

UNISON
Newcastle City Branch
BRANCH COMMITTEE MINUTES
13 May 2013

PRESENT: T Cook, J Yugire, R Fenton, A Hall, P Barwick, J Young, L McGurk, L Ashbridge, M Wilkinson, M Symington, C McArdle, D Mead(DM), W Ndlovu, L Patterson, A Carson, L Kennedy, J Nicholson, C McGuinness, A Hamilton, A Lamb, D Tree, V Suddes, J Liepins-Hall(JL-H), B Oliver, D Gormley, T Carr, N Ramanandi, J Bird - Chair, L Hardie, P Gilroy(PG), M Dobson, C Smith, G Brown, J Horne, G Burin, N Oliver, W Aitman(WA), S Hicks, K Nesbitt(KN), L Jackson
In Attendance: D Atkinson, S Praszczalek

APOLOGIES: P Brown, P Cobb, V Powell, D Carroll, A Robinson, E Wilson, J Kennett, N Bone, P Gregory, N Nicholson(NN), J Shortt, J Imhoof, L Hannon, T Gregory, D Muse, E Whitby, R Sheikh

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Shop Stewards introduction – informing of location in new directorates.

2. AFFILIATIONS, DONATIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE

(a) **Donations:** TT2 Cullercoats Lifeboat Golf Day - £50.00 **AGREED**
Disasters Emergency Committee – Syria Crisis - £50.00 **AGREED**

3. MINUTES FOR CONFIRMATION

(a) Branch Committee 11th April – **AGREED**

- Matters Arising – Explanation given about links with Palestine Solidarity Campaign in Northern Region.

- Health & Safety – Update required from H&S Officer re Shieldfield – **John Reed ACTION**

- Branch Education April - **Noted**

4. FINANCIAL REPORT

Treasurer informed branch funds are healthy. New online branch accounting (OLBA) in place – future Branch Committee reports may take on a different format.

5. BRANCH STRUCTURE

Senior Branch Officers met and discussed which officers were leading on the new NCC directorate structure – Resources – Paul Gilroy; Wellbeing, Care and Learning – Conor McArdle & Lynda Hardie; Investment and Development – Nicky Ramanandi; Communities – Nicky Ramanandi; Assistant Chief Executive – Paul Gilroy; YHN – Derek Muse (Derek Muse – Community & Voluntary Sector). Resources needed in Schools/Trusts/Academies – secondment to branch being considered. Any proposals to be brought to future Branch Committee – **PG ACTION**

Reorganise Shop Stewards monthly meetings to reflect new structure – **Senior Officers ACTION**

6. SENIOR MANAGEMENT REVIEW

Slow progress, need structure fit for purpose. Presentation given on the review – Q&A session followed. Budget savings to be achieved of £1.5m – less managers less pay bill. £50m to be spent on Civic Centre building – more employees coming back to work here – needs updating. There are different budgets for different expenditures. Chief Exec's office to become open plan – more transparency.

7. LIBRARIES

Meeting held 3 weeks ago – changes to proposals. Discussed the differences between Community and Partnership libraries; unacceptable to use volunteers in any libraries, trained staff should be in place; Issues include: CRB checks; ownership of buildings – asset locks; insurance; stock transfer etc. Awaiting clarification on these issues from NCC. PG gave an overview of the National Library Event in London.

8. CO-OPERATIVE COUNCIL SEMINAR

At seminar Sustainable Enterprise Strategies (SES) explained about support to form co-operatives; involving staff; sharing info and process – UNISON shared views. Generally positive outcome. SES to meet with E Weir & C Bull.

9. INFORMAL CABINET

Meet on a regular basis with trade unions involved. Opportunity to share issues. Some items still remain on DJCs.

10. CONFERENCE 2013

Delegation update given – C McArdle now delegate to NDC – E Wilson not given release. NDC Preliminary Agenda due last Friday, still not published.

LGC – Agenda released; 2 motions from branch on it – Co-op Councils and Cuts. Northern Region also has motion on Cuts.

- June Branch Committee – Branch position on motions to be agreed – **Senior Officers ACTION**

11. WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING

Adult Learners Week next week – info was emailed and posted out, list of future courses were given. Nominations were put forward for the award – W Ndlovu, Branch ULR and Shop Steward won! Contact W Aitman for further information.

Bridges to Learning – Informed of courses and workshops to be held – contact J Yugire for further information.

12. NATIONAL AND REGIONAL COMMITTEES AND CONFERENCES

- SGE – Conference business.

- NEC – Conference business plus info given on the new Emergency Legal Helpline available for Thompsons, and also continuing access through Regional Officer.

- NTUC conference – 13/14 April – motion based. Good conference in general. UNISON had high profile and moved/spoke on important motions, incl. emergency motion on Colombia. Constitutional motion fell, which was disappointing to UNISON as this would have brought NTUC more in-line with UNISON policy/practice and ensured the NTUC remained vibrant and relevant.

- Regional Committee – Friday 3rd May – discussed pay claim and local elections. Concern over UKIP coming 2nd in South Shields by-election and general increase in vote nationally.

- Pay Matters on branch website – Branch consultation out next week – 1% pay increase with no strings or reject with sustained strike action - **PG ACTION**

13. DIRECTORATE REPORTS

Wellbeing Care & Learning – full report given last Branch Committee. Update given on Connexions, Sure Start, Redeployment, Fixed Term Contracts, Schools, B2L event at All Saints, bump redundancies and School Support Seminar in London.

- Adult DJC on Monday – clarification if libraries are included – **PG ACTION**

- Shop Stewards meeting this Friday; Workstreams updated; discussed Care Co-ops, Care Management, Recruitment, Crisis Response, Cherry Tree, agency staff – how many?

- NCC revisiting Cheviot View – final response 1 June.

- Castledene – arrange meeting – **PG ACTION**

- Children's Res. Care – rotas agreed.

Resources – Review in Revs & Bens.

Concern over large vacancies in IT – arrange meeting between **DM + PG ACTION**

Chief Execs – Nothing further to report

Communities – Workstreams – Customer & Leisure Services, Libraries – pilot before integration, work shadowing across areas – another meeting in June. Leisure – Advert out for 3 posts. Update given on City Hall, Customer Service Centres, Security Service, and Environment.

JL-H - Code of Conduct for Technical Services has been shelved.

Investment & Development – No update

YHN – Paper tabled and circulated

CVS – Paper tabled and circulated

Newcastle College – No update

14. **BRANCH OFFICER REPORTS**

Women Members – Update given on future events and meetings. Next meeting is on 14 June – power hoop session; July – yoga; September next meeting – details to be circulated

- **NN/KN ACTION**

LGBT Members – International Day Against Homophobia (IDAHO) 17 May – event and information outside and inside Newcastle Civic Centre. Phillipa Scrafton, UNISON, Co-Chair of National LGBT, will be speaking.

Disabled Members – Regional Policy Weekend – 10/11 May 2013 – 6 members from branch attended. Raised delegation to SOG conferences and application of scheme of fair representation and proportionality. Believe NCC including Access to Work funding with budget.

Black Members – No report. Any interested in becoming Black Members' Officer to contact branch office.

Young Members – No report

Welfare – No report. Welfare calls into branch office being monitored. Contact made to Credit Union about access to members – rather than using Pay Day lenders – to discuss with National Welfare Officers.

International – Northern Region Forum – work on Palestine and other issues. Colombia – 3,000 signed petition for Alfamir Castillo: President of the Women Sugar Cane Cutters Committee.

15. **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

Now monthly meetings being rescheduled for every 2-3 months. Need to encourage H&S reps to attend. 2 delegates attending Hazards Conference in July.

16. **INFORMATION**

Membership – Significant reduction due to staff now leaving due to redundancy. All leavers are contacted by branch asking if they wish to remain in membership – either as unemployed or retired member.

Recruitment Update – Recruitment drive in Civic Centre, YHN and some schools - end April/beginning May – mixture of success and activity. Recruited 2, spoke to large numbers – especially in schools.

17. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Still awaiting figures from HR for compulsory redundancies.

18. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Monday 3rd June 2013 – 3pm, Committee Room, Civic Centre