

**UNISON**  
**Newcastle City Branch**  
**BRANCH COMMITTEE MINUTES**  
**1<sup>st</sup> October 2012**

**PRESENT:** J Bird (JB-Chair), N Nicholson (NN), L Patterson, A Carson (AC), D Gormley (Retired), L Ashbridge, J Nicholson, P Gregory, SJ Richardson, R Kain, BM Metters, C Smith, SG Hopper, J Imhoof (JI), D Mead, S Rounthwaite, L Jackson, E Wilson, V Suddes, P Wharton, J Liepins-Hall, E Whitby (EW), SM Herron, N Proudlock, J Yugire (JY), W Aitman (WA), C McArdle, T Cook, I Mackintosh, R McGrath, AR Hamilton, T Carr, L Hardie, S Doyle, J Shortt (Retired), P Gilroy (PG), M Symington (MS)

**APOLOGIES:** C McGuinness, R Nelson, G Burin, C Mason, C Armstrong, L McGurk, S Hicks, L Crosby, M Hall, V Powell, J Kennett, K Harrison, N Oliver, M Dobson, A Lamb, L Hannon, D Tree, T Gregory, J Dunlop, B Oliver, N Bone

**In attendance:** K Loughlin (KL), S Praszczalek

**1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

JB welcomed all to the main part of this meeting. Apologies were noted.

**2. COUNCIL BUDGET 2013**

PG gave a presentation on the current situation and the branch strategy. A question and answer session followed from the floor. Special Branch Committee arranged for next week on redundancy selection process.

**3. CERTIFICATE PRESENTATION**

Certificates were presented to those who had completed the last Shop Stewards Training course. Posters that were created on the course will be used and shown at next meeting.

**4. AFFILIATIONS, DONATIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE**

- Gateshead Unison – No donation – **AGREED**, but will promote social event
- Nicaragua Solidarity Campaign (NSC) – No donation - **AGREED**
- Action for Southern Africa (ACTSA) - £50 – **AGREED**
- UK-Burma TU Solidarity Network – No donation – **AGREED**
- Northumbria Healthcare UNISON – Strike Support - £250 – **AGREED**
- War on Want - £40 – **AGREED**
- RMT South Shields – Strike - £100 - **AGREED**

**5. MINUTES FOR CONFIRMATION**

- Branch Committee 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2012 – **AGREED**
- Matters arising – 10 tickets for TUC Demo 20<sup>th</sup> October still available. Consider selling outside the branch.
- Health & Safety – no minutes – **NOTED**
- Branch Education September 2012 – **NOTED**

**6. LIVING WAGE**

To be implemented as of 1 November 2012 by NCC. Very little notice or info given to unions. Additional payroll costs will be met centrally, so there will be no additional costs to directorates. There will be short drop-in sessions arranged for advice and guidance to show how this may impact on benefits. Council writing to all affected staff; signpost people to welfare rights; UNISON should take some credit, as we have championed the Living Wage for some time.

7. **PAY CLAIM 2013**

- NJC consultative ballot result re. do we support substantial flat pay rise – 941 Yes / 60 No. UNISON nationally has not submitted result as yet – should lodge mid October. Dave Prentis speaking today at Labour Party Conference on LG pay freeze.

8. **WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING**

- £3,000 branch fund committed to this. Information given on various training courses and request for nominations from ULRs in Enviro & Regen and Children's Services to support others in their directorates (all other directorates covered). Third Shop Stewards course will be 8<sup>th</sup> November. Contact WA for further info.

- Bridges To Learning – Update given from JY about free courses for members including Sign Language, Basic Computing Skills and Counselling. Info will be sent out once received about Ancillary Workers Conference in November. Need more Learning Reps. PG – Need members and NCC to be aware of the learning and training UNISON can offer – was helpful to those facing compulsory redundancy. NCC should put this on the LMS. 3 year plan needed for lead ULRs to attend forum. Meeting with PG and H.R. to take place soon.

9. **NATIONAL AND REGIONAL COMMITTEES AND CONFERENCES**

**LGSG** – Annual meeting was in Hartlepool, 19 September, discussed issues around regional pay, living wage, branch membership retention – especially in local government. PSA aware need to increase membership – re-circulate dates of meetings - **ACTION NR Regional Committee** – Discussion around area forums – different sectors meet, take the campaign against austerity measures forward.

**Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) Elections** – Meeting held with Vera Baird, candidate, at Civic Centre and Regional Office last week. Encourage colleagues to vote, and make sure you are registered.

10. **DIRECTORATE REPORTS**

**Adult & Culture Services** – MS - Continuing issues around transformation – 4 areas. Team meeting this week, another scheduled with C Williams later on to discuss proposals. 2 week period to submit ideas.

Working Time Regulations – motion to be brought to November's Branch Committee re rota changes, accessing worklife balance and flexibility.

**Children's Services** – LH – Posts available in Troubled Families – redeployment ends 31 October, also post in DARE.

All Saints school closing in 2014 – will be a Studio School with Kenton Academy. Branch to clarify TUPE transfer. Meeting on Wednesday when JY, B2L will attend, to give info to staff about training.

**Enviro & Regen** – NR – Concern about the future of services in schools i.e. meals, cleaning etc. and more academies are being formed. Open forum meets every 4 months to discuss traded services.

– Changes were implemented in Sept. for school meals – no redundancies, hours contractualised or 12 weeks notice.

Technical Services – Close down over Xmas period; also new structure – 4 posts deleted – 2 senior posts created.

**Chief Execs – Central Divisions – now Corporate Services, Finance and Resources and Policy Strategy and Communications** – major changes in structure, possibly reduction in senior manager positions. Head of Service meeting with S Evans – informed of cuts in policy research and in policy strategy and comms.

**YHN** – Director of Finance retiring – temporary structure in place until Xmas or March.

**CVS** – No report.

**Newcastle College** – No report.

11. **BRANCH OFFICER REPORTS**

**Women Members** – National Women’s Conference, 14-16 February 2013, Liverpool. Motions deadline – 18 October, meeting 5<sup>th</sup> October for Women members to discuss – notice to be re-sent – **ACTION NN/KN**

Policy Weekend was well attended by all branches. Women’s Group congratulated NR on being elected as Deputy Regional Convenor.

**Disabled Members** – Meeting tomorrow at 4pm; National Conference 27-29 October, Brighton; Hardest Hit Campaign march in Newcastle 27 October; hustings for PCC elections in Northumbria 15 October; candelit vigil in Sunderland evening before – linked to PCC Elections.

**Black Members** – 4 motions have been submitted to National Black Members Conference; next meeting 23 October; Black History month – details to be circulated – **ACTION SD**

**Young Members** – Regional group launched DVD ‘Regional Pay Does Not Add Up’ – contact the branch office for copies.

- ‘Songs for Social Justice’ – way for young people to be heard – training at Region to inspire young people to write and perform a protest song – JI can advise.

**Welfare** – No report.

**International** – Cuba event at Civic Centre huge success – 250+ attended.

- Mini bus was purchased in Northern Region after young members visit to Cuba.

Dedication ceremony of the bus to Kenny Bell was also held.

- Visit of General Secretary of Cuban Health Workers Union - 8th October 10.00 am Civic Centre – all welcome.

- Open International meeting in November, Civic Centre – Palestine or Burma.

12. **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

No report.

13. **INFORMATION**

September 2012 – Membership down – challenging time for UNISON

Financial Statement – Any queries to Branch Treasurer.

14. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Monday 5<sup>th</sup> November 2012, 3pm, Committee Room, Newcastle Civic Centre.