

Annual General Meeting 2012



March 2011: Edinburgh UNISON joins half a million others at the massive London rally for public services.



2011 - 2012: UNISON wins legal case on Equal Pay for another 1,000+ members and the council agrees to pay up. UNISON is also dealing with a host of 'Modernising Pay' appeals.

Wednesday 22 February 2012, 6pm
Queens Hall, Clerk Street, Edinburgh.

AGM Agenda and Annual Report



January 2012: After two years of UNISON and community campaigning, the last of three huge privatisations is thrown out by Edinburgh Council.



November 2011: 10,000 rally in Edinburgh with two million across the UK to defend our pensions.

AGM Calling Notice

To All Members
Dear Colleague,

All members are urged to attend the Annual General Meeting of the branch on **Wednesday 22 February 2012 at 6pm in the Queens Hall, Clerk Street, Edinburgh**. Members can only be admitted to the meeting on production of their current membership card or pay slip showing UNISON deductions and if their name appears on the branch list.

The quorum for a branch meeting is 200. The Chairperson will take a count at 6pm prompt and if the quorum is not met, the meeting cannot proceed. **The meeting will conclude at 8pm at the latest** so that members using the creche or making care arrangements can plan as necessary.

AGENDA

The agenda on the following pages includes nominations, motions and rule changes received by the closing date in the preliminary notice. Any amendments will be posted on the website and circulated at the meeting.

AMENDMENTS

Any two members can propose amendments to motions. These must be in writing, signed by the proposer and seconder and arrive at the Branch Office **Noon, Wednesday 15 February 2012. Questions on the Annual Report and Financial Statement** must be received by **noon on Friday 17 February** to ensure the information is available for a response.

CRECHE/ CARERS ALLOWANCE

Members intending to use the creche should inform the branch office by **Noon on Tuesday 14 February**. For safety reasons, the creche cannot be made available to members who have not contacted the office. Carers allowance must be arranged in advance with the branch office.

ACCESS/ SIGNER

There will be a signer at the meeting. The building has wheelchair access. If any member has any special requirements, please contact the branch office as soon as possible so that efforts can be made to provide them.

A good attendance at the Annual General Meeting is essential to the running of the branch. Please make every effort to attend to set your policies and to ensure that the branch can elect its officers and have its structures in place to meet this year's challenges.

Yours sincerely

Agnes Petkevicius
Branch Secretary



AGM 2012

Contents

Calling Notice	1
Agenda/ Elections	2
Policy Motions and Meetings Guide	4
Annual Report	11
President's Intro	11
Chairperson's Report	12
Attendances	12
Secretary's Report	13
Health & Safety	14
Lifelong Learning	14
Service Conditions	15
International	16
Communications	17
Equalities	17
Education	17
Political Fund	18
Membership	19
Fair Rep. Audit	19
Minutes of Branch Meetings	20
How the Branch Works	24

- | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>1. Opening Remarks/ Introductions</p> <p>2. Appointment of Scrutineers</p> <p>3. Standing Orders</p> <p>4. Minutes of Branch Meetings 2011
<i>Annual General Meeting 7 March (p20)</i></p> <p>5. Annual Report 2011 (P 11-19)
<i>Questions on the Annual Report should be submitted to the Branch Office by <u>noon on Friday 17 February.</u></i></p> <p>6. Financial Statement
<i>To be circulated</i></p> | <p>7. Election of Branch Officers
<i>See below. Voting will be by secret ballot at the meeting.</i></p> <p>8. Presentations and Question and Answer Session
- <i>Our City's Not For Sale</i>
- <i>Pensions</i>
- <i>Modernising Pay Appeals</i></p> <p>9. Rule Changes <i>None submitted.</i></p> <p>10. Policy Motions <i>See pages 4-9</i></p> |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Agenda Item 7 Election of Branch Officers

NOTE: * Ballot Papers will be issued at the AGM for contested posts. Biographical details of candidates will be on the website and available from the branch office from a week before the AGM and circulated on the night. Where no nominations were received for any post, they will be sought via the Branch Committee.

Post	Candidate	Nominated by
Branch President	John Stevenson (Children & Families)	<i>Children & Families Shop Stewards Committee</i>
Branch Chairperson	Duncan Smith (Services for Communities)	<i>Services for Communities Shop Stewards Committee; Children & Families Shop Stewards Committee; Health & Social Care Shop Stewards Committee.</i>
Vice Chairperson (2) <i>One of whom must be a woman.</i>	1. Matthew Crighton (Unemployed Member) 2. No nomination	<i>Children & Families Shop Stewards Committee</i>
Branch Secretary	Agnes Petkevicius (Children & Families)	<i>Children & Families Shop Stewards Committee ; Services for Communities Shop Stewards Committee; Health & Social Care Shop Stewards Committee</i>
Branch Assistant Secretary	Kirsten Hey (Health & Social Care)	<i>Health & Social Care Shop Stewards Committee</i>
Branch Treasurer	No Nomination	
Service Conditions Co-ordinator	Agnes Petkevicius (Children & Families)	<i>Services for Communities Shop Stewards Committee; Children & Families Shop Stewards Committee; Health & Social Care Shop Stewards Committee</i>
Service Conditions Convener	Tam McKirdy (Services for Communities)	<i>Services for Communities Shop Stewards Committee; Health & Social Care Shop Stewards Committee</i>
Service Conditions Convener (Craft)	Walter Weir (Services for Communities)	<i>Services for Communities Shop Stewards Committee; Health & Social Care Shop Stewards Committee</i>

Service Conditions Officers (5) **three of whom must be women*

Shauna Clarke (Services for Communities)	<i>Services for Communities Shop Stewards Committee; Health & Social Care Shop Stewards Committee</i>
Tom Connolly (Children & Families)	<i>Services for Communities Shop Stewards Committee; Children & Families Shop Stewards Committee; Health & Social Care Shop Stewards Committee</i>
Tracey-Ann Don (Finance/Corporate Gov)	<i>Finance/Corporate Governance Shop Stewards Committee</i>
Hanna Dzikowska (Health & Social Care)	<i>Health & Social Care Shop Stewards Committee</i>
Rory Gardener/David Harrold (Services for Communities) JS	<i>Services for Communities Shop Stewards Committee; Health & Social Care Shop Stewards Committee</i>

Health & Safety Officer	Dave McConnell (Finance/Corporate Governance)	<i>Finance/Corporate Governance Shop Stewards Committee; Children & Families Shop Stewards Committee; Health & Social Care Shop Stewards Committee</i>
------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Recruitment/ Membership Officer	Irene Heggie (Corporate Services)	<i>Health & Social Care Shop Stewards Committee</i>
--------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------

Equalities Officer	Tracey-Ann Don (Finance/Corporate Governance)	<i>Finance/Corporate Governance Shop Stewards Committee</i>
---------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------

***Election Required**

Malcolm Parnell (Children & Families)	<i>Children & Families Shop Stewards Committee</i>
------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------

Education Officer	Luke Henderson (Services for Communities)	<i>Services for Communities Shop Stewards Committee; Health & Social Care Shop Stewards Committee; Children & Families Shop Stewards Committee</i>
--------------------------	-------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Lifelong Learning Officer	John Player (Children & Families)	<i>Children & Families Shop Stewards Committee</i>
----------------------------------	--------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------

***Election Required**

David Hop (Health & Social Care)	<i>Mathew Pianosi and Lynne Spence-Piercy (Health & Social Care)</i>
-------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Communications Officer	John Stevenson (Children & Families) Andrew Barnett (Services for Communities)	<i>Services for Communities Shop Stewards Committee; Health & Social Care Shop Stewards Committee</i>
-------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Job share}

Welfare Officer	Mike Smith (Finance/Corporate Gov) Carolyn McLean (Services for Communities)	<i>Finance/Corporate Governance Shop Stewards Committee; Services for Communities Shop Stewards Committee Health & Social Care Stewards Committee</i>
------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Job share}

International Officer	Matthew Crighton (Unemployed Member)	<i>Health & Social Care Shop Stewards Committee</i>
------------------------------	-----------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------

Young Members Officer	No Nomination
------------------------------	---------------

Auditors (2)	S Mullen (Finance) A Bennett (Finance)	<i>Agnes Petkevicius, John Stevenson (Children and Families)</i>
---------------------	-------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------

Brief Guide to Meetings (See full standing orders at www.unison-edinburgh.org.uk)

We hope you enjoy the AGM and that you will feel able to take part in setting our branch's policies at this very important time.

Meetings can seem quite formal but with so many people there, it is important to have rules to:-

- ensure a well ordered meeting.
- make sure as many people as possible have their say without the meeting being abused.

The Chair is there to keep order and make sure that things are run within *your* rules.

Motions: Motions create policy that mandates the Branch. They are introduced by the

mover named on the agenda. The seconder can then speak after or later in the debate.

Amendments: Can add, change or delete bits of motions but they cannot merely contradict a motion.

Speaking: The mover of a motion gets up to 7 minutes to speak and other speakers get 3. Then any member can speak and should start by giving their name and department. They must keep to the issue and can speak only once.

How do I get to speak?: Just come forward. The Chairperson decides the order of speakers, usually alternating for and against.

Right of Reply: The mover

gets another chance at the end but new material cannot be raised.

Voting: Normally voting is by show of hands but elections for branch officers will be by ballot. The Chair will rule on whether a motion is carried or not. If in doubt he/she will call for a count.

Ending a debate: Normally a debate goes on until everyone who wants to speak has spoken. But, after five speakers, anyone who has not spoken in the debate can move that "*The Question Be Put*". The meeting will immediately vote on this and, if carried, we go straight to the right of reply and the vote.

9. Rule Changes

None submitted

10. Policy Motions

In line with practice since the inauguration of the branch, motions have been prioritised under the following headings. In addition, they are prioritised on whether they are urgent, instruct the branch to act on an issue within its remit, and need a branch meeting decision. Where there is no clear priority, they are in the order in which they were received.

- Council Budget, Cuts, Redundancies (local action)
- Service Conditions Issues (issues like pay and conditions)
- Health & Safety
- Pensions and Superannuation

- UNISON Services and Structure
- Policy and Campaigning
- Economic Policy
- International
- Miscellaneous

Any motions not dealt with will be remitted to the Branch Committee.

EMERGENCY MOTIONS

Must be urgent, unable to be submitted within the timescales and relevant. They require a two-thirds majority to be heard. ***Because of rapidly changing developments re the Budget etc, negotiators will wish to submit emergencies on these.***

Council Budget, Cuts, Redundancies (local action)

1. Campaigning and organising against privatisation

Proposed by John Stevenson and Agnes Petkevicius (Children and Families)

To be submitted to National Delegate Conference
Conference congratulates members, activists and the community in Edinburgh on their two-year long campaign that resulted in the Council voting against three major privatisations affecting over 4,000 jobs.

It recognises that, had these privatisations

gone through, they would have been the biggest ever in local government in Scotland and would have opened the floodgates across other Scottish local authorities.

The success of this campaign depended on a range of interrelated initiatives:-

Continued on page 5

Continued from Page 4

- Research and analysis
- members' briefings and meetings
- lobbies, demonstrations, public leafleting
- public meetings and building community and user group links
- political lobbying
- publicity, bulletins, leaflets and briefing packs
- bargaining and negotiation.

Conference recognises the work of officers and activists in analysing and scrutinising the plans to expose dubious comparators, the lack of a level playing field, the lack of consultation and a range of other issues which led to a public outcry, bringing pressure to bear on politicians.

Conference therefore calls on the NEC to further develop activist training in this aspect

of challenging privatisation, especially in relation to 'Competitive Dialogue' models.

Conference also recognises that victories like these also come at a cost. While members campaigned to stay 'in-house' and are positive about being involved in and contributing towards service redesign, they are also aware that there will be implications for jobs, working practices and conditions.

In all such situations there is a danger that the employer will use the privatisation threat to push through untenable and unnecessary cuts in conditions.

While industrial action will be an appropriate response in some situations, there will also be a need to for support for negotiation, campaigning and arriving at agreements with the aim of keeping services in house. That should not be at any cost and should not alter the union's principled opposition to privatisation of any public service.

2. Privatisation and Cuts

Proposed by Matthew Crighton (Unemployed Member), Luke Henderson (Services for Communities)

This meeting celebrates the success of the branch in leading a campaign which defeated proposals for privatisation under the ABM process and applauds the work of campaigners, both Edinburgh citizens and union members that turned the issue into a successful and prominent campaign.

The campaign demonstrated the real hostility to marketisation of public services, which is the foundation of Scotland's 'public service model'. The unions helped create that consensus and welcome the challenge of showing that it gives better result for service users. We call on the incoming Council administration to set out robust models for partnership and consultation with unions and service users as it transforms services through implementation of the ABM public sector models.

The threat of privatisation is only one element of the attack on public services which includes also the massive cuts imposed by the UK government and passed on by the Scottish

Government. We agree to continue to work with community organisations which have been part of Our City's Not for Sale and to propose setting up Save Our City's Services campaign on similar lines, to defend local services and fight the cuts. We call on councillors to publicly campaign against the cuts in government funding and we call on the new administration to prepare a needs-based budget assessment as a tool in that campaign.

To combat these attacks we need to take on the ideas which underpin them and to build up knowledge of the radical alternatives. We will take steps to arrange briefings, seminars and public events for our activists, our members and the public; and co-operate with other unions, the trades councils and campaigning organisations. Specifically we support the Just Banking conference being organised with Friends of the Earth Scotland and other partners in April.

Service Conditions Issues

3. Sickness Absence Procedure

Proposed by Health and Social Care Shop Stewards Committee and Children and Families Shop Stewards Committee

This union notes:

1. The Council is imposing a sickness absence policy (Managing Attendance Procedure). It is felt by UNISON to be so unreasonable that they are unable to agree.

2. It involves:

- Trigger points; 3 separate absences in a rolling year

OR

- 6 days in a rolling year

These triggers will lead to a Stage 1 warning of the procedure

This union believes:

1. This policy is draconian and is seen to be non-supportive and unnecessarily punitive to our members. E.g. no pay increment if

processed through procedure. Sickness absence taken into account retrospectively.

2. We state that it is not acceptable for us to face the threat of losing our jobs because of the human condition of sometimes being unwell.

This union resolves:

1. To affirm the decision of UNISON to refuse to sign up to this policy.

2. Furthermore we affirm support in refusing to co-operate with the First Care Pilot Scheme.

3. To build within our membership a campaign of opposition.

4. To conduct a consultative ballot to determine the willingness of members to take collective action against the policy.

4. New Sickness Absence Management Procedure

Proposed by Luke Henderson and Steve Feist (Services for Communities)

UNISON member's terms and conditions are under attack again with the council imposing a draconian new Sickness Absence Management policy. UNISON could not sign up to this policy as it is very harsh and will discriminate against those who have to take more time off work, such as those with asthma, a disability, a recurring long term illness etc.

The new Sickness Absence Management Scheme is a much shorter process so that 6 days off in any 12 month period will trigger the formal stages of the policy. There are a number of other problems with the policy:

1. At each absence stage there is a presumption that the managers will move you onto the next stage.
2. After your second formal warning you can be sacked.
3. There is no appeal process within the policy.
4. You will not get an annual pay award if you are in a formal stage of the policy.
5. Your pay while you are sick will be docked if you do not follow the exact letter of the policy.

The new policy instructs staff on their first day

off sick to phone a call centre run by a private company to report their sickness. There are a number of problems with this:

1. Can we be sure confidential information and sensitive personal health data is kept secure?
2. What qualifications do those who are offering advice have and what if the advice given is incompetent or contradictory to a GP's or NHS advice?
3. The Company makes money if it reduces staff absence. This may lead to unprofessional practises in order to achieve financial gain.

This Branch Believes

Rather than improving absence these measures could create more sickness as worried staff struggle concerned about being penalised come into work with colds, flu and other infections which they can pass onto their colleagues.

Sickness absence figures in the council are significantly affected by a few staff on long term sickness.

If managers want to reduce sickness absence figures then they should keep in regular

Continued on page 7

Continued from page 6

contact and provide genuine support and reasonable adjustments to help and support staff on long term sickness absence get back to work. There is no mention of help and support in the new policy.

This Branch Resolves

Provide a branch bulletin to members covering our concerns about these developments and advising members of their rights

1. Members are not required to give personal information to FirstCare,

2. Members should not commit to a return date etc.

To encourage union stewards to take test cases to appeal the way the policy is implemented and to channel the cases to UNISON's national legal team so that we can challenge the new council policy in the courts if necessary.

To take necessary measures to ballot members on whether they are prepared to take industrial action or action short of industrial action to oppose these plans.

Health and Safety

5. Lone Working

Proposed by David Harrold and Amanda Kerr (Services for Communities)

This AGM notes that in a time of staff cuts and a recruitment freeze our members are still expected to deliver services of the highest quality to the people of Edinburgh. This level of service delivery is being eroded further by attempts to introduce lone working into new areas e.g. library buildings and departments.

This AGM also notes that a recent UNISON survey on violence in the workplace showed an increase of over 3000 assaults on public sector workers in the last year. This means more than 28000 assaults on staff took place in 2011.

This AGM believes that the widened use of lone working unnecessarily increases the risk

of violence to our members. We also believe it demonstrates a clear failure on the part of management to meet their duty of care by attempting to maintain current service levels without adequate staffing.

This AGM rejects the argument that financial constraints and the current economic climate necessitate the adoption of lone working practices with the risk of endangering our members.

We call upon the Union to campaign actively against and oppose lone working practices.

We urge the Union to ensure all members have the right to work in a safe environment.

6. Health assessments for rotational shift/night staff

Proposed by Andrew Barnett and David Harrold (Services for Communities)

This AGM notes:

Night shift and rotational shift workers are at greater risk of significant health issues such as heart disease, gastro-intestinal problems, stress, chronic fatigue and cancer.

As staff get older, their tolerance to shift work decreases which increases the risk to their health.

There are higher levels of sickness within working groups who operate on shift patterns;

The Council's duty of care as an employer for the welfare of their staff;

The legal requirement under the Working Time directive to offer night shift staff health assessments.

This AGM believes:

Rotational shift and night staff will be amongst

those most affected by the new sickness absence policy.

The current system of health assessment for rotational shift work and night workers is insufficient to identify and address any potential health issues within these staff groups;

A more robust system of health assessment would assist in the Council's current drive to reduce both long and short term sickness absence and fulfil their obligations under Health and Safety law.

Full medical assessments would identify health issues sooner and would enable prompt and more effective treatment.

This AGM moves:

To request the branch to negotiate with CEC to introduce optional free full medical assessments for rotational shift and night staff.

 Pensions and Superannuation

7. Pensions Dispute

Proposed by John Stevenson and Agnes Petkevicius (Children and Families)

This Branch congratulates members on their action on 30 November as part of the biggest joint union strike in a generation.

The level of support underlines how angry public service workers are at the unfairness of a Government that seeks to make us pay for the excesses of the bankers.

Our pensions are affordable, fair and justified and must be protected.

This Branch notes that many members are confused about the progress of negotiations at UK and Scottish level.

It therefore urges UNISON Scotland to issue further briefings outlining:

1. What stage pensions negotiations in Scotland have reached
2. What the impact on the Scottish Local Government Pension Scheme will be of any progress in negotiations with the UK Government.
3. A clear strategy for what the triggers would be for any further action and/or a ballot of members on any new proposals.

8. Pensions Dispute

Proposed by Luke Henderson and Duncan Smith (Services for Communities)

This Branch Notes

The attacks on our pensions include working longer (increased retirement age) and receiving less (change from final salary pensions to career average, changing interest calculation from RPI to CPI).

Pensions were one aspect of the many attacks on the public services and public sector workers such as pay freezes, redundancies, funding cuts etc

Union members were united in their resolve to fight the attacks and this created the magnificent action on November 30 2011 which saw unprecedented coordinated strike action between different unions.

This Branch Believes

The stand taken over pensions was a catalyst for resisting the other attacks public sector

workers face as it created the maximum national unity within UNISON and between unions.

The November 30 strike forced minor concessions from the government including delaying implementation of the some of the attacks.

The decision by Unison national leaders to suspend action for such limited concessions broke up the national unity and threw away the momentum for action that had been built up.

This Branch resolves:

This Branch requisitions a Special Conference of the Local Government Service Group to consider the policy of the Service Group in relation to the Local Government Pension Scheme.

9. Pensions and Equalisation

Proposed by Lothian Valuation Joint Board Shop Stewards Committee

This Branch calls on the NEC to investigate and consider the taking of a test case on behalf of women members affected by the amendment to the equalisation timetable contained in the Pensions Act 2011 on the grounds that implementation of the amended

timetable causes those women to consider themselves wronged by the failure to apply the principle of equal treatment under Article 6 of EC Directive 79/7/EC

 Policy and Campaigning

10. Labour and trade union voice for the alternative

Proposed by John Stevenson and Agnes Petkevicius (Children and Families)

To be submitted to National Delegate Conference

The Government's incompetence in tackling the economic situation along with its ideological attack on public services and the welfare state threaten to embed inequality for a generation.

Conference recognises the key role of the trade union movement in promoting an alternative to the failed policies of austerity which are decimating public services, undermining the founding principles of our NHS and increasing unemployment and throwing families into poverty.

That role is all the more crucial if the main parliamentary opposition, for whatever reason, finds itself unable to articulate any real alternative to austerity, despite the abject failure of that strategy.

The best way to deal with the deficit is to create employment, not cut it. Rebuilding public services benefits both the public sector and the private sector. The more people there are in work, the more there is in taxes to deal with the deficit and the more there is to put back into the economy.

The best way to use the undoubted wealth that exists in the UK is to put it to work for everyone rather than being hoarded by the few.

Conference therefore re-asserts the economic alternatives in Composite E passed at National Delegate Conference 2011 and resolves to build on these and take them out to our members and communities with the argument that there is a 'better way'.

Conference therefore instructs the NEC to:-

1. Produce easily accessible and concise bulletins, leaflets and other materials to promote the alternative to austerity.
2. Urge regions and branches to promote the alternatives through local campaigns, workshops and community involvement.
3. Continue to work with other unions, the TUC, STUC, WTUC and ICTU to build co-ordinated initiatives to promote our message.
4. Urge the LabourLink to use what influence it can to ensure that message is taken to the Labour Party leadership, urging them to grasp the role of being a political voice for our members and their families.

 International

11. International Initiatives

Proposed by Matthew Crighton (Unemployed Member) and Paul Clarke (Services for Communities)

This AGM welcomes the work done by this branch to link issues of international solidarity and development with the challenges facing our members and our city. It believes that the Edinburgh World Justice Festival has been a great addition to the calendar of events in the city and expresses its wish that one can be held in 2012. It calls on the City of Edinburgh Council to give the festival practical help and funding for this purpose.

This meeting recognises in particular the

significance of continuing developments in Latin America for demonstrating the practicality of a socialist alternative to the crises facing the world. It calls on UNISON Scotland to organise with other partners, including the STUC, development campaigners and environmental organisations if possible, a conference which will bring these developments to the attention of the Scottish public.

Look back with pride and forward with confidence

Keeping all three of Edinburgh's proposed privatisations in-house was a massive high point this year that came from using all the resources at our disposal.

Publicity, campaigning, engaging with local communities, lobbies, leafleting and stunts all went alongside research, organising, political lobbying and the sheer force of persuasion to achieve the right decision from the council.

Everyone from members to activists and staff who kept the campaign machinery running should rightly be satisfied with the achievement. Challenges lie ahead for those directly involved but they are challenges they are up for.

The pensions strike of 30 November saw that unity of purpose and sheer hard work on the ground result in a great turnout that surprised many pundits.

Many members came out on strike and stood on picket lines for the first time.

The 10,000 strong march and rally in Edinburgh was inspiring. It showed the real strength of feeling about the unfairness felt by public service workers being asked to pay for the excesses of the banking system and the super-rich. Members will be consulted in

the coming weeks on the progress made in talks following the action.

All of this was against a background of real challenges

“We need to use each other's talents, working as a team and using all the tools available to us”

for the Branch with vacancies in the branch officer team.

One key event was our lead negotiator Kevin Duguid deservedly moving on to a new job. The thanks extended by both the Branch and management to Kevin was a testament to the respect he commanded.

Branch secretary Agnes Petkevicius and lead officers had to put together an ad hoc team to manage the huge workload. Many thanks to those who stood up to the mark to help out.

The death of John Ross, a key figure in the Branch from its inception, affected us all and left a gap in the team, the office and our lives that is still felt.

The fact that the Branch has been able to deliver so much when its activists' pool has been so stretched must give us

John Stevenson
Branch President



confidence for the coming year.

You will see from the AGM agenda that new people will be coming forward to fill the gaps.

But the lesson from the 'Our City's Not For Sale' campaign is that it is not enough just to fill the posts.

We need to get more stewards on the ground and more members directly involved in their union. Most of all – and this was the success of the campaign – we need to use each other's talents, working as a team and using all the tools available to us.

That means basic organising, education, campaigning and action where necessary, alongside strong support for bargaining and representation. No one part of it will deliver by itself.

We have a major task ahead of us to bring fairness and justice back to public services and those who deliver them.

With the confidence we have built from last year's campaigns, I know the Branch is up for it.

Branch Officers and Staff 2011/2012

President: John Stevenson
Chair: Duncan Smith
V/Chair: Matthew Crighton
Secretary: Agnes Petkevicius
Asst Secretary: Kirsten Hey
Treasurer: John Stevenson
Equalities: Irene Stout
Health & Safety: Dave McConnell

Service Conditions

Co-ordinator: Kevin Duguid
(*Agnes Petkevicius from Aug 11*)

Convener: John Ross
(*to Oct 2011*)
Convener (Craft): Walter Weir
Service Conditions Officers: Tom Connolly, Tam McKirdy, Irene Stout, Gem Hogan (*to Aug 11*), Agnes Petkevicius.

Communications: John Stevenson
Recruitment/Membership: Irene Heggie

Welfare Officer: Mike Smith
International: Matthew Crighton
Education: Luke Henderson
Lifelong Learning: John Player
Young Members: Gem Hogan (*to Aug 11*)
Auditors: A Bennett, S Mullen

Branch Support Staff



Left to right Monica Niven (*Branch Support Officer*), Eileen Thomson, Julieanne Finlay, Nicola Lee.

Links with neighbourhoods crucial to fight against cuts

I think we should always consider what we do locally as a branch in the wider context.

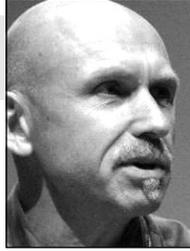
2011 was the year when resistance to the Tory-LibDem government broke through on a massive scale.

The most significant events last year for the trade unions were the demonstration in London on March 26th and the strike on November 30th.

The London march attracted half a million people protesting about the budget cuts, attacks on welfare and rising unemployment. This was probably the largest single demonstration by trade unionists in British history. Despite the long journey about 60 of our members travelled down joining thousands of UNISON members from all over the UK.

The strike to defend our pensions on November 30th saw two and a half million public sector workers on strike in defence of their pensions. This was the biggest strike since the general strike of 1926.

In Edinburgh about 20,000 people marched to a rally outside the Scottish Parliament where the key speaker was Rodney Bickerstaff, a former general secretary of this union.



Duncan Smith
Branch Chairperson

These events were impressive not only because of their size but

also because of the feelings of empowerment and solidarity they created.

Nationally, UNISON has now agreed a framework for talks with the government over our pensions. There is a legitimate debate as to whether this decision was premature as there is nothing more on the table. We still face 'paying more, working longer, and getting less'.

There is an argument that we should have continued to work with the other unions to build more co-ordinated action to defend what for most of us are very modest pensions indeed.

We shall see how far we get with the talks but I believe we will need to re-instate the action sooner or later.

The branch's 'Our City's not for Sale' campaign scored a major victory in January when the council voted to keep the Integrated Facilities Management and Corporate and

Transactional Services in house.

This followed the victory in November

when a majority on the council voted not to give the Environmental services contract to a private company.

This was the culmination of a long campaign that began slowly in 2010 and accelerated during last summer. It involved street stalls, petitions, talks with all the main political parties, public meetings, lobbying and rallies.

The campaign encouraged a new group of activists to step forward which I believe will re-invigorate our branch.

Equally important the campaign attracted support from hundreds of non-members in local communities who realised that the council's euphemism 'alternative business models' was really about privatisation.

The pressure our allies put on their councillors, MPs, and MSPs showed that the public really do care who runs their services.

These links we have made with people in the neighbourhoods will be crucial in the fight against the cuts in services that we are likely face in coming years.

Branch Committee Attendances - January to December 2011

Name	POSS	ACT	Associated Bodies (2)	Edinburgh Leisure (3)	Amanda Kerr	12	5
Branch Officers			No delegates appointed	No delegates appointed	Aileen Park	12	0
Tom Connolly	12	9			Hugh MacDonald	12	2
Matthew Crighton	12	6	Chief Officers (1)	Finance (3)	Marek Beumont	12	4
Kevin Duguid			No delegates appointed	Hugh Menzies 12 7	Joe Baxter	12	4
<i>to August '11</i>	12	3		(2 vacant seats)	David Harrold	12	9
Irene Heggie	12	6	Children & Families (13)	Further Education (3)	(1 vacant seat)		
Luke Henderson	12	10	Lorna Dunn 12 7	No delegates appointed			
Kirsten Hey	12	8	Alex Gallacher 12 10		Valuation Joint Board (2)		
Gem Hogan			Carol Griffin 12 5	Health & Social Care (12)	Kath Tweedie	12	7
<i>to August '11</i>	12	6	Evelyn Hanlon 12 12	Rosalind Butler 12 7	Jim Hood	12	6
Dave McConnell	12	11	Karen Maclean 12 12	Hanna Dzikowska 12 3			
Tam McKirdy	12	9	Billy McKendrick 12 1	Andy Little 12 2			
Agnes Petkevicius	12	6	(7 vacant seats)	Dominic-Fergus	Voluntary Sector (5)		
John Ross				Allan 12 2	No delegates appointed		
<i>to October '11</i>	12	5	City Development (4)	Mary McCrea 12 7			
Duncan Smith	12	11	No delegates	Marlyn Tweedie 12 7	Self Organised Groups (9)		
John Stevenson	12	9		Paul Flaherty/	No delegates appointed		
John Player	12	8	Corporate Services (4)	Mark Kinghorn 12 0			
Irene Stout	12	1	Mike Durnan 12 3	Services for Communities(8)			
			(3 vacant seats)	Caroline McLean 12 9	Retired Members (1)		
					No delegate appointed		

A time to reflect, celebrate and move forward

The Branch faced a very challenging time in 2011 in relation the volume of work that was required to be undertaken and the loss of a long standing activist, John Ross (due to his untimely death), and with Kevin Duguid, Service Conditions Co-ordinator and Staff Side Secretary moving to a new post.

John gave a life time commitment to the union and I would ask that people remember him for that and all his achievements over the years, both at a branch and Scottish level.

Good at giving advice but not so good at accepting it, we all have our own memories of John but there is no doubt that he put others before himself.

I know that Kevin thought long and hard about moving on and at the end of the day it was more for personal reasons than professional.

He was committed to the branch, worked hard on behalf of members and provided support to officers, stewards and members alike.

Certainly the branch wishes him well for the future and thanks him for all his work over the years.

Alternative Business Models

Other officers will have more to report on this but just to say a huge thanks to all who worked so hard and tirelessly to ensure that the public services we value will continue to be delivered by public sector workers.

Fantastic, but not an easy victory with a lot of work still to come. Thanks to Peter Hunter for co-ordinating the work, supported by many others, including those on Campaign Group, Community Groups, other activists as well as the branch staff.

Pensions

We had that hugely successful day of action in November where

members from across all unions joined together to protest at the Coalition Government's proposals to make us pay more, work longer for less.

There is no doubt that the issue of pensions is a very emotive one and one we will continue to fight for should the negotiations not provide what members are looking for.

“We did not cause the problem and cuts in services we all value is not the answer”

Pay

A pay claim was submitted by the TU side and we are still waiting on a response.

There is a Better Way

March 26 London 2011 - what a day! No one could fail to notice the 100,000's who turned up on the day to in support of public services to send a clear message that we did not cause the problem and cutting budgets which in turn leads to cuts in services that we all value is not the answer.

Equal Pay

Another fantastic achievement with the council finally accepting the need to settle claims with APT&C staff.

Modernising Pay was about dealing with inequality and there was an agreement at the beginning of the process to deal with female manual work graded posts and then APT&C.

Unfortunately the employer then reneged on this which meant that hundreds of low paid APT&C female workers have had to wait for that inequality to be addressed.

That is now happening and it was the failure to address this earlier that has led to the situation we are now in.

Agnes Petkevicius
Branch Secretary

Wider Union

The branch continues to be actively involved in UNISON at a Scottish level (Scottish Council and Local Government) and at National Conference. We have officers on a number of committees at a Scottish level.

Branch Office

We were eventually able to move to new premises this year to an office that is not only accessible but is a much better working environment for staff and activists.

It was a major task planning the move and setting up the new infrastructure. More has to be done in terms of IT systems etc but it was considered best to get settled into the new environment before taking the next step.

Yet again the branch office staff, Monica Niven, Julie Findlay, Nicola Lee and Eileen Thomson have worked hard dealing with the day to day work of the branch but also being there to support all the additional work generated by all of the aforementioned issues.

A big vote of thanks to them from all the officers, stewards and members.

Thanks to so many others who have helped out the depleted S&C Team and to the Convenors and stewards from all the committees. Working together we can achieve so much more.

As John Stevenson said - Look back with Pride but Forward with Confidence.

Reflect on what has happened over the last year, be proud of our successes and celebrate them and move forward with confidence.



Hopes for Corporate Safety Group in council at last

Last year we were close to signing a constitution for the corporate Safety Group; a year on this still hasn't happened but negotiations are underway to have a functioning structure in place by late January.

Much effort has gone into developing the Safety Strategy and while much has been achieved more needs to be done.

There are only 14 Safety Reps within CEC to cover 620 workplaces which is insufficient to deal with the workload. More need to be recruited in 2012.

The position in other employers is similar. I will use the Branch and Steward Committee network to try to recruit more Safety Reps. Many large workplaces don't have Safety Reps which

needs corrected.

The Branch Health and Safety Sub-Committee needs to be better attended and have more input into other Branch committees to be effective. Steward's Committees must nominate delegates so that the meeting runs correctly.

It's also essential that Safety Representatives can attend the meetings so that good practices can be promoted throughout the Branch and support our hard pressed Safety Representatives.

Thanks to John Stevenson for keeping the Safety section of the website updated.

Effective Joint Trade Union Sides are taking shape at

Dave McConnell
Health & Safety Officer



corporate level and within SfC. Work is or will shortly be underway with the other Unions in other Departments.

Other challenges remain notably ensuring that Safety Reps are recruited and trained, risk assessments are undertaken and reviewed, workplaces are inspected, accidents are reported and investigated and Safety Committees are meeting to make workplaces safer.

Lifelong Learning

Priority to recruit Union Learning Reps

I took up the post of Lifelong Learning Officer (LLO) in July 2011.

I was keen to apply some of the skills, knowledge and understanding I had developed at the Adult Learning Project (ALP), Tollcross Community Centre which were based on the work of the Brazilian Educator and Socialist, Paulo Freire.

I was also strongly motivated to get more fully involved in the work of the union by the current economic crisis and its subsequent attacks on public services.

Tasks:

As the LLO post had lain somewhat dormant my immediate tasks were to:

- find out the resources that exist for lifelong learning within the trade union movement by liaising with David Howie from WEA and Dave McConnell from City of Edinburgh Branch. I intend to maximise the resources available from UNISON; TUC; WEA and in particular STUC for

City of Edinburgh Branch.

John Player
Lifelong Learning Officer



- undertake required training to complete the Union Learning Representative (ULR) course at Stevenson College. I intend to look at recruiting and mobilising ULRs for the City of Edinburgh and begin to assess the educational needs of the Branch members

- attend joint meeting of Lifelong Learning Officers and Education Officer from all over Scotland at City of Glasgow UNISON offices on 24th August 2011

- attend the relevant STUC Conferences such as 'Union Learning: A Better Way' 9th November 2011

- prepare learning events such as the forthcoming one with John Slaven and Dave Moxham, Deputy General Secretary STUC who will lead educational event on unveiling the myths about the current financial crisis.

- prepare the UNISON City of

Edinburgh Branch Lifelong Learning and Critical Thinking Seminar Programme which is currently being negotiated

If re-elected my aim will be to consolidate and develop the role of the LLO in City of Edinburgh Branch.

As stated, this will primarily involve assessing the educational needs of City of Edinburgh Branch members, making available as many relevant resources as possible and engaging members with critical thinking around a negotiated curriculum.

This will also entail providing space for both reflection and action over the cuts and the workings of the market such as privatisation, commissioning and ABMs.

Standing up for services and public service workers

The header might be a bit of a sound bite but that's what we have done and with some success in the last year and continue to do day after day.

One man who did this for longer and on many occasions better than any of us was John Ross, who tragically passed away last year. In his day he was a brilliant strategist and negotiator and the master of a corny joke who we all miss greatly.

Our Branch wouldn't be what it is today without his input and influence.

Three major issues ran throughout the last year the Council's privatisation proposal (ABM), dealing with the hangover from the imposition of Modernising Pay and budget cuts.

Privatisation (ABM's)

Firstly the brilliant victory of stopping the privatisation of swathes of Council services against all the odds. The companies bidding for these services spent hundreds of thousands of pounds to try to secure a foothold in Scotland as opposed to the meagre financial resources we had available to us.

However, hard work and tenacity can pay off. We negotiated, we harassed, we campaigned, we lobbied MSPs, MPs and councillors and we joined with other unions and the people of Edinburgh to see the privateers off.

You should be very proud of the people who were actively involved in this and delivered such a stunning result after we were written off time and time again.

Modernising Pay

Modernising Pay, although implemented, continued to provide the team with a huge amount of work including Job

Evaluation Appeals, Pay Protection, huge numbers of Departmental Reviews as well as reviews of nearly every policy and Local Collective Agreement in the Council.

We won an important concession in securing a Policy on Transitional Pay Protection for people who may be adversely affected by a review and are fighting hard against the attempted imposition of a draconian Sickness Absence Policy.

Our City's Not For Sale: You should be very proud of the people who were actively involved in this and delivered such a stunning result after we were written off time and time again."



Managing Attendance at Work (Sickness Absence Procedure)

The latest on this procedure is that it will be in place from 30 January 2012, despite the fact that the branch have actively tried to stop this happening.

A dispute was lodged, letter sent to the Chief Executive, there will be a deputation to committee on the 24 January and we have continued to put forward suggested changes to procedure as well as look for clarification.

A copy of the procedure was sent out to members,

Kevin Duguid

Ex Service Conditions Coordinator

Agnes Petkevicius
Branch Secretary



Thanks to Kevin, who left the branch for a professional post with UNISON in August 2011, for his assistance with this report.

there is information on the website and an update is available from officers and stewards.

The transition from the current to the new procedure is going to create problems as your employer intends to apply it retrospectively - basically any absences you have had over the last year will be counted towards the triggers in new procedure.

The first day of absence after 30 January 2012 will mean a retrospective look at



John Ross,
Convener
RIP 22/10/11



Wattie Weir,
Convener Craft

SC Officers



Tam McKirdy



Gem Hogan
till Aug 11



Agnes Petkevicius



Tom Connolly



Irene Stout

your absences over the last year which will be reviewed by your manager and could lead to formal action being taken.

We are taking legal advice on this as punitive action could/will be applied.

First Care - Pilot Scheme

This was put in place without engaging with the trade unions. We were informed by employer that it was being looked at, there was a presentation but no further consultation took place after that.

continued on page 16

Continued from page 15

No consultation on where the pilots would be, process that was required to be followed, use of a private company and how that is supportive to employees, costs attached and how the employer will determine whether it is First Care or the draconian sickness absence procedure that will actually bring levels down.

Budget - Reviews (reduction in staff and changes to service delivery)

The Budget (or lack of it) for Local Government continued to provide the team with many challenges, with staff numbers being cut and services lost, they are too many to mention but I do feel we must mention Blindcraft.

Blindcraft

Blindcraft was closed by the Council in the summer of last year after a long battle in which the local Administration paid lip service to trying to find a viable solution to keep the oldest sheltered workshop in Europe



Blindcraft workers at the City Chambers last year

open as did the Scottish Government.

Over 200 years of giving people with disabilities meaningful, productive employment was consigned to the annals of history.

The trades unions fought hard and helped secure many of the staff alternative employment but others were not so fortunate and for that the councillors from the Lib Dems, Tories and SNP should hang their heads in shame.

The team continue to have a huge number of individual cases and have provided the best service they can despite the diminished numbers in the team.

But I'm delighted that a few of our stewards have stepped up to the plate and have been helping the team out with casework and hopefully after the AGM there will be a new energy about the team with a mix of old and new faces.

International

Vital to demand that banks work to make world better, not worse

This year has seen a continuation of the focus we have had on international issues.

However 2011 didn't see an Edinburgh World Justice Festival. There had been one for the previous four years in which UNISON played an active role, but this year the group of volunteers behind EWJF ran out of steam.

The Festival has been good for Edinburgh and all the organisations which contributed value it so the question which needs resolved this year is who will put in the time to make it happen. UNISON will play an active role in this.

In the Take One Action film festival we sponsored the UK premier of Even The Rain, a brilliant film set in Cochabamba, Bolivia, during the 'water wars' in

which the privatisation of the water supply was thrown out.

We also spoke at the Land Rights, Land Wrongs event which united themes from a number of the films in the festival.

The other film we sponsored was Fix Me, a film made in Palestine which focuses on the impact of the illegal occupation by Israel. In terms of solidarity with Palestine, the return of water supplies from Eden Springs, linked to an Israeli company which benefits from the occupation, in some Council offices puts the issue the boycotting of Israel and its product back on our agenda.

We supported, and I helped organise, a conference in Glasgow called Venezuela and Friends -

Matthew Crighton
International Officer



keeping up attention on the social and political revolution in that country under the leadership of Hugo Chavez.

At present I am contributing to the organisation, with Friends of the Earth Scotland, of an important conference on the banks - the provisional title is Banking for Social Justice and Sustainability.

Some hope, you might think! - but, especially when we own large banks, it's vital that we demand that they work towards making the world better not worse; and that we know how they should go about that.

Learn lessons to build on ground-breaking campaign

Our ground-breaking 'Our City's Not for Sale' campaign paid off this year with all three privatisation plans ending up rejected by the council.

Thousands of posters, briefings, leaflets, t-shirts and badges have been well used throughout the year at local lobbies and Scottish and UK rallies.

UNISON activists and members, along with key full time officers, have joined with community and service user groups across the city to bring the plans to public attention and put maximum pressure on politicians.

It has been an object lesson in combining trade union and community action, lobbies and demonstrations with political lobbying and hard technical analysis and evidence-building.

Thanks must go to everyone who worked so hard, to Labour for

sticking with us, to the SNP for listening and most of all to full time officers, mainly Peter Hunter, for all the research and organisation.

We now need to analyse the campaign so we can build on the lessons. There is much interest from other branches who want to learn from our experience.

● **The website** is well used by members for queries, updating details, joining the union etc. It is also a huge resource for information to challenge the cuts.

Alongside that, the redesigned blog and links to Twitter and Facebook allow us to update members in real time and this came into its own on the strike day.

● **Hard copy:** We must not forget the continued importance of paper bulletins to members and many

John Stevenson
Communications Officer



briefings and newsletters have

been sent out to workplaces, especially in mobilising for the 26 March London anti-cuts demo and the hugely successful pensions strike.

Work is under way at the moment on material for the 'sickness absence' campaign.

● **The media:** Our media profile has remained high with good radio and TV coverage and regular coverage in the local and national press. It was hard at first with the anti-privatisation campaign but the breakthrough eventually came.

Thanks to fellow officers and staff for their help throughout the year, especially to staff Monica, Julie, Nicky and Eileen for a year of things needing done by yesterday!

Equalities

Victory on equal pay but more challenges ahead

The legal victory on equal pay claims and the Council's decision to pay up at last has been a significant step forward for equal pay for over 1,000 women in the Branch this year.

Overall, it is likely that Edinburgh Branch will have had the highest number of equal pay claims in Scotland.

But alongside the victories there are always new challenges.

The disproportionate effect on

women of attacks on pensions is obvious. The average pension for a woman in Local Government is £2,600, hardly the 'gold plated' nonsense we hear in the media.

Less obvious are the disproportionate effects likely to arise for women and disabled members from the Council's new draconian absence policy.

These are all issues I am confident the Branch will continue to challenge for members in the

Irene Stout
Equalities Officer

coming year.

Due to long term illness last year I was not able to fulfill the Equalities role for most of the time and I have decided to stand down this year.

But, as always, I will remain an active UNISON member.



Education

The more trained stewards we have, the better we can represent



Luke Henderson
Education Officer

Workplace stewards are the lifeblood of our union.

I encourage you to consider

becoming a steward so that you and your colleagues can get the latest information, representation

and training.

As the current Branch Education Officer I guarantee I will support you to get on to national training courses as well as organising training on issues specific to our employer.

Edinburgh Council intends to introduce a new and very harsh sickness absence policy so I organised training so that stewards can read up on the

policy and how to oppose managers trying to use the policy to dock pay from people who are sick or even worse sack staff unfairly.

I have also organised branch training on representing members in Grievance & Disciplinary situations, the more stewards we have trained the better representation we can give to all our members.

Labour: Reliable ally locally but UK leaders must defend services

The big news in 2011 was that at a time when the Conservatives are in power at Westminster, the Labour vote fell in the Holyrood elections!

Not by much - the core vote held up - but it seems that anyone shifting allegiance went to the SNP. Complacency in light of an early poll lead and failure to see that an anti-Tory sentiment would not necessarily benefit Labour in Scotland were root causes of this.

There was, not surprisingly, a serious review of the Labour Party in Scotland which led to a series of changes, the most important being that a Leader of the Scottish Labour Party would be elected (previously there had only been a leader of Labour in the Scottish Parliament) - a belated shift to integrate into its own structures the devolution which the party had championed in parliament.

UNISON Labour Link voted to nominate Johan Lamont, who was elected in the elections which followed. This may be a step forward but more is needed! As the Scottish TU and LP Committee said, Scottish Labour needs to

rediscover its purpose and its role in transforming public opinion rather than simply mirroring it. It must reconnect with the broader movement in defence of jobs and services, vigorously oppose injustice, inequality and privilege.

The results of the election weren't all bad, however, in that 75% of voters supported left of centre parties. That the SNP can be so described is interesting in itself and, I believe, a testament to the historic strengths of the labour movement in Scotland in creating balance of opinion in which a populist nationalist party has to occupy that position.

That balance of opinion has been tested locally in our struggle to oppose privatisation through the Council's ABM process, through which we have found that we can in fact mobilise people in Scotland around this issue. In this the Labour Group on the Council has been a reliable ally; Labour councillors, MSPs and MPs have regularly attended our rallies and meetings, and given political advice - and, crucially, voted the

Matthew Crighton
LabourLink Officer



right way.

Looking more broadly two massive issues confront us. Economically we are in a big mess.

So far the Labour Party under Ed Miliband and Ed Balls have failed to present a coherent solution based on protecting public services and attacking the sources of the problem - greed, inequality, out-of-control bankers, short-sighted and under-regulated capitalism. Eds, if you need a steer, ask UNISON.

The other issue is the independence referendum. Again nothing can be gained by defending the status quo.

If Scots can see that across the UK as a whole there is a Labour Party which is vigorously defending public services and the rights of working people, more people will see the point of remaining part of it.

General Political Fund - Resources for

UNISON's political fund is divided into two sections: the General Political Fund and the Affiliated Political Fund.

UNISON uses the General Political Fund (GPF) to pay for political campaigning at branch, regional and national level as well as for research and lobbying in Parliament to pursue UNISON's objectives and priorities.

It is not affiliated to any political party, but the money in the fund is used to support local campaigns, to give a boost to our big national political campaigns, and to pay for political advertising.

In 2010, the GPF funded the newspaper ads for the Branch's 'Our City's Not For Sale' campaign and it has supported our campaigning through 2011.

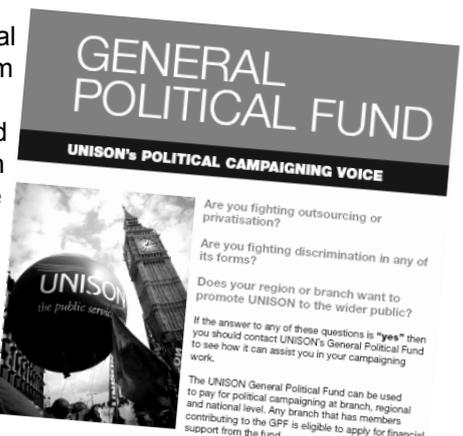
Much of the high profile political campaign work you see from UNISON is paid for by the GPF.

The GPF has also funded adverts and other materials in areas where the BNP were standing at elections as well as adverts in national papers, along with other anti-racism initiatives.

But it's not just the big things that the GPF funds. All sorts of national and local projects and campaigns benefit from receiving funding this way.

These have included:

- Anti-racist events
- Local campaigns against privatisation/marketisation
- UNISON presence at various national and regional events
- Campaigns against council housing sell-off - like the



money it made available to us in Edinburgh for that but also nationally for the Asylum Seeker Children initiative.

More recently, much of the funding for environmental and economic campaigns has come from the GPF

Encouraging more colleagues to join will keep us strong for the future

Recruitment this year has been a very varied task. Whilst we have maintained consistent efforts to increase membership within C.E.C. there have been reduced staffing levels throughout all departments.

We have a very loyal core of members who have been extremely concerned over the outcome of several major potential changes to their employment.

This shows how important it is to be a member of UNISON, as meetings organised by Branch Service Conditions officers, was often the only means of finding out how plans were progressing.

There has also been an increase in requests to support voluntary organisations. In these very difficult austere times, these are the most vulnerable groups, with funding often being reduced and in some cases withdrawn.

Being in UNISON has meant these members have been given help, advice and reassurance to try to get the best possible outcome for them.

This year there will be increased effort to encourage more staff in these areas to join up.

The extremely successful campaign lead by UNISON to

keep services "In House" has proven how effective your union can be.

Irene Heggie
Recruitment/ Membership Officer



There will be many changes and challenges ahead, but encouraging more colleagues to join will keep us strong for the future.

Membership at 31 December 2011

Department	31/12/2010	31/12/2011	Var
Associated Bodies	186	195	+9
Children & Families	2,479	2,445	-34
City Development	393	237	-156*
Corporate Services	504	523	+19
Edinburgh Leisure	141	139	-2
Finance	340	313	-27
Further Education	232	233	+1
Health & Social Care	2,105	2,029	-76
Services For Communities	1,393	1,536	+133*
Valuation Joint Board	59	59	0
Voluntary Sector	612	560	-52
Unallocated	93	56	-37
TOTAL	8,537	8,315	-94
Student	2	0	-2
Unemployed	42	69	+27
Retired Members	1,000	1,065	+65
TOTAL	9,581	9,543	-38

Recruited 1/1/11 - 31/12/11 = 788 Officially resigned = 102

*PLEASE NOTE: Transfers between City Development and Services for Communities have affected these figures. Overall reduction is due to job losses. The Branch actually recruited over 100 more members in 2011 than in 2010.

Audit for proportionality and fair representation

Figures in brackets show 2010 figures. With the advent of Single Status, we are no longer showing an APT&C/Manual split and the branch is working on other indicators to reflect fair representation.

1. Women

Branch	Branch Ctte	Officers	Stewards
69% (68%)	45% (42%)	27% (32%)	39% (43%)

2. Branch Committee breakdown

Breakdown of Women as at 31/12/11

a) Women on dept. delegations

Department	Should be	Actual
Associated Bodies	56% (51%)	0% (0%)

Department	Should be	Actual
Children & Families	84% (83%)	31% (4%)
City Development	0% (34%)	0% (0%)
Corporate Services	64% (67%)	0% (38%)
Edinburgh Leisure	38% (40%)	0% (0%)
Finance	64% (63%)	0% (0%)
Further Education	66% (63%)	0% (29%)
Health & Social Care	80% (79%)	50% (66%)
Services for Communities	40% (42%)	38% (38%)
Valuation Joint Board	63% (52%)	50% (50%)
Voluntary Sector	74% (75%)	0% (0%)

b) Women on delegations

% of Women in membership = 69% (68%)

% of Women delegates to Branch Committee = 45% (44%)

Minutes of AGM 2011

MINUTES of BRANCH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

held on 7th March 2011 in the ST COLUMBA'S BY THE CASTLE, JOHNSTON TERRACE, EDINBURGH

1. OPENING REMARKS/ INTRODUCTIONS

The meeting was chaired by Branch President

The Branch President advised the meeting the Supplementary Agenda circulated to the meeting included a Financial Statement which was omitted from the AGM booklet. The Supplementary Agenda also included corrections to Rule Change D.6 and an Amendment to Motion 3 'Stop the Cuts.'

An Emergency Motion on Budget Cuts and Alternative Business Models was also circulated. The Emergency Motion received the required two thirds support to be submitted to the Agenda.

The Branch President advised the meeting no election was now required for the Service Conditions Officers post as Jim Quinn and Elaine Wishart had withdrawn their nominations.

2. APPOINTMENT OF SCRUTINEERS

Four Scrutineers were appointed from the body of the hall.

3. STANDING ORDERS

The Branch Standing Orders were AGREED for the following year without amendment.

4. MINUTES OF BRANCH MEETING 2010

The minutes of the last Branch Annual General meeting of 10th February 2010 and the Emergency General Meeting of 9th June 2010 were AGREED as a correct record with no matters arising.

5. ANNUAL REPORT 2010

No questions were raised on the Annual Report.

6. FINANCIAL STATEMENT

The meeting AGREED the previously circulated financial statement.

7. ELECTION OF BRANCH OFFICERS

The undernoted were elected unopposed:

President: John Stevenson (Children & Families)

Chairperson: Duncan Smith (Services for Communities)

Secretary: Agnes Petkevicius (Children & Families)

Assistant Secretary: Kirsten Hey (Health & Social Care)

Treasurer: John Ross (Services for Communities) and John Stevenson (Children & Families)

Service Conditions Co-ordinator: Kevin Duguid (Finance)

Service Conditions Convener John Ross (Services for Communities)

Service Conditions Convener (Craft): Walter Weir (Services for Communities)

Service Conditions Officers: Tom Connolly (Children & Families)

Agnes Petkevicius (Children & Families)

Irene Stout (Services for Communities)

Gem Hogan (Children & Families)

Tam McKirdy (Service for Communities)

Education Officer: Luke Henderson (Services for Communities)

Equalities Officer: Irene Stout (Services for Communities)

Welfare Officer: Mike Smith (Finance)

International Officer: Matthew Creighton (Associated Bodies)

Recruitment/Membership Officer: Irene Heggie (Corporate Services)

Young Members Officer: Gem Hogan (Children & Families)

Health & Safety Officer: Dave McConnell (Finance)

No nominations were received for the post of Vice Chairperson(woman seat) and Lifelong Learning Officer. These vacancies would be remitted to the Branch Committee for action.

9. RULE CHANGES

1. Rule D. 6. Health & Safety Sub Committee

Proposed by Dave McConnell (Finance) and Derek Kerr (Children & Families)

Delete paragraph 1 (a) and replace with " a) The Branch Chairperson, the Branch Health and Safety Officer, the

Branch Education Officer and one member elected by the Branch Committee."

Delete paragraph 2 and replace with "The Sub-Committee shall invite all Branch Safety Reps to attend the meetings but only members of the Sub Committee as defined in 1(a) and (b) of this rule shall have voting rights."

Decision: On being put to the meeting the terms of the Rule Change were **AGREED.**

10. POLICY MOTIONS

The meeting agreed to debate Motions 1 and 2 together.

1. Organising to meet the challenge Proposed by Branch Committee

1. This AGM Notes:

1.1 The Council has approved a range of 'budget savings' amounting to around £90million over three years on top of substantial cuts already made in the last two years.

1.2. Job loss estimates already stand at over 1,000 in the Council, associated bodies and the community and voluntary sector with more to come as the real effects of the cuts begin to bite.

1.3. All jobs in the public sector are critical to delivering services, be they 'back office' or front line. The consequences of these cuts are that whole services are likely to disappear.

1.4. The cuts are ideologically and politically motivated and not based on financial need.

1.5. The economists who predicted the 'crash' are of one voice in saying that cuts of this speed and magnitude are not only unnecessary but will throw the economy into even more crisis.

2. This Committee Believes:

2.1. That a Branch wide strategy is necessary to co-ordinate a fight against these cuts.

2.2. That the union needs to engage members to rally a fight from the ground up!

2.3. That the lack of consultation with staff shows disregard by this Council to its employees.

2.4. That the cuts will decimate the

Continued on page 21

Minutes of AGM 2010 (continued)

Continued from page 20

workforce and key skills will be lost.

2.5. That the long term impact of the cuts for the residents of Edinburgh has not been fully considered and steps to ensure consultation with members of the public are farcical.

3. This Branch Resolves:

3.1. To organise All Stewards Meetings to ensure continuing briefing of stewards and promote organising and information sharing.

3.2. To organise workplace meetings to engage existing members and recruit new members.

3.3. To continue to develop and promote a public campaign against the cuts in Edinburgh which should include strategies like adverts in newspapers, on buses and other ways of reaching the public.

3.4. To continue to forge links with other unions, community groups and the public to build a united campaign.

3.5. That the branch should prioritise branch learning and organisation to ensure we have the systems and stewards to address the wider campaigns for jobs and services as well as individual representation.

Decision: On being put to the meeting the terms of the Motion were **CARRIED**.

2. Organising for public services

Proposed by John Stevenson (Children and Families) and John Ross (Services for Communities)

This AGM deplores the Westminster Government's attacks on public services as a means of dealing with the deficit. It believes that cutting public services is unnecessary and runs the risk of further damaging the economy and creating a "double dip" recession.

This branch notes that:-

a) Our economy depends on a healthy public sector and the private sector depends on public sector contracts. Throwing more and more people out of work will only make matters worse.

b) For every job lost in the public sector, one goes in the private sector. Public service workers spent around 70p of every pound they earn in the local economy. Cuts in public

services affect the whole economy.

c) The Institute for Fiscal Studies warns that these cuts will hit the poor far more than the rich and will increase inequality in the UK.

d) The cuts are opposed by expert economists who predicted the crash and are driven by right wing ideology rather than concern for dealing with the financial crisis created by the banks.

This branch welcomes UNISON's campaigning against the cuts at Scottish and UK level under the million voices and public works banners. This AGM believes that there are better ways to deal with the financial crisis - ways which will ensure that the rich and the banks all play their part in the recovery. For example:-

e) Dealing with tax avoidance amongst the very wealthy would raise £33 billion and a one off 20% tax on the richest 10% would raise £800 billion. A 0.05% tax on banks for all transactions not involving members of the public would raise £30 billion.

f) Using these measures and maintaining and increasing employment in both the public and the private sector will lead to higher tax receipts and to economic growth, which will, in turn do much to deal with the deficit.

This AGM calls on the branch to

1. Recognise that organising, lobbying and campaigning are all a major part of this campaign but we must also be willing to combine that with industrial action if and when needed. All attempts possible should be made to ensure that action is co-ordinated across trade unions locally and nationally to ensure the biggest impact.

2. re-state its policy of seeking a ballot on action in the event of any compulsory redundancy.

3. continue the work to get the key messages out to members and the public that the cuts are unfair, unnecessary and will damage the economy

4. continue to build alliances locally with other branches, trade unions and community groups to oppose the cuts.

5. lobby politicians about the impact of the cuts and for their support to oppose cuts to public services.

6. put forward a motion to UNISON's Delegate Conference calling for UNISON to continue its high profile campaign against public service cuts and to seek co-ordinated action.

7. build support amongst members for the national march and rally on 26 March.

Decision: On being put to the meeting the terms of the Motion were **CARRIED**.

3. Stop The Cuts

Proposed by Services for Communities Stewards Committee

This Union Branch Notes

1. The rising UK deficit reflected the collapse in tax revenues and rising cost of unemployment benefits during the recession. It was not caused by excessive public spending as the Conservative -LibDem government claim.

2. The breadth and depth of the cuts are unprecedented since the birth of the modern Welfare State and will devastate public services for many years to come. Furthermore one of the main effects of these cuts will be to increase the pressure to outsource and privatise.

3. The breadth of the cuts affects the whole of society often hitting the poorest and vulnerable the hardest. All branches of public services including Local Authorities, Higher Education, Voluntary and Community Sector, the NHS, the civil service face cuts, as will students, people on benefits, and tenants in private and local authority accommodation, etc.

4. For every job lost in the public sector there will be a job lost on the private sector.

5. The success of the STUC demonstration in Edinburgh in October shows that people respond and feel empowered when they see the unions acting together.

6. The call from the TUC conference for a national demonstration against the cuts in March 2011.

7. In France and Greece the attempt by governments to shift the blame

Continued on page 22

Minutes of AGM 2011 (continued)

Continued from page 21

from the bankers to working people have met with General strikes organised by trade unions.

This Union Branch Believes

8. These cuts are politically motivated rather than driven by economic necessity and threaten a weak economic recovery which may prolong the recession. The STUC's 'There is a Better Way' campaign shows there is an alternative.

9. The coalition government is attempting to overcome union resistance. We must learn the lessons from history and seek united action against the present government where possible.

10. As the cuts threaten jobs, pay, and pensions of workers across the whole economy we need a unified and powerful response. The kind of action that fits this is a General Strike which brings together workers in both the public and private sectors.

11. This kind of united national action undercuts attempts by the far right parties to use the economic crisis to scapegoat ethnic minorities.

This Union Branch Resolves

12. To organise for the biggest turnout possible for the national demonstration in March 2011.

13. To call on the TUC to coordinate a 24 hour General Strike against cuts and attacks on wages and pensions.

14. To take this motion to Unison Scottish Council.

Amendment to Motion 3

Proposed John Stevenson (Children & Families) and John Ross (Services for Communities)

Delete point 13 and replace with "Call on UNISON through the TUC and the STUC to co-ordinate lawful industrial action between trade unions to ensure that any such action has maximum impact. This meeting believes that the attacks on pension should be a priority for such action.

Decision: On being put to the meeting the amendment in the names of John Stevenson (Children & Families) and John Ross (Services for Communities) was **lost** and the original motion was **CARRIED**.

At this point in the meeting it was **AGREED** to consider the Emergency Motion.

Emergency Motion - Budget Cuts & Alternative Business Models

Proposed by John Ross (Services for Communities) and Kevin Duguid (Finance)

This meeting considers the combination of ongoing budget measures and alternative business models will impact detrimentally on jobs and services.

We consider the application of a 3 year budget involving £90 million of cuts will inevitably lead to service reductions with a consequential impact on jobs. This will affect citizens across the whole spectrum of society throughout Edinburgh, not just the young and elderly. We note with regret the City of Edinburgh Council has determined to adopt financial measures imposed by Westminster and Holyrood governments without giving due cognisance to the implications of their actions.

We note with great concern statements alluding to a job loss of potentially 1,200 posts which will lead to reduced services and place individual employees on a job market which no longer exists given the cuts to councils proposed by the Westminster government.

Further, we note the ongoing development of bidding for our members' jobs and services they provide under the auspices of Alternative Business Models will inevitably be budget driven as opposed to the proposed precept of improving service delivery. This places the objective of further continuing employment for our members at risk.

We consider the current branch policy regarding opposition to compulsory redundancies to remain valid, i.e. maximum resistance, and instructs branch officers to further develop appropriate strategies for initial action in the workplace prior to embarking on wider campaigns whilst recognising the potential effectiveness of wider action.

Decision: On being put to the

meeting the terms of the Motion were **CARRIED**.

4. Scottish Government To Cut Funds For Tackling Unemployment And Poverty In Edinburgh

Proposed by Branch Committee

This meeting deplores the news (29 Dec 2010) that the Scottish Government will withdraw £2.2 m funding for tackling unemployment and poverty from the Edinburgh Partnership, over and above the overall cuts to the funding given to City of Edinburgh Council - although historically paid through Edinburgh's unique partnership structures, this is funding which in other cities has been included in their overall Fairer Scotland Fund allocation.

As a result, highly-acclaimed local programmes for the long-term unemployed, for areas most affected by worklessness and for the most disadvantaged groups are under threat; and staff at Capital City Partnership have been told that at least some and potentially all of the staff team face redundancy if a solution is not found.

The meeting calls on Alex Neil, Minister for Housing and Local Government, to reinstate this funding allocation.

It calls on the City of Edinburgh Council to protect the share of budgets going to anti-poverty and regeneration programmes, whether or not the minister reinstates the funding.

It calls on politicians of all parties to support this position and on all political parties to commit to reinstating or continuing this level of funding if they are in government following the May elections.

Decision: On being put to the meeting the terms of the Motion were **CARRIED**.

5. Our Pension Fund

Proposed by Matthew Crighton (Associated Bodies) and Kevin Duguid (Finance)

This meeting notes with concern the attempts by the Government to cut our pension rights and the

Continued on page 23

Minutes of AGM 2011 (continued)

Continued from page 22

misinformed attacks on public sector pensions in the media.

In particular we condemn the unilateral decision of the government to shift the basis on which pensions are uprated from the Retail Price Index to the Consumer Price Index which it has been calculated will ultimately result in a reduction of around 15% in pension payments.

Local Government pension funds constitute members' deferred pay and we call for arrangements to give workforce representation, via trade unions, on the bodies which govern them in order to be able to safeguard members' interests.

Specifically we call on the Lothian Pension Fund to adopt this principle of its own volition, that is, to make available two additional voting places on the Pension and Trusts Committee to workforce representatives to be nominated by the trade union representatives on the LPF Consultative Committee.

We also call on the government to bring forward legislation to implement the EU directive. As regards consultation on the future of the LGPS, we note with concern that the submission of the LPF to the Hutton Commission advocates a change from a final salary scheme to a career average scheme.

It also suggests that membership of the scheme should be compulsory. Union representatives on the LPF Consultative Committee were given less than two working days' notice of this, which does not constitute sufficient opportunity for consultation with LPF beneficiaries.

We call on the LPF to withdraw its support for a career average scheme. We support the efforts of LGPS funds to use their investment power to encourage good corporate governance and to check on social and environmental issues but we believe this does not go far enough.

Our funds should avoid investments which directly threaten public services (e.g. companies which promote privatisation), violate basic trade union and workforce rights (as

defined by the ILO) or undermine efforts to protect our climate and environment (e.g. investment in dirty tar sand or deepwater oil extraction).

We call on the LPF to bring forward reports on its current exposure to these risks and how to minimise it.

Decision: On being put to the meeting the terms of the Motion were **CARRIED.**

6. Supporting the Social Care Workforce

Proposed by John Stevenson (Children & Families) and John Ross (Services for Communities)

This AGM congratulates all staff who continued to provide essential services for the public during the heavy snow. In particular it recognises the efforts put in by Social Care staff, many of whom walked for miles in the snow, ended up working long hours while only getting paid for core work and were penalised for being late after having struggled through the snow to get to work.

It believes this has thrown into sharp relief many of the issues facing the Social Care workforce across the country. These include:-

1. Cuts and privatisation, reducing standards of care and reducing pay and conditions.
2. Unsafe lone working
3. A 'market' approach to care that puts cost before need
4. Increasing demands without an increase in resources.
5. The 'Personalisation' agenda that, rather than offering service users independence, disguises cuts and affects the ability to strategically plan services in the public sector.
5. Increasing regulation in children's services (for example new Scottish Government Child Protection Procedures) with no additional resources.

This Branch welcomes:-

6. The work done by UNISON Scotland's Social Work Issues Group (SWIG) to highlight social care issues. In particular:-

- a) its Manifesto for Social Work
- b) its negotiating guide on Supervision and Workload

Management

c) its forthcoming guide on Keeping Safe at Work.

7. SWIG's attempts to pull together home care and social care staff at a Scottish level to share information and experiences and build an organisational base that recruits members and activists.

8. Its recognition that members need professional as well as service conditions support from their union. This Branch therefore resolves to

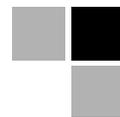
9. continue to play an active part in the Social Work issues Group

10. continue to campaign actively on a local basis against social care cuts

11. provide the necessary resources to assist organising and recruitment among social care staff.

Decision: On being put to the meeting the terms of the Motion were **CARRIED.**

At this point of the meeting the Chair advised the AGM was closed will all vacant Branch Officer posts being remitted to the Branch Committee for decision and action.



Making your VOTE COUNT

Branch Meetings

These are the supreme branch policy meetings and are open to all members.

Departmental Meetings

Open to all members in each department or sector and can mandate Shop Stewards Committees. Members mandate their own stewards via **Workplace Meetings**.

Branch Committee

Consists of about 60 members made up of branch officers, stewards elected from Departmental Committees and reps from self organised groups. Steward delegates are accountable to their Stewards' Committees. Structures ensure stewards outnumber officers.

The Committee meets monthly to deal with the running of the branch and oversees work of all other committees.

Delegations must meet proportionality (ie reflect the proportion of women in the membership) and fair representation.

Shop Stewards Committees

Made up of all stewards in each department. These deal with issues in your department and most have a Joint Consultative Structure through which they meet management regularly. They represent your views through workplace or departmental meetings and elect delegates to the branch committee.

Scottish Council

UNISON's Scottish forum of delegates from all branches. There are also specific structures for services like Local Government and Health.

National Conference

UNISON's supreme policy making body made up of delegates from branches. Also Conferences for each individual service (eg Local Government).

National Executive

Elected by ballot of all members on Regional constituencies (eg Scotland), and UK service constituencies like local government. Implements, interprets and sets policy between conferences. Members are lay officers who have jobs like the rest of us.

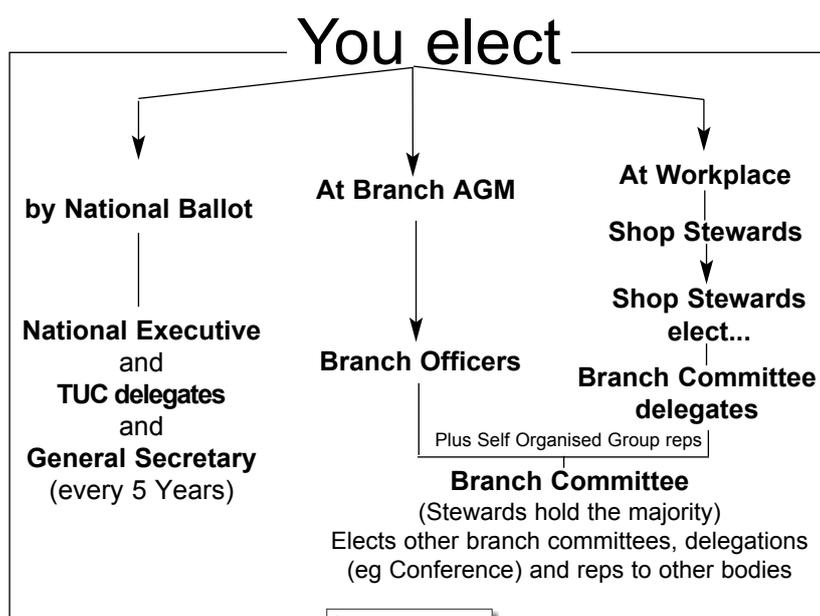
Self Organised Groups

For structurally disadvantaged groups, eg Black Members, Disabled Members, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Members.

Here we outline broadly the current framework and the UNISON structure in which the branch works.

UNISON is a lay member led union with democratic structures at all levels. But these structures are no good unless members themselves exercise their right to use them.

The structures which branch members have set up will no doubt develop through experience to meet the branch's needs.



How you can make UNISON Policy

For example, you want UNISON to campaign for more leave. Discuss at your workplace, raise with your steward or draw up a motion (the branch office will help) and find a seconder.

