

**UNISON**  
**Newcastle City Branch**  
**BRANCH COMMITTEE MINUTES**  
**3 June 2013**

**PRESENT:** A Gregory, V Suddes, D Tree, J Young, D Gormley, S Rounthwaite, V Powell, A Hall, T Cook, M Symington, J Horne, J Imhoof, A Hamilton, M Wilkinson, L Ashbridge, N Bone, P Gregory, A Green, G Brown, L Patterson, J Carden, W Aitman, J Yugire, J Reed, T Carr, J Liepins-Hall, G Burin, E Whitby, P Gilroy (PG), J Bird-Chair (JB), N Ramanandi (NR)

**In Attendance:** D Atkinson, S Praszczalek

**APOLOGIES:** D Carroll, B Oliver, J Shortt, J Nicholson, C McGuinness, R Sheikh, A Carson, K Nesbitt, N Oliver, S Hicks, L Hannon, C Hodgson, A Lamb, L Jackson, R Fenton, D Mead, L Crosby

**1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Branch Secretary opened meeting – Chair delayed. Apologies acknowledged.

**2. AFFILIATIONS, DONATIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE**

Affiliations and Donations - None

Correspondence – Noted

**3. MINUTES FOR CONFIRMATION**

(a) Branch Committee 3 June - **AGREED**

Matters Arising – Item 14 – The F&GP meeting agreed 3 delegates, in full membership, (numbers could be increased in exceptional circumstances) would attend SOG conferences - SOGs to submit delegation to Senior Branch Officers then to Branch Committee for approval.

(b) Health & Safety April – no meeting

(c) Branch Education May – no minutes

**4. FINANCIAL REPORT**

Branch finances are good. OLBA (online branch accounting) input ongoing - will enable various reports to be produced in the future.

**5. SENIOR MANAGEMENT REVIEW**

Progress is slow. Meeting in scope was held on 22<sup>nd</sup>, identified group functions – more generic, some omissions noted. Initial proposals on the intranet. Next meeting this Thursday – proposed posts should be known by Thursday, but clarity needed – to be published Friday on Intranet. £1.5m savings out of this review. Updated structure to be available end of the week.

**Pay** – Discussed concerns about proposals, inequalities, senior posts to equal generic pay – will be published end of week. Vote needed – at least a month to consult. Potential recruitment opportunity.

Newcastle Ballot – so far poor return - important to vote, remind colleagues, closes Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> June 12 noon.

**6. CO-OPERATIVES**

Meeting held – Care Co-operatives – what does it mean? It may be a trading company in private sector – not co-operative, possibly ALMO, greater understanding needed. NCC

could lose ability to influence. No timeline as yet, concern if staff have to transfer, secondment better. SES willing to meet activists to discuss.

## 7. **MEMBERSHIP**

Continuing downward national trend due to people leaving through redundancy. Encourage non-members to join. Will get figures on density from NCC and bring to next branch committee – **PG ACTION**

## 8. **COUNCIL JOINT COMMITTEE**

Meeting held 2 weeks ago – not a great deal discussed.

## 9. **CONFERENCE 2013**

Branch delegate meeting held – who would speak on each motion. Recommendations on branch to be circulated on motions as info just released, email out - **JB ACTION**  
Release for delegates to conference now resolved.

## 10. **WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING**

- Adult Learners week very successful – good attendance.
- Adult Learners Week Award ceremony at Gateshead Stadium on 22<sup>nd</sup> – branch has won 3 awards in 3 years.
- New reps course 11 June (first time held) – reps can ask questions etc. – 7 already registered .
- Brush Up Skills Course on Wednesday at Trehitt Road

**B2L** – CPD workshop 7 June; Mental Health Awareness course plus many others available – contact J Yugire for details.

## 11. **NATIONAL AND REGIONAL COMMITTEES AND CONFERENCES**

Regional Local Government SG meeting 2 weeks ago – discussed Pay, LG Conference. Academies – 43/46 out of 96 involved schools moving to Foundation Trust/Academy status. Concern regionally over traded services provision within schools being decreased (cleaning, catering, HR, IT, etc) Share details with shop stewards when available – **NR ACTION**

## 12. **DIRECTORATE REPORTS**

**Wellbeing, Care and Learning** – Adults Care Co-ops ongoing; Cherry Tree View – needs to be resolved and signed off; Issues over Cheviot View and Castle Dene still ongoing; concern about Welfare Rights move and overcrowding in new premises – contact Branch Health & Safety Officers with details.

**Resources** – Senior Managers proposals moving forward.

**Chief Execs** – As above

**Communities** – Ongoing reviews in Environmental Services, security, libraries, leisure, parks etc. Discussed asset transfer in leisure, 3<sup>rd</sup> party interest, community run libraries – encourage members to attend relevant meetings when arranged – need good support.

**Investment & Development** – No report.

**YHN** – Options appraisal – ALMO could come back to NCC; £20m surplus since 2005.

Problems with welfare reform and housing benefits - bedroom tax introduced 6 weeks ago and now 2,000 tenants in arrears - 25% affected are low paid.

**Community and Voluntary Sector** – No report.

**Newcastle College** – No report.

## 13. **BRANCH OFFICER REPORTS**

**Equalities** – No report

**Women Members** – Email to be circulated around future activities, please support and encourage women members to attend – **NN/KN ACTION**

**LGBT Members** – No report other than IDAHO event, 17 May, very positive with good press and TV coverage.

**Disabled Members** – No report

**Black Members** – No report – position still vacant.

**Young Members** – Durham Miners Gala, 13 July, need volunteers for this event.

Rumoured G4S may steward this – not desirable! **NR** to raise this at NTUC exec.

**Welfare** – School Uniform Grant already circulated, closing date 5 July. Welfare AGM – excellent Welfare Reform presentation given re pay day loans, money lending, loan sharks etc. Contact J Yugire for copy – put on branch website – **JY ACTION**

- w/c 17 June TUC bus touring region – austerity measures, hardships, food banks etc. Case studies needed – approach members sensitively about this issue – contact branch with details. Communication to go out to all members soon – **PG ACTION**

**International** – Meeting with solicitors involved with Cuba 4 - info to July/Sept Branch Committee.

- TUC targeting GAP and Debenhams – not signed new agreement on working conditions of overseas workers. Possible leafleting and to sign online petition.
- Alfamir Castillo, Colombian Activist, receiving further death threats (court case ongoing) – encourage members to sign online petition.

#### 14. **HEALTH & SAFETY**

Asbestos Register – contact H&S Officers for forms to register to go to Thompsons Solicitors.

- Next H&S meeting Tuesday 11 June, Branch Office.

#### 15. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Tolpuddle Martyrs Festival and Rally - Friday 19th July to Sunday 21st July 2013 – encourage members to attend.

- Shop Stewards Committees – continue to meet individually – possibility to overlap at end of meetings.

#### 16. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Monday 1<sup>st</sup> July, 3pm, Committee Room, Newcastle Civic Centre.