

**UNISON**  
**Newcastle City Branch**  
**BRANCH COMMITTEE MINUTES**  
**5<sup>th</sup> November 2012**

**PRESENT:** N Ramanandi (NR Chaired meeting), J Bourn, W Ndlovu, M Symington(MS), T Cook, B Oliver, J Liepins-Hall, E Wilson(EWi), L McGurk, A Green, P Gregory, L Patterson, S Hopper, G Brown, I Mackintosh, G Whitehead, S Herron, A Watt, R McGrath, E Whitby(EW), L Ashbridge, R Fenton, R Nelson, T Gregory, D Tree, V Suddes, A Hamilton, J Shortt (Retired), C McGuinness, J Carden, W Aitman(WA), L Reeve, J Yugire(JY), R Sheikh, C McArdle(CMcA), L Hardie, P Wharton, P Gilroy

**APLOGIES:** Carson, S Doyle, J Nicholson, K Bensley, N Oliver, L Hannon, L Crosby(LC), J Bird (JB)

**In Attendance:** K Loughlin, S Praszczalek, L Reeve (LR)

**1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

NR to chair - welcomed all to the main part of this meeting. Apologies were noted.

**2. CERTIFICATE PRESENTATION**

Deferred.

**3. AFFILIATIONS, DONATIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE**

- Medical Aid for Palestinians – No donation - **AGREED**
- Newcastle Women's Aid - £250 – **AGREED**

**4. MINUTES FOR CONFIRMATION**

- Branch Committee 1<sup>st</sup> October 2012 – **AGREED**
- Matters Arising – Women's Conference 14<sup>th</sup> February 2013 – 3 delegates allowed (including 1 low paid) – N Nicholson, K Nesbitt (Women's Officers) plus 1 visitor – L Jackson - **AGREED**
- Health and Safety – no minutes – **NOTED**
- Branch Education October 2012 – **NOTED**

**5. COUNCIL BUDGET 2013**

- No recap from earlier meeting, copy of presentation distributed.
- Discussed issue on facility time – can be difficult obtaining release from managers (operational requirements). Keep PG informed of any issues.

**6. SPECIAL BRANCH COMMITTEES 27 SEPTEMBER & 11 OCTOBER**

Update given on selection for redundancy. No major changes to NCC matrix. Length of service not a factor – could be age discrimination. 800 employees have expressed an interest in redundancy – 200 have indicated they would like to leave in Year 1.

**7. WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING**

- Stress Awareness course held last week. Sessions can be held in workplaces.
- Shop Stewards course begins this week, next one to be held February 2013.
- Adult Learner Week next year – May 2013.

Contact WA for further information.

**Bridges to Learning**

- Ancillary Workers Conf. – 28 November, Durham. Will contribute towards travel – contact JY.
- MH Awareness Bite Size Session – 21 November, Allendale Road and 12 December, TUC Pilgrim Street.

- Sign Language Session – 5 December, Connie Lewcock.

8. **WORKERS BEER COMPANY – FESTIVAL REPORT**

Festival Volunteering with the WBC – LR gave handout and update of UNISON members involvement with the Latitude and Leeds Festivals 2012. Total raised after expenses was £593 to be distributed between 3 local causes for victims of domestic violence - Broken Rainbow; Newcastle Women's Aid and Panah Residential Support – **AGREED** Further information will be given for next year's festivals at Branch AGM in February.

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

Regional Conference, 2/3 November, Durham – Full delegation from branch. Main topics of discussion were the austerity measures in region and the Living Wage. Workshops were held and a round up was given on Saturday morning - this will feed into the regional action plan. Good feedback from all.

10. **DIRECTORATE REPORTS**

**Adult & Culture Services** - CMcA – CMH rota issue ongoing. Further information available end of week. Issues also around Welfare Rights admin staff and grades. Hill Court move nearly finalised. CMcA visiting as many sites as possible.

MS – Transfer to Social Enterprise discussed, staff meeting soon to clarify. Changes could lead to a breakdown of care packages throughout Newcastle. Too many applications for voluntary redundancy – how will the selection process work?

- **Motion** was submitted by Eddie Wilson(EWi) - followed by floor discussion. Motion includes a request for a steering group to be established to look at single status; solution to difficulties arising from shift work; legal guidance on health & safety matters and rota issues. Input from SOG chairs required and to work with EWi and report back to Branch Committee – **ACTION/AGREED PG&EW**

**Children's Services** – LH – Further meetings to be held with Sure Start and Social Workers. Change of time discussed for Children's Services stewards meeting.

EW – Successful stewards meeting but need to recruit new stewards and reps in Admin. DJC minutes and action points should be sent out prompt – **AGREED**

**Chief Exec** – PG - Budget done. Facility time plus details of costs known – positive industrial relationship with NCC.

- Living Wage Week – stall in Civic Centre main reception all week. NCC implements this week and has written to 2,500 employees. Contact Welfare Rights with queries concerning benefits. Drop in sessions arranged and further information given in OUTLINES.

**Enviro & Regen** – Shop Stewards meeting held last Thursday.

**YHN** – No report

**CVS** – No report

**Newcastle College** – No report

11. **BRANCH OFFICER REPORTS**

**Women Members** – To be given at December's meeting.

**LGBT Members** – RS – National Conference 16-18 November. 2 delegates and 1 visitor attending and 3 motions submitted.

PG informed LC is compiling information about A-Gender (Transgender awareness in branch); Worlds Aid Day – 1<sup>st</sup> December.

**Disabled Members** – AH – National Disabled Conference held 2 weeks ago, 3 motions on agenda; unfortunately business not completed.

- Hardest Hit Rally 27<sup>th</sup> October, good turnout and looking at setting up a youth group.

- Discussed greater HR support for disabled employees.

**Black Members** – RS – Regional Black Members meeting tomorrow 6pm at Pilgrim Street – pass info to members.

- National Black Members Conference – 18 January 2013, Sheffield. Delegates registered 2 women + 1 male (limited to 4), anyone interested going as visitor to contact RS. Motions have been submitted from branch and region.

**Young Members** – No report.

**Welfare** – JY – Welfare leaflets available from JY. Workplace meetings can be arranged.

**International** – No report.

**12. HEALTH & SAFETY**

Nothing major to report.

PG – Info produced around excess flexi hours being lost. Over a 30 week flexi period 131 hours per employee were lost. Long hour culture is endemic in NCC – home working, no lunch breaks, goodwill etc - meeting tomorrow with Acting Chief Exec to discuss. Stress Awareness course next week. CJC to do report through H&S on increase in stress at work.

**13. INFORMATION**

**Membership** – Down 28. Application form on the back of ‘Talk to Us’ flyer.

**Financial Statement** – Any queries contact Branch Treasurer.

**14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

PG – Social Enterprise – explained what it means and what the trade union view is on it. Need input from where this has already happened – bring proposal to next Branch Committee – **ACTION PG**

**15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2012, Committee Room, Civic Centre