

**UNISON**  
**Newcastle City Branch**  
**BRANCH COMMITTEE MINUTES**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> September 2012**

**PRESENT:** J Nicholson, D Gormley (Retired), I Mackintosh (IM), S Hicks, L Jackson, L Patterson, E Whitby (EW), J Liepins-Hall, SM Herron, N Proudlock, B Oliver, R Nelson, J Kennett, N Bone, J Reed (JR), S Doyle (SD), N Oliver, T Gregory, V Suddes, D Tree, M Symington (MS), M Temperley, C McArdle, J Imhoof (JI), R Kain, R McGraw, J Bird (JB - Chair), N Ramanandi (NR), L Hardie (LH), J Yugire

**APOLOGIES:** C McGuinness, T Cook, J Arnold, P Wharton, S Rounthwaite, J Carden, A Hamilton, A Carson, L Alderson, M Wilkinson, A Watt, L Hannon, P Gilroy (PG), W Aitman (WA), Natasha Nicholson (NN), Kerry Nesbit (KN)

**In attendance:** K Loughlin (KL)

**1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Chair welcomed all and informed numerous presentations were to be given at the meeting.

**2. UIA PRESENTATION**

Sara McLelland, UIA Business Manager, gave an update about UIA benefits to members, including home, travel and pet insurance. UIA note that Newcastle City branch is a key branch in the north east. Chair thanked Sara.

**3. AFFILIATIONS, DONATIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE**

- Coalition of Resistance, TUC Demo £150 - **AGREED**

- NCC YOT – Support for Activities - £50 – **AGREED**

- Motion – Support the Tyne & Wear Metro Cleaners Campaign for a Living Wage - EW requested branch to support these cleaners and to end victimisation and bullying - recent 5 day strike held was 100% supported. Donation of £50 today, will revisit - **AGREED**

- 'Amazing Grace', Whitley Bay Playhouse, Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> November, 7.30pm – funny tribute to Northumberland heroine Grace Darling - tickets available from branch office for £4 lottery payers; £6 non-lottery payers.

**4. MINUTES FOR CONFIRMATION**

- Branch Committee 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2012 – **AGREED**. No matters arising.

- Branch Education July 2012 – **NOTED**

- Health & Safety – June 2012 – No minutes – JR explained the flooded basement incident in the Civic Centre in July had been quickly resolved.

**5. COUNCIL BUDGET 2013**

**Update on 2012 - staff still at risk:**

**E&R** – Less than 5 at risk of redeployment (1 through budget)

**Chief Exec** – still only 1 at risk

**Adult & Culture** – 5 on redeployment

**Children's Services** – 8-11 still on redeployment – potential opportunities in new structure.

- **Redundancy Scheme / Protection Scheme:** B Rowland, Chief Executive, has now left the Authority, E Weir interim Chief Exec. Meeting took place last week with LH, GMB and E Weir – we were assured the good working relationship between the authority and unions will continue.

- The committee discussed the impact of the £90m budget deficit, 3 year plan (to 2016), believed it was £40m, queries will be taken to next Senior Branch Officers meeting. Awaiting proposals then communication will go out to members, need to encourage more reps to come forward –

**ACTION NR**

Redundancy scheme at 1 September x1.5 (not x1.75). Discussed how this affects those individuals on redeployment. Protection scheme information now live on Intranet.

6. **COMMEMORATIVE VIDEO CLIP** – It is just over a year since Kenny Bell, Branch Secretary, passed away. A commemorative video from Colombia which shows the respect in which Kenny was held by activists there, was shown. It also shows the importance of International solidarity work.
7. **RESOLUTION** – IM, Branch Treasurer submitted a resolution to set up 2 separate bank accounts with Unity Trust for the Lottery and Welfare funds – **AGREED.**
8. **WELFARE REFORM PRESENTATION**  
Clive Davis, Welfare Rights Officer, gave handouts and a brief presentation of the Welfare Reform changes – reduction of social security spending of £83m a year in Newcastle until 2014/15. Meeting informed of the various benefit changes taking place including Universal Credits from October 2013. Labour Link to get involved. A follow up session to be arranged with Clive Davis for all members for a more detailed presentation – **ACTION NR**
9. **DIRECTORATE REPORTS**  
**Adult & Culture** – Libraries – Major changes to services. Motion was passed at a mass meeting that volunteers were not a substitution for employees. PG involved in negotiations.
  - A&C DJC Friday 7<sup>th</sup> September, 'Volunteers' on agenda.
  - Concerns raised between libraries and partnerships e.g. home deliveries, working alone, duties of volunteers. Arrange meeting with Library Reps and PG to discuss – **ACTION Admin**
  - Chair thanked Mike Symington for the good work he had done during his secondment in the branch office. Role of Convenor to be discussed at stewards meeting, due to MS returning to work – **ACTION MS/PG**DMT's going ahead and branch would not miss anything, even though less release time allocated. CMH review ongoing - further discussions required.  
A&C Shop Stewards meeting Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> September.  
**Children's Services** – 8 on redeployment. Posts may be available in 'Troubled Families' section later this month.
  - Queries on Travel Plan to be directed to LH – this will be monitored; general changes to telephony; also discrimination of admin staff using public transport.**Chief Execs** – Partnership House staff moving back to Civic Centre in December 2012.  
**Enviro & Regen** – Reviews ongoing – grounds maintenance (schools pulling out), security control and cash in transit.  
**CVS** – No report.  
**YHN** – Concern of staff welfare and residents.
10. **TUC DAY OF ACTION**  
Working through applications – will distribute as soon as possible.
11. **PALESTINE / SYRIA PRESENTATION**  
JB gave an update and insight into the atrocities of the civil war in Syria. Continued support is to be given to the refugees - difficult as all bank accounts are presently frozen. Hope to be able to donate when possible. JB will provide future updates – **AGREED.**
12. **TOLPUDDLE 2012**  
JR, now Tolpuddle Area Co-ordinator and on the Organising Committee, gave a powerpoint presentation and talk about the history of Tolpuddle, the forming of the Tolpuddle Martyrs, and the events of this year's gathering, 13–15 July, in Dorset. Encouraged members and families to attend next year.

**13. WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING**

WA tabled a report and distributed flyers giving information about various courses. Contact Jane Yugire, Branch Office, with any queries.

**14. NATIONAL AND REGIONAL COMMITTEES AND CONFERENCES**

**Regional Council** – Meeting held before summer break, informed debate had taken place on mutual and social enterprises, same issues across all service groups and now area forums have been organised in region.

**LGSG** – Issues around North Tyneside with regard to 900 jobs to go. To be discussed at next Service Group.

- NJC requesting branch consultation around LG pay claim for 2013/14, generally asking should we get a pay increase, require all members to respond. KL explained pay freeze gone on too long in Local Government and should discuss at future meetings; clarify taking action; need national lead to defeat regional pay. Email consultation out to all members –

**ACTION Senior Officers**

**NEC** – Prior to summer break there was a review of National Delegate Conference – generally considered a good and productive conference. Committee meetings start again in September

- Branch Resources Review – consultation through to November. Branch Committee to play more of a role in branch finances.

**SGE** – No report.

**15. BRANCH OFFICER REPORTS**

Reminder for all stewards to complete Branch Equality Monitoring Form when doing case work – copies at meeting.

Women Members – Notice to go out for branch women's meeting to discuss motions for Women's Conference – **ACTION NN / KN**

LGBT – No report

Disabled Members – No report

Black Members – SD – Next branch Black Members meeting 18<sup>th</sup> September – focus on Black Members' Conference in January 2013.

Young Members – JI – Launched regional pay deal – now online. 'The Kenny Bell Mini Bus for Cuba' dedication takes place on 12 September at Newcastle Civic Centre, followed by Cuba Solidarity NE & UNISON Newcastle City public meeting – Aleida Guevara and Luis Marron speaking. Tickets available from branch office.

Welfare – No report.

International – Covered under Young Members.

**16. HEALTH & SAFETY**

J Carden, Joint H&S Officer, attending National Hazard Conference at Keele University.

**17. INFORMATION**

July Membership – down; need to work on recruiting.

Financial Statement – **NOTED**, address any queries to Branch Treasurer or Assistant Treasurer.

**18. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

CMc - PSA stall at the Monument on Thursday 5pm-7pm, 'Austerity Doesn't Work' - volunteers needed.

**19. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – Monday 1<sup>st</sup> October 2012**

Minute Taker: S Praszczalek