

**Newcastle City Branch
BRANCH COMMITTEE MINUTES
6 July 2015**

PRESENT: L Hardie, J Imhoof, D Mead, J Horne, L Ashbridge, S Hicks, M Wilkinson, S Rounthwaite, A Clark, A Stewart, M Dobson (MD), I Royal, N Bone(NB), E Whitby(EW), J Yugire (JY), W Aitman (WA), T Carr, C McArdle (CM), N Ramanandi (NR-Chair), E Wilson, J Kennett, R Nelson, J Liepins-Hall, M Clark, P Barwick (PB), N Oliver, J Nicholson, J Horne, T Leddicoat, L Kennedy, C McGuinness, L McGurk, T Rayne, G Smith, D Brown

In Attendance: K Loughlin, Regional Officer

APOLOGIES: T Cook, E Thorp, P Staines, A Carson, J Bird, S Hicks, A Hall, L Patterson

1. WELCOME, APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND INTRODUCTIONS

Chair (NR) welcomed all to the meeting, apologies noted.

2. MINUTES FOR CONFIRMATION

- NB noted that she had attended previous Branch Committee, **Minutes confirmed**

- Matters Arising

NB spoke of health and safety concerns regarding agile working; suggested bite sized H&S training would be useful for Stewards.

EW spoke of 'cross-covering' between stewards and H&S reps

LK (IT) stated there is health and safety information on LMS, such as safe use of display screen equipment.

PB (H&S Officer) asked that members who have questions come to him for advice.

Recap of agile working was given for those who hadn't attended previous Branch Committee meeting.

NR stated that Health and Safety concerns was high on the list of issues being reported back to management.

- **A break from scheduled agenda took place as Special Guests Matthew King and Michael Quinn from the Newcastle West End Food bank gave a short presentation**
Mr King gave a moving speech illustrating the deprivation in Newcastle and the need for food banks. He also spoke of the struggle to meet those needs. He stated there is still a misconception by many regarding food banks and reiterated that everyone who receives assistance is referred by an outside organisation. He also stated there were volunteering opportunities and to visit the website at www.newcastlewestend.foodbank.org.uk Mr Quinn distributed leaflets to the committee to aid the food bank. Mr King then accepted a £600 cheque from the branch as a donation.
The committee will visit this matter again during the Christmas season.

3. BRANCH MEMBERSHIP

- Report Tabled

NR gave a recruitment update; some discussion from committee regarding membership.

4. FINANCIAL REPORT

- Tabled

Affiliations, Donations and Correspondence

A request has been received from an organisation in Swaziland; CM to investigate and report back. Other correspondence was noted.

5. **HEALTH & SAFETY**
- Tabled; MD commented on Wiseman Ndlovu's excellent work within his team. Other discussion regarding health & safety issues occurred during 'matters arising'.
6. **SPECIAL BRANCH COMMITTEE UPDATE**
CM recapped what was covered regarding redundancy payments and the proposed plan to pay the statutory minimum and the pay cap as well as the reduction in the paid protection period. It was pointed out that the proposed plan would be the worst of any local authority in our area. Discussion was exchanged by the committee.
7. **CONFERENCE REPORT**
LH and EW as delegation leaders both gave brief reports on Local and National Conference
8. **2016+ WHAT LIES AHEAD AND THE UNISON RESPONSE**
No detail has been given on the £50m cuts; services are at a pinch-point. NR spoke on what we may expect next.
There was a twenty minute table exercise by the committee regarding these cuts. Each table spoke on three points. NR noted these. There was very good discussion and the ideas will be taken forward.
9. **WORKFORCE, LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT**
Report tabled. WA spoke of future training sessions on Colleagues that are Victims of Domestic Violence/Abuse and the Reaccreditation training for stewards.
JY spoke of additional Lunch & Learn sessions sponsored by bridges to Learning
10. **NATIONAL AND REGIONAL COMMITTEES AND CONFERENCES**
Nothing to report.
11. **DIRECTORATE REPORTS**
WCL (Adults) – CM provided an update on the Care Services proposals/
WCL (Children's) – LH report on Children's Services DJC, Sure Start moving to Commissioning and Procurement with a change in name to reflect this.
Communities – NR reported on Agile Working and pay for staff within NCL. NCL stated they were not in the position to give a pay offer. After further discussions and a ballot of members NCL will review the position in September, which could include a retrospective offer. Members have opted to wait till the review.
12. **BRANCH OFFICER REPORTS**
International – CM advertised a book launch for Archie Sibeko he had organised through the regional international committee.
13. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**
EW mentioned a meeting for the Jeremy Corbyn campaign on 9th July.
14. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**
Monday 7 September 2015, 3pm, Newcastle Civic Centre