Access – very few people have access to this – needs changed. Can't be called 'Protected Characteristics – Needs to be Self Organised Groups and be clear. Who will have access to this?

RH – Will this also apply to Voluntary Sector?

RS – Yes open to all membership – form will be updated.

NB – Lengthy form will take time to complete – will be more time spent filling in form than talking and looking at member – people do not like that.

CMc – Form only needs specific parts to each member filled in. Members can fill out word document and collate on Microsoft Access.

PG – Form will be password protected and be restricted to only Rizwan and member.

Membership numbers can be checked with branch office. Information we hold on RMS is only the information that member has provided. Needs to be confidential. This is for Equality purposes only so will not fit into the RMS.

7. **WORKFORCE LEARNING AND DEVELOPEMNT**

Tabled report – No questions.

8. **NATIONAL & REGIONAL COMMITTEES AND CONFERENCES**

Regional Service Group – NR gave report on 1st meeting at Regional Office.

Local Government Conference – NR – Starts Sunday delegates travel down on Saturday. Large number of emergency motions on Pensions – will be the primary focus of conference. Full report back in July Branch Committee.

National Delegate Conference – Report tabled listed recommendations for branch position on all motions and rule amendments – **AGREED**

NEC – JB – Main debates were Pensions and Conference – already discussed today. Also informed TUC has called a day of action on 20 October, we will need to mobilise – we will put it on the agenda for next branch committee.

9. DIRECTORATE REPORTS

Convenor Elections – PG – No contested posts so no elections needed. People have been written to asking to confirm your acceptance – please reply.

Adult and Culture – MS – 2 main issues – Hill Court restructure – 2 staff at risk. Concierge posts – lowering grade, staff briefings started last week.

Community Mental Health – discussions on Working Time Directive at Rota – going out to see staff.

Children's Services – LH – Management Structure Phase 2b – extended a further week.

Early Intervention Social Care – 8 posts – met with staff – savings of £638,000. 3 posts created – Troubled Families for redeployed staff.

Chief Exec – Mini review in Legal.

E + R – NR – Number of service reviews. Security affects 30-40 staff. Further targeted savings could be made later on in year – a lot of work being done and not through staff cuts.

Community and Voluntary Sector – RH – Redundancies are at a pace across whole sector. Creative Solutions – be aware – winning contracts – not unionised.

YHN – PG – Branch has lack of understanding of how YHN runs – need to have a discussion at a future branch committee.

10. BRANCH OFFICER REPORTS

Women's Officer – KN – meeting penciled in for end of month. A tabled report was also provided.

LGBT members – RS – branch meeting at end of June – notice to go out.

Disabled Members – AH – Hardest Hit Campaign went well – over 200 attended. Disabled members Policy Weekend – A lot of branch members attended – very good.

Black Members – SD – need more people to attend the meeting – very low on numbers. Need to raise a profile and other ways of communicating.

Young Members – NR – Congratulate James Imhoof – Elected to Chair of Northern TUC Young Members Group.

11. INTERNATIONAL REPORT

PG – meeting with Karen – regular International Committee for those interested. 1st meeting on Colombia – not a huge turn out. Next meeting will focus on Cuba – next month.

Along with region a mini bus has been purchased – Kenny Bell mini bus – in early stages – put an event on in Civic grounds – Cuban themed, to launch bus.

12. HEALTH AND SAFETY

JLH – Put query in about 2 or 3 month ago, had no response, chase up – **ACTION - PG**

AH – can we also have some clarity about H&S in relation to the Civic Centre not having any hot water or heating until October.

13. MEMBERSHIP

Report tabled – reduction of 82 members – mainly through redundancy – need to look at recruitment strategy.

14. FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Report tabled.

15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

NB – can Welfare Reform be added onto Agenda for future Branch Committee?

JB – Yes, this would be helpful – you could liaise with branch officers.