

UNISON
Newcastle City Branch
BRANCH COMMITTEE MINUTES
11 April 2013

PRESENT: D Tree, V Suddes, L Ashbridge, M Wilkinson, A Hamilton, E Whitby, C McArdle, E Wilson, M Symington, P Gregory, L McGurk, J Yugire, R Nelson, L Jackson, N Oliver, W Aitman, L Patterson, J Shortt, B Oliver, D Gormley, J Kennett

In Attendance: D Atkinson, S Praszczalek

APOLOGIES: N Bone, K Nesbitt, S Hicks, C McGuinness, M Hall, P Cobb, J Nicholson, J Liepins-Hall, L Kennedy, L Crosby, D Daley, L Hannon, T Gregory, P Gilroy, J Bird

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

N Ramanandi will chair the meeting – noting apologies from Chair – and welcomed all. Absences noted.

- Due to attending another meeting the Branch Disabilities Officer informed that the Regional Disabled Members Policy Weekend in May is open to all – you do not have to be disabled to attend, you can work with disabled or represent disabled members.

2. AFFILIATION, DONATIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE

(a) Affiliations: International Centre for TU Rights; Hope Not Hate. Newcastle PSC – **AGREED**

(b) Donations: Action for Southern Africa – £50.00 **AGREED**

Medical Aid for Palestinians - £50.00 **AGREED**

War on Want - £50.00 **AGREED**

Newcastle PSC - £250.00 **AGREED**

NE Women's Network - £50.00 **AGREED**

3. MINUTES FOR CONFIRMATION

(a) Branch Committee 4th March – **AGREED**

- Matters Arising – None

- Health & Safety February – **Noted**

- Branch Education March – **Noted**

- Special Branch Committee 27 March – LG & NDC Delegates Agreement – discussion took place about how decision was made – paper was circulated at Special BC meeting.

- Multicultural Music Event 20th April – **Noted**

4. Financial Report

Financial Statement – **Noted**. Any queries contact A Hall, Branch Treasurer.

(a) J Imhoof, Young Members Officer, to encourage more young people in workplaces to join.

(b) Women's Group – will be advertising in the next few weeks of further meetings – encourage more to attend.

5. PAY CLAIM 2013

Update given – 1% offered, with list of changes to terms and conditions – unacceptable. Formal offer end of April. LGSGE agreed branches to contact employers about what the offer will be – NCC 1%. NJC to meet again – awaiting recommendation.

- Pay updates emailed out to be shared in workplaces – only to members. Information available on national and branch website.

6. WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT & LEARNING

(a) Branch Education Co-ordinator gave update on free courses to members – 'Moving On' course for those who recently left work through voluntary severance, redundancy or leaving work soon.

Any queries about workplace learning contact W Aitman in branch office. Informed approx. £63,700 would be the cost of free courses offered to members in the last 6 months!

(b) Bridges to Learning – New flyer available with info on courses – contact J Yugire for further details.

(c) Newcastle City Learning – Courses in May, can assist localised services i.e. Basic IT, CV uploading etc. Shop Stewards will attend each session. Could be rolled out in other areas?

(d) Union Learning Fund – secured funding for another year – C Simblett now in position (was E Lipscombe).

7. CONFERENCE 2013

Delegation confirmed. Motions to NDC – 3 not on agenda, have appealed. Will intervene on other motions if appeals unsuccessful.

8. NATIONAL AND REGIONAL COMMITTEES AND CONFERENCES

- Regional Council AGM held in March.

- Approx. 1,000 recruited nationally in March. Recruitment drive in Civic Centre and workplaces – YHN, Dimensions and Mental Health Matters 29th – 3rd May. Need shop steward volunteers to work with Regional Officers – liaise with contact leads – email for volunteers – **NR ACTION**

- List of members needed from HR re 2 Academies and the large secondary schools – target Schools Working Group. Initiatives to be agreed – recommendation to be emailed to shop stewards – **NR ACTION**

- Discussed recruiting new stewards; pro forma to build up a clearer understanding of where needed; new recruitment material much clearer; should publicise Welfare assistance

9. DIRECTORATE UPDATES

Mostly covered in earlier discussion.

Adult & Culture – Nothing further to report.

Children's Services – Changes to directorate. Discussion took place about having joint meeting with stewards from Adults and Children's directorates, possibly overlap of meetings. Informed that next Branch Committee would bring recommendations on how to cover new set up.

Chief Execs – Nothing further to report

Enviro & Regen – Technical Services – Informed new Code of Conduct is being discussed.

Feedback to be given to next Branch Committee – **NR ACTION**

– Feasibility Study – City Build to stay within NCC control

YHN – No report

CVS – No report

Newcastle College – Nothing to report

10. BRANCH OFFICER REPORTS

International – War on Want – encourage members to use link to sign petition to the Colombia Embassy to protect Alfamir Castillo, human rights defender, and her family, <http://www.waronwant.org/overseas-work/conflict-zones/17837-urgent-protect-colombian-leader-alfamir-castillos-life>

11. HEALTH & SAFETY

Concern over Shieldfield premises – overcrowding, H&S Officer to contact L McGurk and M Symington to discuss - **J Reed ACTION**

12. INFORMATION

Membership continues to drop due to redundancy etc., expecting a further decrease over the following month.

- To record each month running total of membership, bring to next Branch Committee – **Admin ACTION**

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Concern over introduction of 'bedroom tax' – meeting tonight at 6pm, Newcastle.

- To discuss in branch how to support locally and nationally – financial hardship. How can Your Homes Newcastle help?

14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Monday 13th May 2013, 3pm, Committee Room, Newcastle Civic Centre.