

re*vitalise* our  
**public  
services**

**UNISON City of Edinburgh**  
Local Government & Related Sectors Branch

# AGM 2007

Monday 19 February 2007,  
6pm, City Chambers, High Street, Edinburgh

AGENDA

ANNUAL REPORT 2006

[www.unison-edinburgh.org.uk](http://www.unison-edinburgh.org.uk)





# AGM 2007 Calling Notice



To All Members

Dear Colleague

All members are urged to attend the Annual General Meeting of the branch on **Monday 19 February 2007 at 6pm in the City Chambers, High 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 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 **by 12 noon Wednesday 14 February**.

**Questions on the Annual Report and Financial Statement** must be received by **noon on Friday 16 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 13 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

George Lee  
Branch Secretary

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# Agenda

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| <p>1. Opening Remarks/ Introductions</p> <p>2. Appointment of Scrutineers</p> <p>3. Standing Orders</p> <p>4. Minutes of Branch Meetings 2006<br/><i>Annual General Meeting 21 February (Pages 20-22)</i></p> <p>5. Annual Report 2006 (Pages 11-19)<br/><i>Questions on the Annual Report and Financial Statement should be submitted to the Branch Office by noon on Friday 16 February.</i></p> <p>6. Financial Statement (Page 19)</p> | <p>7. Special Reports<br/><i>Reports on any urgent or emergency issues from Service Conditions Team.</i></p> <p>8. Election of Branch Officers<br/><i>See below. For any contested posts biographical details (where provided) are on Page 4. Voting will be by secret ballot at the meeting</i></p> <p>9. Rule Changes<br/><i>None submitted.</i></p> <p>10. Policy Motions<br/><i>See pages 4-10</i></p> |
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## Agenda Item 8 Election of Branch Officers

**NOTE: \*Ballot Papers will be issued at the AGM for contested posts. Biographical details of candidates are on page 4.** Where no nominations were received for any post, they will continue to be sought via the Branch Committee

POST	NOMINATED BY	
<b>PRESIDENT</b>	<b>Joe Galletta</b> (Retired Member)	- John Ross (Services for Communities) John Stevenson (Children & Families)
<b>* ELECTION REQUIRED</b>		
<b>CHAIRPERSON</b>	<b>Duncan Smith</b> (Services for Communities)	- Services For Communities Shop Stewards Committee
	<b>John Stevenson</b> (Children & Families)	- George Lee (Health & Social Care) Agnes Petkevicius (Children & Families) John Ross, Irene Stout (Services For Communities)
<b>VICE-CHAIRPERSON (2)</b>	<b>Matthew Creighton</b> (Services for Communities)	- G. Lee (Health & Social Care), Kevin Duguid (Finance), Services for Communities Shop Stewards Committee
	<b>Rose Jackson</b> (Health & Social Care)	- Walter Weir (Services for Communities), George Lee (Health & Social Care)
<b>SECRETARY</b>	<b>George Lee</b> (Health & Social Care)	- Margaret Wilkinson, Veronica Houston, Mary Thomson and Elizabeth Gibson (Health & Social Care), Services for Communities Shop Stewards Committee, Finance Shop Stewards Committee
<b>ASST SECRETARY</b>	<b>Agnes Petkevicius</b> (Children & Families)	- Kevin Duguid (Finance), Walter Weir (Services for Communities)
<b>TREASURER</b>	<b>Mike McCrossan</b> (Services for Communities)	- George Lee (Health & Social Care) Agnes Petkevicius (Children & Families)
<b>EQUALITIES</b>	<b>Irene Stout</b> (Services for Communities)	- George Lee (Health & Social Care) Walter Weir (Services for Communities)

## 8. Election of Branch Officers (continued from page 2)

POST	NOMINATED BY	
<b>SERVICE CONDITIONS TEAM</b>		
<b>*ELECTION REQUIRED</b>		
<b>CO-ORDINATOR</b>	<b>Kevin Duguid</b> (Finance)	- Mary Attridge, Jim Kelly (Health & Social Care)
	<b>John Mulgrew</b> (LVJB)	- Barbara Foubister (Children & Families), Amanda Kerr, John Ross (Services for Communities)
<b>CONVENER (APT&amp;C)</b>	<b>John Ross</b> (Services for Communities)	- George Lee (Health & Social Care), Kevin Duguid (Finance)
<b>CONVENOR (Craft)</b>	<b>Walter Weir</b> (Services for Communities)	- Services for Communities Shop Stewards Committee Finance Shop Stewards Committee
<b>CONVENER (Manual)</b>	<b>Kevin Duguid</b> (Finance)	- Services for Communities Shop Stewards Committee Finance Shop Stewards Committee
<b>* SERVICE CONDITIONS OFFICERS (4 - at least two must be women)</b>		
	<b>Alan Brown</b> (Children & Families)	- Children & Families Shop Stewards Committee
	<b>Agnes Petkevicius</b> (Children & Families)	- Children & Families Shop Stewards Committee Services for Communities Shop Stewards Committee Finance Shop Stewards Committee
	<b>Elaine Wishart</b> (Corporate Services)	- Services for Communities Shop Stewards Committee Finance Shop Stewards Committee
	<b>Irene Stout</b> (Services for Communities)	- John Ross, Walter Weir (Services for Communities), Agnes Petkevicius (Children & Families)
<b>HEALTH &amp; SAFETY</b>	<b>Derry Morrice</b> (Services for Communities)	- George Lee (Health & Social Care) Kevin Duguid (Finance)
<b>RECRUITMENT/MEMBERSHIP SERVICES OFFICER</b>		
	<b>Irene Heggie</b> (Health & Social Care)	- Agnes Petkevicius (Children & Families), George Lee (Health & Social Care), Finance Shop Stewards Committee
<b>* ELECTION REQUIRED</b>		
<b>COMMUNICATIONS</b>	<b>Luke Henderson</b> (Services for Communities)	- Services for Communities Stewards Committee
	<b>John Stevenson</b> (Children & Families)	- George Lee (Health & Social Care), John Ross (Services for Communities)
<b>WELFARE</b>	Job Share { <b>Gillian Allan</b> (LVJB) <b>Mike Smith</b> (Finance)	- Finance Shop Stewards Committee, George Lee (Health & Social Care), John Ross (Services for Communities)
<b>LIFELONG LEARNING OFFICER</b>		
	<b>Dot Paterson</b> (Health & Social Care)	- Margaret Wilkinson & Veronica Houston (Health & Social Care) Services for Communities Shop Stewards Committee Finance Shop Stewards Committee
<b>EDUCATION</b>	<b>Dot Paterson</b> (Health & Social Care)	- Margaret Wilkinson & Veronica Houston (Health & Social Care)
<b>INTERNATIONAL OFFICER</b>	<b>Matthew Creighton</b> (City Development)	- Services for Communities Shop Stewards Committee, George Lee (Health & Social Care), Kevin Duguid (Finance), Finance Shop Stewards Committee
<b>YOUNG MEMBERS OFFICER No nomination received</b>		
<b>AUDITORS</b>	<b>Alan Bennet</b> (Finance) -	John Stevenson (Children & Families) John Ross (Services for Communities)
	<b>Stewart Mullen</b> (Recreation) -	John Stevenson (Children & Families) John Ross (Services for Communities)

### Post of Branch Chairperson

#### Duncan Smith

From 1983 to 1988 I worked at the City Hospital becoming a senior NUPE steward and was active in the fight to halt privatisation of the ancillary services.

I started work in the Housing Department in 1988 as a Housing Officer. I became a NALGO steward shortly afterwards representing members in Housing Management.

When the new decentralised Housing Office in Craigmillar opened in 1990 I was transferred to it and became the steward for the office.

I was delegated to the Branch Committee from Housing and have participated actively in the discussions and political debates over the key issues of the day.

I have always seen the AGM as an important focus for ensuring Unison is a member led union and have often put forward motions and spoken at that event.

In 2002 I moved back to the Headquarters building to work as a Commissioning Officer in Homelessness Services. I was elected to represent the Assessment and Advice section.

For several years I have been the

Convener of the Housing Stewards Committee, chairing the meetings and leading negotiations with local management.

During 2004/2005 I worked with other trade unionists and council tenants in the campaign Edinburgh Against Stock Transfer. I chaired EAST committee meetings, spoke at public events and reported progress back to the branch.

Following the creation of Services for Communities I have been Joint Convener of the expanded stewards committee dealing with the challenges of a new department.

#### John Stevenson

I have been active in UNISON and NALGO since 1982 and was previously Scottish Regional Steward for the EETPU Telecommunications Branch.

I was Branch Secretary for 18 years as well as Communications Officer. I have represented the Branch at Scottish Council and at National Conference throughout that time. I have wide experience of chairing meetings at Branch and Scottish level. I believe the level of experience and knowledge I have gath-

ered is essential to the post of Branch Chairperson.

For example, due to transport problems at 2006 National Conference, I was the only Branch Delegate there on Friday afternoon. Because of changes in business, I had to be prepared to speak on three motions and get sufficient support to ensure our branch policy was adopted by Conference.

I have led and developed a wide range of branch policies and structures. I have been instrumental in the computerisation of the Branch Office.

I was a lead negotiator in the Nursery Nurses Dispute and took a Branch and national role in defending members from the unfair criticisms of the O'Brien Inquiry. While negotiation is the best way to resolve disputes, I have led industrial action on numerous occasions including unofficial action where that was necessary.

I formulated and lobbied for the application that won £15,000 from the GPF to fund our Housing Stock Transfer Campaign.

### Post of Branch Communications Officer

#### Luke Henderson

I have been an activist in Unison for the last decade. Starting as steward in the housing department in Birmingham City Council, I then took on various officer positions in that branch.

I moved to Edinburgh over two years ago and became convener of the Environmental & Consumer Services Department. When the Services for Communities Department was formed I became the joint convener for this Department.

Examples of my communication skills

include:

- Producing clear and accessible leaflets for council tenants. These were essential in beating the pro-transfer multi-million pound campaign waged by Edinburgh council.
- Producing regular emails to update members of the Environmental & Consumer Services department.
- Organising workplace meetings and bulletins.
- Working as part of the Unison national award winning communications campaign that defeated stock

transfer in Birmingham.

- Producing a number of press releases which have generated articles in every major Scottish newspaper
- With Single Status and other major challenges facing us over the next year both branch officers and members need to be prepared to fight. Experience has shown me that regular, clear communication is the key for building and strengthening the link between a branch and its members, so that together we can achieve the best possible results.

#### John Stevenson

I was Publicity /Magazine Editor in NALGO from 1982 and Communications Officer in UNISON since 1996. I have been active in communications at branch, Scottish and UK level throughout that time. Achievements include:-

- The Branch winning a National Magazine Competition Award seven times.
- I set up our branch website (the first in Scotland) in 1997 and I single-handedly maintain it, winning Best UK Website three times.

- I initiated and produce the Branch Annual Report for members.
- I campaigned for and achieved lay control of Communications in the union.
- I have led Communications strategies at Branch, Scottish and UK level.
- Successful Housing Stock Transfer Campaign, winning national funding for press adverts and a broadsheet I produced, now used as a template by other branches.
- I helped translate our policy on Asylum Seeker children into a Scottish campaign, researching and designing joint guidance for social work members.

I battled and mitigated negative press coverage in the Social Work Crisis and the Nursery Nurses Strike.

I have developed a media strategy which has brought extensive local and national press coverage with hardly a week going by in 10 years when the Branch has not had a media profile. In the Pensions strike, Edinburgh achieved the highest Scottish coverage. Communications is about organisation, and sound structures for involving members and targeting the media. It involves considerable work 'out of hours' and I believe I have approached that with enthusiasm.

# 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 (ie pay and conditions)
- Health & Safety
- Pensions and Superannuation
- UNISON Services and Structure
- Policy and Campaigning
- Economic Policy

## ○ Council budget, cuts, redundancies (local action)

### 1. Equal Pay

*Proposed by John Stevenson (Children & Families), Irene Stout (Services for Communities)*

This meeting expresses its extreme concern at the council's approach to Equal Pay.

The Council's failure to accept their employment practices over the past years have discriminated against groups of workers who are predominately low-paid women has created an environment where "no-win, no-fee" lawyers are now raising litigation against not only the employer but also individual Branch Officers on the basis they were supposedly aware of Equal Pay legislation but failed to use it in the interests of their members.

The complexity of this particular employment legislation

- International
- Miscellaneous

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

### COMPOSITES

\* Movers of motions marked thus are asked to try to merge them into composites to simplify business.

### 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 developments in Single Status and Equal Pay, negotiators may wish to submit emergencies on these.**

### 2. Single Status - The Way Forward

*Proposed by Services for Communities Stewards Committee*

This union branch notes

1. It is likely that the Council's final Single Status proposals will include "winners" (members whose pay goes up), "losers" (whose pay goes down) and many whose pay will stay the same. The current branch policy is that no members should lose out under any proposed Single Status agreement.
2. The impact of Single Status proposals elsewhere in Scotland have seen some staff, often low paid, lose thousands of pounds under the proposals. This can have a devastating effect on members who are already struggling to manage on low incomes.
3. Once Glasgow Council revealed their Single Status package there was a strong vote for strike action including some who were set to benefit from the package. This threat of strike action by council workers forced their council into making significant concessions.

This union branch believes

1. Single Status is a key issue for the following year. It has the potential to make or break this union branch.

is self-evident and we are concerned that lead activists are now being asked to respond on an individual basis to questions raised by the "no-win, no fee lawyers".

We consider both the failure of the employer to respond to this situation and the circumstances facing our lead activists to be unacceptable and call upon the union at all levels to take whatever action necessary to address these issues with a view to ensuring a fair and equitable resolution which protects the interests of all members and those who represent them.

2. Communication between the branch and members must be more effective to ensure that we can fight for the best package.
3. If the council is sincere in working in partnership with the unions then it should allow members meetings in council time. This will maximise attendance and participation.

This union branch resolves

1. To improve direct communication with members. This includes using all facilities available including members meetings, newsletters, email, stewards meetings etc.
2. To ensure it is the members who should make the final decision to accept or reject the whole Single Status package.
3. To send this motion to the Scottish Local Government Committee of Unison and to call on the Scottish region to lead a national campaign to pressurise the Scottish Executive to provide the full funds required to finance the proposals and to co-ordinate branches to win the best possible deal.

### 3. Competitive Tendering - Homes for Older People

*Proposed by Marlyn Tweedie (Health & Social Care), Ian Hood (Health & Social Care)*

This AGM notes with dismay the decision of Edinburgh Council to competitively tender the management, maintenance and running of care homes for older people. Organisations, individuals and multi nationals will be able to bid and then legitimately profit from the "business".

This meeting believes that there is a fault line at the core of the rationale for justifying the market principles in public services; that is that the drive to make a profit inevitably leads to decisions that cut back on the services provided, that pay staff less money, that cut back on training etc. The disastrous experiences in our hospitals, railways and schools prove that this is not "best value" for us - the employees and users of public services. Polls consistently show that 80% of the public are against privatisation and that public services and the ethos of accountability, equality and care

from cradle to grave are highly valued and worth defending.

This meeting resolves to

1. Set up and participate in a campaign which is as large and inclusive as possible to oppose the tendering process. Every group and individual is welcome from students to pensioners and all in-between. This is an issue for all of us.
2. A steering group should be organised within two weeks of the date of this meeting, involving branch officers, shop stewards and other activists to organise the first steps in this campaign.
3. Those members directly affected should be consulted to establish their willingness take industrial action in defence of in-house provision.

#### ○ Service Conditions Issues (ie pay and conditions)

### 4. Pay Claim

*Proposed by John Stevenson (Children & Families), Kevin Duguid (Finance)*

This meeting recognises the current Pay Settlement concludes on 31st March 2008 and that talks on a future settlement will be initiated in the coming months.

We note current practice is to agree a settlement framework which reflects the grant settlement timeframe between the employers and the Scottish Executive, recognising the Executive's role as the main funder of Local Government.

Given such grant arrangements have generally been put in place to cover several years there is logic and rationale in

reflecting this arrangement in any pay settlement.

Any agreement must, however, be qualified with the recognition the disparity between public and private sector earning levels is a growing one and any agreement must be set on addressing this issue.

Further, there should be agreement with the employers that pay negotiations should be reopened in the event of any agreed settlement figure being overtaken by the average rate of earnings.

### 5. Access to Work

*Proposed by David Ng Hop (Health and Social Care), John Ross (Services for Communities)*

This AGM notes that

- 1) There are 6.8 million disabled people of working age in the UK - 1 in 5 of the working population.
- 2) Only 50% of disabled people of working age are in employment compared to 81% of non-disabled.
- 3) 1 million disabled people within a job want to work.
- 4) The average gross hourly pay of disabled employment is 10% less than that of non-disabled employees (£9.36 per hour compared to £10.39 per hour).
- 5) Disabled people with mental health problems have the lowest employment rates of all impairment categories, at only 20% per cent.
- 6) Only 17% of people with learning disabilities are in paid work.
- 7) 3 out of 5 employers readily admit that they would not

employ someone with history of mental illness.

This AGM believes that employers should do more to open up jobs for disabled people. Jobcentre plus and its providers should work with employers in all key sectors to generate more employment opportunities.

This AGM believes that Access to Work has an important role in supporting disabled people to stay in work. The proposals to remove the Access to work Scheme will have a negative impact on disabled people opportunities to find and remain in employment.

This AGM mandates the Branch committee to campaign against the removal of the Access to work scheme and work with minded organisations to lobby the Government with the aim of securing the long term future of the Scheme.



## ○ Health & Safety

### 6. New Council HQ

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

This Branch recognises that its members have varying views about the New Council HQ and that there is a need to reflect all of these views.

This Branch is concerned about the issues being raised by members which include:-

- a) Unrealistic expectations regarding 'hot-desks' whereby members are unable to access desks and computers when they need them.
- b) Unrealistic storage space for paper files: Systems for storing all records electronically are not fully in place, can be unreliable and do not fully address converting existing documents to electronic form. This Branch is concerned that this could create work problems for many members.
- c) A depersonalised working environment: Many of the housekeeping rules are experienced as overly-restrictive and many members feel they have

become a number rather than a person.

- d) We note with concern the failure to address the problems highlighted by Branch representatives following the opening of the office.

This Branch is concerned that aspects of the organisation of the new building display a lack of knowledge about the content of members' jobs and duties.

This Branch resolves to:-

1. Support the Branch Health & Safety Officers in the work they have been doing to address the ongoing issues within Waverley Court.
2. Closely monitor Health & Safety issues in the new building
3. Mount an urgent and widespread consultation of members to identify, collate and act on problems identified.

## ○ UNISON Services and Structures

### 7. Branch Restructuring

*Proposed by George Lee (Health & Social Care), John Ross (Services for Communities)*

This meeting notes the ongoing process of restructuring the council under the auspices of the Council 2007 Review which has led to the reconfiguration of services under the control of new and reorganised departments.

We also note this ongoing exercise will also be influenced by the Job Evaluation / Single Status processes which are currently the subject of consultation with the trade unions.

It is recognised the outcome of this work will require a revision to Branch structure and rules to reflect the revised council structure.

This meeting agrees to convene a Special General Meeting at such times as the finalised revised council structure is in place. This meeting will consider required Rule Changes to allow a revised branch

structure to be put in place. Whilst the meeting may agree changes in Branch Officer posts, no elections will take place until the subsequent Branch Annual General Meeting.

It is recognised such changes will be required to ensure the continued effectiveness of the branch. Given the exceptional circumstances, in the event the Special General Meeting is inquorate, the matter should be referred to the Branch Committee with a view to agreeing a way forward with their decisions being placed before the subsequent Branch Annual General Meeting for homologation or otherwise.

It should also be noted any decision of a Special General Meeting in this respect will also require homologation from the Annual General Meeting.

*More motions on Page 8*

○ Policy and Campaigning

## 8. Protection of asylum seeker families

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

*The terms of this motion to be adopted as branch policy and adapted and forwarded to National Delegate Conference.*

This Branch welcomes the fact that its motion on Asylum Seeker Families was widely supported at the union's Scottish and UK level and directly led to:

- The first ever guide for members in Social Work in Scotland on ethical practice with Asylum Seeker Families and Children.
- Joint work and funding on the briefing from the union's General Political Fund and the British Association of Social Workers in Scotland.
- Early talks on building a Scottish Action Group to continue to campaign for the rights of Asylum Seeker Children.
- Political lobbying to campaign for the Government to apply the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child to Asylum Seeker Children.

However, this Branch remains deeply concerned that the unacceptable treatment of asylum seeker families continues, in particular the practice of removing these families from their homes in dawn raids.

This Branch is particularly concerned about the impact of these tactics on the children of asylum seekers, and believes that such inhumane and degrading treatment breaches their rights under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and possibly domestic legislation. It creates distress and fear not only for those children directly affected, but also for other refugee children who must live in terror that it could happen to them.

This Branch notes with concern that the UK government has placed a reservation on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in respect of immigration and asylum, and believes that this further disadvantages already vulnerable children.

Such practices continue despite the undertaking last year by the UK Immigration Minister to establish a protocol in Scotland for the humane treatment of these families, to be rolled out to the rest of the UK. This would ensure:

- that asylum seekers' children would have their needs assessed;
- that each would have a lead professional appointed; and

- that immigration staff dealing with children would have enhanced disclosure checks.

This Branch regrets that these commitments have not all so far been fulfilled.

This Branch recognises that

- there are measures that UNISON members can take to protect the interests and safety of children and families who are asylum seekers,
- and they should be fully supported in doing so.

It recognises that legislation designed to protect the interests of children and their families in England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland may have a role in protecting children of asylum seekers from abusive situations created by practices under other legislation.

However, given that asylum and immigration is a reserved matter Conference recognises the need to take action to press the issues at a UK level.

Conference resolves:-

1. to lobby forcefully for the full implementation of the Home Office's proposed protocol for ensuring that the needs of the children of asylum seekers are assessed and taken into account when making decisions about asylum and deportation.
2. to campaign for an end to the forcible removal of asylum families and in particular, an end to the practice of dawn raids.
3. to campaign for an amnesty for all asylum families living in this country for a year or more, in line with the precedent set in 2002 by the then Home Secretary.
4. to put pressure on the UK Government to lift the reservation on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
5. to urge branches to write to their MPs, MSPs, and AMs to raise these matters and seek their support.
6. to instruct the NEC to build urgent links with the relevant Children's Commissioners, UNISON members who are practitioners in the field and relevant legal advisers to research and advise on how best to support members to act in the best interests of asylum seeker children.

## 9. Dignity! Period Campaign

*Proposed by Kevin Duguid (Finance) Agnes Petkevicius (Children & Families)*

This Branch notes with concern:

That the political, economic and social situation in Zimbabwe is at crisis point under the dictatorship of Robert Mugabe.

The unemployment rate is 80% and inflation is running at over 1000% with the average monthly wage, should you be fortunate enough to have a job, being £12.

That because of the aforementioned the majority of women in Zimbabwe have no access to sanitary products, which cost in excess of £6 per pack, and that this is a major cause of disease and infection which can be fatal with life expectancy for a woman in Zimbabwe currently standing at only 34 years of age.

This branch believes:

1. That women in Zimbabwe cannot fight for their rights as women and as Zimbabwean citizens when they are stripped of their dignity.
2. That supporting women by providing them with sanitary protection is the first step in helping them

to regain that dignity.

3. That highlighting this issue may bring further pressure to bear on the Zimbabwean Government to address this issue.

This branch resolves:

1. To support the Dignity! Period campaign being run by ACTSA (Action for South Africa) by making a donation of £500.
2. To affiliate to ACTSA.
3. To publicise the issue amongst our membership with details on how they can become involved and donate to the campaign.
3. To publicise the Dignity! Period rally in Trafalgar Square on 10 March 2007.
4. To write to local MP's and MSP's to highlight the issue and ask for their support of Early Day Motion 862.

## 10. Just Solutions to Global Warming - the trade union role

*Proposed by Matthew Crighton (Associated Bodies), Stephen McMurray (Associated Bodies)*

It is becoming accepted that global warming is the major long-term issue facing the world; that the people to suffer most, earliest, will be in the developing world; but that it will have potentially disastrous consequences in this country within a generation; let alone its consequences for the natural world. There is a burning need for socially-just solutions to global warming which can convincingly map a practical route to virtual elimination of greenhouse gases. Put another way, we need to develop plans for the conversion of our economy and lifestyle.

The various approaches which have been suggested need to be scrutinized for their effectiveness and their impact on social justice, to determine what mechanisms should be used to effect a massive change in the economy in order to stop burning fossil fuels. If there is a choice between, for example, carbon taxation, emissions trading, carbon rationing etc, we should support those which meet our economic and social objectives as well as stop global warming. Therefore we need to know the costs and who pays them, the benefits and how they will be shared. These questions affect whether any plan can be implemented, since they both determine the potential to win popular support; and help identify the obstacles they may face. This

will require that planned solutions are seen to be fair and that they can provide continuity of employment even if occupations change.

The trade union movement can and should play a central role in clarifying these key questions. Accordingly we aim to promote Just Solutions to Global Warming which embody the idea of a conversion plan for the national economy. To do this, at branch, Scottish and national level we will work with other unions and environmental organizations to assess the options and propose a trade union response to these problems.

Specific actions to be taken will include

1. Affiliation to umbrella climate change campaigns - Stop Climate Chaos and Campaign against Climate Change
2. Within these organizations to propose just solutions to global warming
3. To seek to co-operate with other trade unions nationally and internationally on these matters
4. To organize a conference to debate and promote this approach, jointly with other organizations as appropriate.

## 11. Trident - weapon of mass destruction

*Proposed by Matthew Crighton (Associated Bodies), Stephen McMurray (Associated Bodies)*

This meeting, being firmly in favour of nuclear disarmament, is appalled by the intention of the UK government to replace the Trident nuclear weapon system. It is particularly concerned that this decision goes against the obligation under the Non-Proliferation Treaty to seek in good faith nuclear disarmament. This can only encourage aspiring nuclear powers to acquire nuclear weapons. Unless the actions and the message from Britain and other nuclear powers change, more and more nations will get nuclear weapons and it will be only a matter of time before they are used, with disastrous consequences for us all.

We note the clear indications that people in Scotland

oppose the replacement of Trident. Therefore

- We urge all Scottish MPs to oppose the replacement of Trident in the Westminster Parliament.
- We urge all Scottish parties with policy which opposes Trident (which includes the Scottish Labour Policy) to work together to formulate a motion which expresses this view.
- We urge all Lothian MSPs to vote for such a motion.
- We applaud the idea that the Scottish Parliament should legislate to make it a crime in Scotland to use or plan to use weapons of mass destruction

### International

## 12. Support the Palestinians, boycott Israeli products

*Proposed by Matthew Crighton (Associated Bodies), Stephen McMurray (Associated Bodies)*

This meeting notes with great distress the continuing violations of international law by Israel, in particular the invasion of Lebanon, the attacks on Gaza, the building of the 'apartheid wall' and ongoing military activities in the occupied territories. It believes that a peaceful Middle East is impossible without an Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories. Without such a settlement it will be impossible to address the dangers of terrorism, which gives UNISON members a direct interest in the resolution of this conflict. We agree therefore to continue to press our government to impose maximum pressure on the governments of Israel and the USA for withdrawal from the occupied territories.

We note that UNISON has received a request, via PSI from its affiliates, the Palestinian Health Services Union and the Palestinian Public Services Union, for political support and humanitarian assistance for Palestinian Public Employees, who have not been paid salaries for the last 8 months because of the political embargo imposed following the election of the new Palestinian Government, led by the Hamas Movement. This has caused enormous suffering and hardship.

We agree to make a donation of £500 to these unions' humanitarian assistance fund to provide essential food and medical services to public sector workers and their families.

We call on Israel to make payment to the Palestinian Authority of the tax income which it is due; and on the EU and the USA to release funds earmarked for development assistance to that country.

We agree to promote the boycott of Israeli goods, and specifically of Eden Springs, an Israeli company which includes in its operations the extraction of water in the Golan Heights, Syrian territory illegally occupied by Israel. We will write to the City of Edinburgh Council, and all other employers where the branch has members, to urge them to cancel any contracts which they have with Eden Springs; and to support the boycott of Israeli goods. We urge all branch members to observe this boycott and will publicise it in the branch magazine and website.

We agree to affiliate to the Palestine Solidarity Campaign.

## Secretary's Report

# Single Status equal pay and pensions dominated 2006



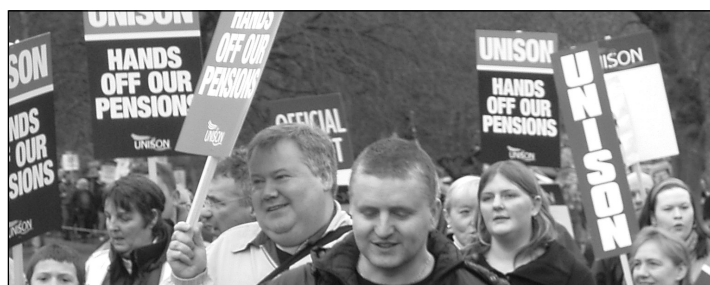
**E**qual Pay, Single Status and Pensions have continued to dominate the branch agenda over the past year with issues such as the national strategy for shared services set to become of equal importance as this year progresses.

The Branch has continued to press our employers to hold to their side of the bargain with respect to Single Status and Equal Pay.

A significant difference in perspective has emerged in that we are seeking harmonisation of conditions between former Manual and APT&C posts whilst our employers are seeking to modernise pay and conditions in a manner that would mean an erosion of existing enhancements such as shift payments, week-end enhancements and the definition of the working week.

The Branch has invested significant resources to ensuring that progress is achieved to deliver the long awaited (and legally required) Equal Pay structure, whilst ensuring that low paid women who have a legitimate "historical" claim have gained access to the appropriate legal assistance and advice.

The failure of Council to deliver an equality proofed Job Evaluation Scheme by the target date set by them (October 1st 2006) has now brought forward the potential for further claims by low paid women who had accepted a



**The hugely successful pensions action in March 2006**

buy-out for historical inequality and the Branch is currently liaising with UNISON's Pay Equality Group for the purpose assessing the potential for progressing these claims to an Employment Tribunal.

The cost of delivering Equal Pay has lead our employer to threaten job losses to negate the cost of delivering pay equality and Branch negotiators have been acutely aware that we have a duty to deliver Equal Pay whilst protecting terms and conditions for all workers as far as is reasonably practical.

UNISON continues to campaign for Government money to back up their own legislation - they must deliver on this to make equal pay a reality.

### Pensions

There was huge support for the strike against cuts in pension rights and the Government backed down for a second time over the issue. The support of our members and that of our sister trade unions have wrung some concessions from Government, however, whilst some progress has been made it is clear that there will be some detriment applied to

some existing and new scheme members alike.

The protection offered to our colleagues in Health and the Civil Service have not been afforded to Local Government workers for purely financial reasons. The long awaited judicial review on the issue supported the employer's position.

### Motions from last years AGM

**Equal Pay:** The Service Conditions Report updates on the work done throughout the year.

#### Housing Stock

**Transfer:** The Scottish Conference we called for is being arranged by Scottish Council.

#### Disability Leave:

We progressed this to National Conference along with

**Discrimination in Pensions.** Our motion on Underfunding in Social Care was passed at Conference and we made progress with **Aid, Trade, Conditionality and Forced Liberalisation and Global Warming.**

Although our **Palestine** motion was not heard at

## Annual Report 2006

### Branch Officers 2005/2006

- President:* Joe Galletta
- Chair:* John Stevenson
- V/Chair:* Matthew Crighton, Rose Jackson
- Secretary:* George Lee
- Asst Secretary:* Agnes Petkevicius
- Treasurer:* Mike McCrossan
- Equalities:* Irene Stout
- Health & Safety:* Tom McLeod
- Service Conditions**
- Co-ordinator:* John Mulgrew
- Convener (APT&C):* John Ross
- Convener (Manual):* Kevin Duguid
- Convener (Craft):* Walter Weir
- Service Conditions Officers:* Alan Brown, Gerry Corbett, Agnes Petkevicius, Elaine Wishart
- Communications:* John Stevenson
- Recruitment/Membership:* Irene Heggie
- Welfare Officer:* Gillian Allan/ Mike Smith
- International:* Matthew Creighton
- Education and Lifelong Learning:* Dot Paterson
- Auditors:* A Bennett, S Mullen

### Branch Support Staff



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

*continued on Page 12*

## Secretary's Report *continued from Page 11*

Conference, the issues in it were passed.

We had considerable success with our motion on **Protection of asylum seeker families**. Motion 8 on this year's agenda outlines that in more detail.

### Scottish Dimension

The Branch continues to play a full role at Scottish level. **John Stevenson** is a member of the Scottish Committee, chairs the Communications & Campaigns Committee and edits the Scottish bulletin and website. We also have strong representation on the Black Members and Disabled Members Groups. **Matthew Creighton** is a member of the International Committee and the Local Government Committee. **Irene Stout** sits on the Local Government Committee.

### Branch Organisation

Single Status, if delivered this year will require us to revisit our Branch structures, there being no need for posts dealing specifically with former Manual and APT&C conditions. We will therefore be placing before the AGM a motion that will allow for a Branch Development Plan and a revised branch structure to be placed before members as part of the consultation exercise on the final Single Status proposals. As a Branch we have continued to both recruit and retain members but we must ensure that our organisational structures remain robust and relevant

with respect to delivering the level of service required by our members.

### Branch Office

The Branch office staff, Support Officer Monica Niven and Support Assistants Nicola Lee, Julie-anne Finlay and Eileen Thomson have had another busy year with preparation for pensions action and the huge amount of work generated on the Equal Pay front. Our thanks go to them all for their hard work this year. We continue our quest for new more accessible premises and work is continuing with the support of the Scottish and the National union to bring this matter to a conclusion.

I would appeal to all members to be mindful of the fact that our staff have the right as all workers should have to be treated with dignity and respect at all times. No matter the frustration members may have, I would ask that our staff are seen as being part of the solution and not the problem.

An interesting development has been the increase in the number of non union members who have contacted the office seeking advice and support. I would encourage non members to join UNISON prior to contacting our office as a refusal to offer assistance often offends.

### People

This year has been particularly difficult, there having been further difficulties within the Branch Officer Team due to illness and injury. I am pleased to report however that all

have recovered and have continued to deliver a high quality of service to our members.

The Branch office is a hectic place and Officers have had their plates full with the range of issues that have faced us. That often means that they come under increased pressure because they cannot get back to people as quickly as they would wish. My thanks go to them for the enormous work they put in.

My thanks also to our Stewards throughout the Branch for their essential work. We could not operate without them. The more we have, the easier the job gets and we need to encourage many more.

Restructuring at Scottish level saw us lose the services of Billy McAllister (Regional Officer) after seven years. We thank Billy for his support guidance and patience and wish him well in his new role covering West Lothian and Higher Education. Nancy Kelly has now been allocated to our Branch as Billy's replacement and we look forward to working with her over the coming year.

We also saw the retirement of the Tom McLeod the Branch Health and Safety Officer, we wish him well and thank him for his contribution.

John Stevenson stepped down from the Branch Secretary post last year and my thanks go to him for his support and guidance on policy matters.

*George Lee  
Branch Secretary*

### Health & Safety

Due to the retiral of the Health & Safety Officer, there was no report available at the time of going to print.

Due to the importance of the work done by Health & Safety Reps around the Branch, every effort will be made to provide a report on the main 2006 issues and circulate it at the Annual General Meeting.

# Service Conditions: Full consultation on Single Status

**What's In a Name? The changes brought about by the Council Review, which in 2005 had resulted in the creation of the departments of Health & Social Care and Children & Families, continued into 2006 with the creation of the department of Services for Communities which effectively dismantled the departments of Housing, Culture & Leisure and Consumer & Environmental Services.**

Whilst for the majority of members' work carried on as normal and this was simply a case of "meet the new boss - same as the old boss" (with a change of the name of their Department) the move into the new Neighbourhood Working structures saw dramatic changes in many members' working arrangements and working conditions.

Not only a change of department but a change of work location for many as the Council opened Castle Greyskull - the new Headquarters building - which is now the base for many (some believe too many) Council Staff - with many more moving to Chesser House to occupy the floors vacated by the Valuation Board who have relocated to the South Gyle.

All this alongside the centralisation of services such as payroll, personnel and the growth of the Contact Centre has resulted in members clearly demonstrating the ability to adapt to change and to different ways of working and this is something that the Council would be well advised to be mindful of when they talk about the need to adapt to modern ways of working.

## Job Evaluation & Equal Pay

The Single Status agreement was introduced in 1999 to deliver the principles of Equal Pay by ensuring that a common set of conditions applied to all staff and

an end to the Manual APT&C divide.

Part of this agreement was that Council's should introduce a common Job Evaluation Scheme and assess all posts to ensure Equal Pay for work of Equal Value.

## Equal Pay Claims

The fact that this has taken so long has resulted in the Branch lodging a significant number of Equal Pay claims against the Council which resulted in members in "Manual Work" posts being offered a compromise agreement last year.

The Branch continues to pursue claims on behalf of APT&C and Manual members who did not accept the compromise deal and indeed we continue to represent those members who did sign but who may have fresh claims from 1st October 2006.

## Job Evaluation

Throughout 2006 negotiations have been taking place between the Council and the Trade Unions regarding introducing a Job Evaluation Scheme that will deliver Equality and this has seen many staff having job questionnaires completed via focus groups in order that their jobs can be evaluated. Council intends to have the remainder of posts evaluated by a process they call Job Allocation. We remain to be convinced of this process and talks are ongoing on this matter.

The current state of play is that the Evaluation process is ongoing and once complete will be translated into a new single grading structure which will soon be the subject of discussion.

## Pay Protection

The Single Status agreement allows for a three year protection period for members who suffer a proposed pay cut as a consequence of Job Evaluation. This remains a major discussion issue with management and a detailed

*From top:*

John Mulgrew, Service Conditions Co-ordinator, John Ross, Convener APT&C, Kevin Duguid Convener Manual, Wattie Weir, Convener Craft. Officers Agnes Petkevicius, Elaine Wishart, Alan Brown, Gerry Corbett (not pictured)



verbal report will be given on the up to date position on all of these matters at the AGM.

## Conditions of Service

The Council wants to modernise conditions whilst the Trade Unions want to harmonise them. Given there is a clear difference in approach we expect negotiations on common conditions of service to be difficult and lengthy.

The conditions that will require to be standardised include:

- overtime rates
- shift allowances
- working hours

In addition the Council wishes to introduce a new working week that includes the weekend as part of the normal working week and the transfer of Public Holidays to Annual Leave.

We also have other areas where the council have not harmonised conditions from the old District and Regional Councils, a ludicrous situation after nearly 11 years.

## Consultation

As you would expect these discussions will be lengthy and it is likely that they will not conclude until the summer. Once they do the Branch will seek advice on the proposals to ensure that they meet the requirements of Equal Pay Legislation. Throughout this process you will

*continued on Page 14*

## Service Conditions Report *continued from page 13*

be fully consulted.

Watch this space! It should be an interesting year.

### General

Although the issues of Job Evaluation, Equal Pay and Harmonisation within the City of Edinburgh Council are our main priority, the Branch continues to provide advice, support and representation on

the everyday bread and butter issues of discipline, grievance and general representation and all members can be assured that the Service Conditions Team are available to provide this should any member require it.

### Thanks.....

Thanks to all Service Conditions Team members who throughout the year have demonstrated the ability to

operate as a unit and to step in at short notice to cover for absent colleagues ensuring that the interests of the membership are served.....

.....and of course to the Branch Support Staff, Eileen, Julie, Monica and Nicky who keep their heads whilst all around them lose theirs.

*John Mulgrew*

*Service Conditions Co-ordinator*

## Communications: Equal Pay and Single Status challenge

● **Branch Magazine:** We have not issued as many as we would have wanted this year. The magazine takes about three weeks from writing to getting into workplaces and for major issues this is too long when developments change so quickly in negotiations, especially with the Equal Pay issues.

Where things need to be communicated quickly, we have therefore concentrated on specific bulletins on specific issues, in particular Pensions and Single Status. We have also used letters to members and one-off single-issue briefings. We have also ensured that all news goes on the Branch Website

● **The Branch Website** has become a very important tool not only in getting out news quickly in situations like the pen-

sions campaign but also as a resource for more detailed documents.

**Check out 'UNISON Edinburgh' on Google and you will see how significant the site has become.**

The site now has over 500 pages and is running at over 750,000 hits a year. Many members use it to update their details and many used it this year to give their views on pay. We are trying hard to build a full email list to contact members directly.

The site also serves as a portal to the Scotland and UK sites.

● **Media:** We continue to try to get our members' views across in the media. The main issues this year were Pensions (where we got the biggest coverage of any branch in the Scottish and UK media, including STV, BBC and Sky), Equal Pay, Child Protection

and the new Council HQ.

To see just how much coverage we get, go to the Evening News/Scotsman site and search for UNISON Edinburgh and you will get over 100 results for 2006 alone.

Single Status and Equal Pay have given us huge challenges in communications. This is because of the constantly changing legal advice and the fact that so much has to be checked over at Scottish or UK level.

*John Stevenson*

*Communications Officer*



## Education: Development priority

**Last year saw me assume the added position of Education Officer. I was happy and enthusiastic to accept this new challenge for me within the Branch.**



I would like to share my vision for this year as Education Officer.

I clearly see it as my responsibility to ensure that all Branch Officers, Stewards, Health and Safety Reps and Union Learning Reps, all have the appropriate training to provide adequate and effective representation to our members.

I firmly believe that only by providing, encouraging and sup-

porting people to undertake the required training, can we provide the level of support and representation that our members deserve.

I also see it as a priority for this year, to arrange a Branch Development day, in co-operation with our Regional Officer and our Recruitment Officer, to map out a service plan, that will include our aims and objectives for the coming year, which I hope will ensure we move forward in unity as a branch ultimately benefiting all our members.

I look forward with enthusiasm to taking this agenda forward.

*Dot Paterson*

*Education Officer*

## How to contact UNISON

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**23 George IV Bridge**

**Edinburgh EH1 1EN**

**0131 220 5655**

**Fax 0131 225 9125**

**email**

**branchoffice@unison-edinburgh.org.uk**

**Website**

**www.unison-edinburgh.org.uk**

**(You can update your details or send queries)**

**UNISONDirect**

**0845 355 0845**

**Or freephone textphone 0800 0 967 968**

**Lines are open 6am-midnight Monday-Friday and 9am-4pm Saturdays**



# Equalities: Mainstreaming equality issues

**The past twelve months have seen a stronger focus on conditions of service as opposed to mainstream equality activities.**

I have been on full time secondment working from the UNISON branch office with my attention and efforts being directed to the intensive work arising from Job Evaluation and Single Status allied to the ongoing issues of Equal Pay and Pension changes.

This change in priority has meant we have been unable to re-establish the Equalities Committee which was one of the priorities identified in last years Annual Report. Given the ongoing work-demands this aspiration is unlikely to be pursued in the coming months although we will continue to seek opinions and comments on appropriate issues through other channels.

In the coming months that consultation will be fairly intensive as we try to develop responses to several new

pieces of legislation.

Paramount amongst these is the proposal to remove **age discrimination**. This will impact on retirement opportunities, pension rights, training and many other aspects of working conditions. Some will gain, some will lose but it is our job to ensure procedures and processes are fair to all and, wherever possible, provide positive options for our members.

Running parallel to this legislation is the new **Employment Equality Duty Regulations** which seek to eradicate discrimination based on sexual orientation, religion or belief. At the time of writing we have no indication on the council's intended approach to the new regulations but, given past experience, I am in no doubt we will seek more than they will offer.

This may seem pessimistic but when you bear in mind the continual refusal to make the simple step of extending provisions such as those included in the old District Council Policy on Domestic Violence it should



Irene Stout

come as no surprise that I adopt such a cynical attitude.

As I have stressed in previous Annual Reports I am more than disappointed in our employer's half-hearted approach to equal opportunity issues but I remain hopeful they will change their attitude sooner rather than later.

It will be interesting to monitor their response to other new legislation such as the new **Gender Equality Act** and the **Work and Families Act** both of which should create a more employee friendly environment.

Over past weeks we have worked on issues arising from the transfer of staff to the new

Council HQ particularly in relation to the working environment for disabled workers and much remains to be done in that area.

As in previous years the branch has actively participated in conferences for self organised groups and I am pleased to report our Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender group has now been re-established. Unfortunately, there has been a distinct lack of contact with those who had organised our Disabled Members Self Organised Group. That will have to be addressed in the coming months.

If the coming year proves as busy and diverse as the past 12 months it should be an interesting period for all of us (particularly with the new Electoral system in May) but I am sure with the support of Branch Officers and our resourceful office staff we can face up to all the challenges.

Irene Stout  
Equalities Officer

## Audit for proportionality and fair representation

Proportionality is slowly progressing with improvements at Branch Committee level and a really welcome rise at Stewards level which should work through to the Branch Committee and eventually officers we hope.

Most Departments are trying hard but it is difficult in a climate of an overall shortage of activists, male or female.

The creation of Services for Communities Department and the new HR and Finance arrangements have skewed the figures this year. In addition, there is conditions 'drift', ie manual posts becoming APT&C.

Figures are clouded if places are left vacant if there is no woman and a two delegate dept meets proportionality by having 50%.

Figures in brackets show 2005 figures

### 1. Women

Branch 68% (67%) Branch Cttee 53% (45%) Officers 35% (40%) Stewards 44% (41%)

### 2.Branch Committee breakdown

Women, Manual & Craft and APT&C (and CO) Breakdown at 31/12/05

#### a)Women on dept. delegations

Department	Should be	Actual
Associated Bodies	53% (56%)	0% (0%)
Children & Families	80% (80%)	60% (69%)
City Development	32% (25%)	67% (0%)
Corporate Services	77% (75%)	100% (0%)
Culture & Leisure	35% (55%)	50% (60%)
Edinburgh Leisure	45% (47%)	0% (0%)
Finance	63% (63%)	20% (20%)
Further Education	61% (60%)	0% (0%)
Health & Social Care	81% (81%)	67% (67%)
Sers for Communities	45% (0%)	22% (0%)
Valuation Joint Board	54% (51%)	50% (50%)
Voluntary Sector	74% (74%)	100% (0%)

#### b)Manual/Craft on dept. delegations

Department	Should be	Actual
Associated Bodies	24% (22%)	0% (0%)
City Development	5% (19%)	0% (14%)
Corporate Services	48% (49%)	0%
(0%)Culture & Leisure	32% (19%)	17% (29%)
Edinburgh Leisure	23% (23%)	0% (0%)
Children & Families	3% (4%)	0% (0%)
Finance	0% (0%)	0% (0%)
Further Education	0% (30%)	0% (0%)
Health & Social Care	28% (34%)	8% (11%)
Sers for Communities	15% (0%)	22% (0%)
Voluntary Sector	4% (4%)	0% (0%)
Valuation Joint Board	0% (0%)	0% (0%)

#### c)Manual & Craft breakdown

% of Branch Membership = 16% (18%)  
% of Branch Committee = 8% (4%)

#### d)Women on Manual/Craft delegations

% of Women in MC membership = 64% (66%)  
% of Women among M&C delegates to Branch Committee = 25% (50%)

#### e)APT&C (and CO) breakdown

% of Branch Membership = 83% (81%)  
% of Branch Committee = 88% (96%)

#### f)Women on APT&C delegations

% Women in APT&C members = 69% (68%)  
% of Women among APT&C delegates to Branch Committee = 52% (45%)

Conditions breakdowns show the percentages **where conditions are known**. There are a large number of members, especially in Associated and other bodies where the conditions category is not clear. There are members where gender is not recorded.

Stewards breakdown by conditions not available. Machinery not yet in place to identify shift workers, disabled, lesbian, gay bisexual and transgender or black members. Part time and job share figures are unreliable.

# Lifelong Learning: Celebrating learning achievements

**I**t has been a very busy and rewarding year for me as the Branch Lifelong Learning Officer.

I get a tremendous amount of pleasure and satisfaction in promoting what training and learning opportunities are available for all staff, and how to access that, with the emphasis on equality of access.

It is my opinion that, when staff feel valued and supporters they are more easily retained, will be off sick less, they will also show greater motivation, commitment and flexibility: they will go that 'extra mile' to give of their best to service users. Effectively being a powerful force for promoting a positive image of Services and Service providers.

I continually advocate and encourage a culture in which education, learning, training and opportunity is available and accessible to everyone.

By learning, I don't mean just getting the skills required to do a particular job. Lifelong Learning should mean learning in the broadest sense, gaining skills to develop your confidence to progress and participate in work, the union and the wider community.

To ensure that all members can have the help and information they need about learning and opportunities to progress, I will be focusing energy on the recruitment of Union Learning Reps (ULR).

The role of the ULRs will be to provide information and guidance, to offer

support, mentoring and where appropriate to signpost members to other sources of information. All of this after training.

Along with the support of the Branch and myself, we will be a powerful force in raising awareness and motivating members to fulfil their potential. Identifying learning needs and working with the employer to identify and break down barriers to learning.

Celebrating and building on achievement is a shared goal. I look forward with enthusiasm to the coming year and the opportunity to continue to promote the benefits of Lifelong Learning for both employee and employer.

*Dot Paterson*

*Lifelong Learning Officer*

## International: New network to build initiatives

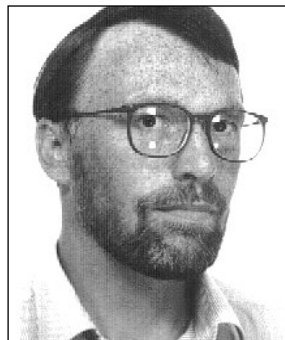
**T**he range of international issues to which a trade union branch can respond has not diminished even if there have not been any major events like Make Poverty History.

The occupations in Iraq and Afghanistan and the actions of Israel continue to cause anguish. UNISON responded rapidly to the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in calling for an immediate ceasefire and adding its weight to pressure on the Prime Minister. Branch Officers supported local protests.

Since the range of issues is enormous so it is useful to focus on a few. This year there have been meetings of an International Network, reporting via me to the Branch Committee, through which a small number of specific initiatives have been proposed. (Anyone wishing to be notified of these meetings should contact me via the Branch Office). These initiatives include:

### Middle East

We are planning to build support for the boycott of



Eden Spring water coolers - this is an Israeli company which extracts water from the Golan Heights, part of Syria occupied by Israel.

Boycotting this and other Israeli goods is a call from Palestinian organizations and trade unions, to build pressure for Israel to leave the occupied territories. In terms of solidarity it is vital to put pressures on the EU, the USA and Israel over the non-payment to the Palestinian Authority of tax revenues, which has meant that Palestinian public service workers have not been paid for eight months.

### Global warming

It is becoming accepted that this is the major long-term issue facing the world; and that the people to suffer most, earliest, will be in the

developing world.

But there is little consensus about what to do or confidence that we can tackle it. I am arranging a meeting at which a trade union response to these problems can be worked out, on the basis of the branch's policies, using the theme of Just Solutions to Global Warming.

Hopefully this will provide a foundation for more detailed policy and for providing our members, and the public, with a better understanding of the issue.

### Globalisation

I attended an inspiring meeting organized by, sponsored by UNISON, at which we heard from Oscar Silvera, leader of successful struggles against water privatisation in Bolivia.

We are planning to work with the organizers, War on Want and the World Development Movement, on promoting the importance of public services in the prevention of poverty in the third world. Privatisation is a threat there as well as here, promoted by the IMF and the World Bank.

### Nuclear Disarmament

The government's proposals on the renewal of Trident can only undermine international non-proliferation and disarmament. During and after the consultation period the branch should publicise our positions on this matter.

### Burma

The branch, mostly through the activities of Murray Forgie, continues to offer support for Burmese refugees, working with BEST and Amnesty.

Branch-sponsored events

It was proposed that in the coming year the branch could contact a few of the organisations to which we are affiliated to discuss public meetings in which their issues would be discussed with a TU input/emphasis, to be sponsored or co-hosted by the branch.

These will raise the UNISON profile in those milieu and inform branch members about the issue. For example, Jubilee Scotland; Cuba Solidarity. Volunteers to support this idea will be very welcome.

*Matthew Crighton*  
*International Officer*

# Labour Link: Success in influencing policies

**UNISON has worked hard to influence the policies of the Scottish Labour Party and this year saw some substantial successes at the Oban conference in November.**

For example it was agreed that, in the Scottish NHS, there should be a presumption that in-house cleaning services would be the norm on the expiry of existing contracts. Although PFI remains in place, there should be a level playing field created for conventional financing; and 'soft facilities management services' (that is support staff) will be excluded from future PPP contracts. Scottish Water should remain public; and direct elections to health boards should be piloted.

The policy documents also propose the re-regulation of buses along main corridor routes; a power to charge a training levy on employers; a full employment agency built on partnership with the unions and employers; and they confirm the comprehensive principle



must remain the foundation of Scottish schooling.

For union members dealing with problems of job evaluation, equal pay and single status it is obvious that there are significant problems with the Executive and local authorities, though these are shared amongst the parties. However there is plenty here worth voting for, achieved through UNISON and other unions acting together. Another case where the benefit of the union's influence was seen in negotiations on the Scottish Pension Scheme which allows for a separate and better agreement than in England.

Locally, in the selection process for the new Labour Group leader we questioned all candidates and the new Leader Ewan Aitken pledged to improve relations with the trade union movement. We also contributed to the process in

Edinburgh East which saw Norman Murray selected as Labour candidate for the Scottish Parliament, again with expressions of support for the trade unions, based on his own union experience.

We contributed to debate inside UNISON Labour Link with two motions to the annual Forum. One called for Labour to show a vision of a party of peace, social justice and the environment. The other said that Labour in Scotland could suffer because voters associate it with the policies on NHS and education followed by Blair in England, whereas Scottish Labour has a distinct and better approach to public services, and should make this clear. It also called on local government administrations to step back from confrontational approaches to service conditions issues and to negotiate acceptable resolutions with trade unions.

*Matthew Creighton  
LabourLink Officer*

## General Political Fund: Resources for running our campaigns

The General Political Fund (GPF) is separate from LabourLink and was set up to allow the union to collect money from members specifically to fund political campaigning work.

**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.

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

The GPF funded a TV recruitment advert 'You're one in a million', launched in October 2004.

In the run-up to the local elections in May 2004, the GPF funded adverts in areas where the BNP were standing as well as adverts in national papers.

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. Recently these have included:

- Anti-racist events
- The Durham Miners gala
- Local campaigns against the Private Finance Initiative
- Campaigns against council housing sell-offs - like the money it made available to us in Edinburgh for that but also Nationally for the Asylum Seeker Children initiative.

## Please raise funds for Dignity. Period!

Being a woman in Zimbabwe is like going to war with a gun minus bullets. Sanitary towels are now threatening the Zimbabwean woman's livelihood. In Zimbabwe women are unable to afford the small quality and quantity of sanitary products that are available currently in the market.

Zimbabwean trade

unionist Tabitha Khumalo told UNISON Conference, "On a wage of £3, with sanitary towels costing £3, women have to choose between sanitary towels or food for their children. You know what they choose".

In an emotional speech, she said that, with the help of trade unions, Zimbabwean women were restoring



Tabitha Khumalo at the STUC with UNISON Edinburgh's John Stevenson

their dignity.

"I am weeping but these are not tears of sadness, they are tears of joy

because you will help us", she said.

She moved delegates to tears as she asked them to "support our campaign, restore dignity to Zimbabwean women so that we can fight this dictator and have our right to be human beings".

You can help by logging on to the ACTSA website [www.actsa.org](http://www.actsa.org), clicking on Dignity. Period! and making a donation.

# Membership and Recruitment

## Recruitment for 2006 has been steadily maintained, achieving an average of 50 new members a month.

This is encouraging, but it is my intention to get round as many sights as possible in 2007 to speak to and encourage new staff to become members of UNISON. As in any year, there are resignations, but not all resignations are due to people leaving UNISON, but are due to members retiring or moving on to other jobs.

In February we were present with the T&G when the Council HR met staff to issue letters about equal pay awards. Service Conditions officers were also there to offer advice. In that week alone we recruited over 70 new UNISON members.

It has been a difficult year for the Branch office to maintain records with so many departments being changed and some being consolidated in the new Services for Communities. Staff are still being "transferred" over from one department to another and some have had their duties altered without any consultation or negotiation. This also highlights the move for

many to the new headquarters at Waverley Court. Although it will be a more pleasant environment for many, for others it will be a complete change in culture and some may have difficulty in adapting to open plan and restrictions placed upon them.

It is important stewards encourage non members to join to ensure they are supported and treated fairly.

There are several areas of concern where we should be proactive in encouraging membership. These listed below are the most contentious.

1. Single status/job evaluation: Branch Officers have been involved in negotiations to try to gain the best deal for members, but it is still a concern that some members may lose out.

2. Shared Services: This Council is committed to bidding to take on services from other authorities i.e. payroll, housing benefits etc. But there no guarantees that they will be successful and this could result in

services being administered by another authority.

Finally, Nancy Kelly, our new Regional Officer, will soon be involved in branch development. With the Council changing so much, the branch organisation and structure needs to be addressed. It is hoped to set

up in house training for stewards again as well as encouraging them to attend TUC courses. Shop stewards work hard for their members and we need to ensure they receive the best support available.

*Irene Heggie, Recruitment/ Membership Services Officer*

## Membership Figures at 31 December 2006

*\*Please note comparisons from last year's figures are influenced by departmental re-organisations and the centralisation of certain support functions. It is anticipated there will be further movement between departments in the coming months*

Department	31/12/2005	31/12/2006	Var
Associated Bodies	.243	.198	-.45
Children & Families	.2,179	.2,454	+.275
City Development	.557	.440	-.117
Corporate Services	.494	.540	+.46
Culture & Leisure	.402	.128	-.274
Edinburgh Leisure	.235	.219	-.16
Env & Consumer	.287	.0	-.287*
Finance	.382	.382	+0
Further Education	.374	.336	-.38
Health & Social Care	.2,216	.2,265	+.49
Housing	.651	.0	-.651*
Services For Communities	.0	.1,496	+.1,496*
Valuation Joint Board	.90	.82	-.8
Voluntary Sector	.810	.763	-.47
Unallocated	.1	.0	-.1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>.8,921</b>	<b>.9,303</b>	<b>+.382</b>
Student	.6	.8	+.2
Unemployed	.40	.57	+.17
Retired Members	.802	.835	+.33
Recruited 1/1/05 - 31/12/05 =	1,259	Officially resigned =	101

## Branch Committee Attendances

Name	POSS	ACT
<b>Branch Officers</b>		
Joe Galletta	10	0
John Stevenson	10	5
Matthew Creighton	10	8
Rose Jackson	10	10
George Lee	10	9
Agnes Petkevicius	10	9
Mike McCrossan	10	0
John Mulgrew*	10	2
Kevin Duguid	10	5
John Ross	10	9
Walter Weir	10	6
Elaine Wishart	10	7
Gerry Corbett	10	7
Alan Brown	10	4
Tom McLeod	10	3
Derry Morrice	10	1
Irene Heggie	10	8

Irene Stout	10	10
Dot Paterson	10	4
Gillian Allen/		
Mike Smith	10	0
* (attendance restricted due to college attendance)		
<b>Associated Bodies (2)</b>		
No delegates appointed		
<b>Chief Officers (1)</b>		
No delegates appointed		
<b>Children &amp; Families (11)</b>		
Tom Connolly	10	4
Alex Gallagher	10	5
Lyn Williams	10	3
Evelyn Hanlon	10	10
Barbara Foubister	10	6
Carol Griffin	10	7
Beverley Holland	10	3

<b>City Development (4)</b>		
Frank Donoghue	10	7
Paul Clarke	10	7
Linda Moor	10	3
Jennifer Livingston	10	2
<b>Corporate Services (4)</b>		
No delegates appointed		
<b>Culture &amp; Leisure (4)</b>		
Mike Durnan	10	2
Owen Greechan	10	2
Sheila McLuckie	10	1
Brenda Sanderson	10	1
Kenny Burns	10	0
<b>Edinburgh Leisure (3)</b>		
No delegates appointed		
<b>Finance (3)</b>		
Craig Wilson	10	3
Steve McDonald	10	5
<b>Further Education (3)</b>		
No delegates appointed		
<b>Health &amp; Social Care (12)</b>		
Marlyn Tweedie	10	3
Mary McCrea	10	1
Catriona Grant	10	3
Vicki Kerr	10	0
Kirsten Hey	10	2
Mo Innes	10	0
Brian O'Riordan	10	3
Jim Kelly	10	1
<b>Sers for Communities (6)</b>		
Caroline McLean	10	0
Pauline Lourie	10	0
Luke Henderson	10	8
Duncan Smith	10	9
Rob Gay	10	3
<b>Valuation Joint Board (2)</b>		
No delegates appointed		
<b>Voluntary Sector (5)</b>		
No delegates appointed		
<b>Self Organised Groups</b>		
Rena Lal (BMSOG)	10	0
<b>Retired Members</b>		
No delegate appointed		

# Treasurers Report and Financial Statement

## UNISON City of Edinburgh Local Government & Related Sectors Branch

### Statement of Income and Expenditure for the period ended 31 December 2006

INCOME	2005	2006
Bank Account Interest	£ 3,400.15	£ 2,810.10
Branch Retention	£ 243,851.00	£ 312,261.07
Hardship Fund Donations	£ 0.00	£ 635.38
Subscriptions-Members	£ 4,642.90	£ 4,304.99
Subscriptions-Retired Members	£ 371.00	£ 791.00
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>£ 252,265.05</b>	<b>£ 320,802.54</b>
EXPENDITURE	2005	2006
Affiliations-Conf/Meet/Rallies	£ 1,201.90	£ 2,503.17
Affiliations-Donations	£ 360.00	£ 590.00
Affiliations-Subscriptions	£ 247.35	£ 312.85
Bank Charges	£ 2.42	£ 0.00
Black Members SOG	£ 1,555.70	£ 395.06
Branch Meeting Expenses	£ 7,002.05	£ 7,706.89
Child Care	£ 588.75	£ 419.57
Cleaning	£ 2,030.72	£ 3,475.51
Disabled Members SOG	£ 2,210.74	£ 676.20
Education-Fees	£ 2,235.00	£ 3,480.00
Education-Travel & Subs	£ 1,755.46	£ 1,429.52
Lesbian & Gay SOG	£ 615.44	£ 1,450.25
Magazine-Library	£ 210.50	£ 193.50
Magazine-Printing & Stat	£ 16.00	£ 1,988.50
Miscellaneous-Conf/Meet/Rallies	£ 925.01	£ 2,034.28
Miscellaneous-Donations	£ 5,294.00	£ 676.00
Office Bearer Expenses	£ 7,160.13	£ 12,440.39
Office Expenses	£ 21,287.93	£ 15,710.43
O/S Strike Pay to HQ	£ 64,305.00	£ 0.00
Photocopying	£ 2,398.14	£ 3,241.68
Postages & Telephones	£ 15,075.25	£ 20,123.61
Printing & Stationery	£ 10,646.30	£ 24,870.42
Publicity	£ 583.96	£ 2,366.11
Rent & Rates	£ 18,149.43	£ 19,944.91
Retired Members Section	£ 440.00	£ 400.00
Scottish Region Expenses	£ 2,666.80	£ 4,683.03
Staffing Costs	£ 81,566.79	£ 65,024.03
Stewards Expenses	£ 933.44	£ 1,715.60
Strike Pay to Members	£ 157.92	£ 0.00
Subscription Overpayments	£ 34.50	£ 0.00
Subscriptions to Headquarters	£ 3,341.09	£ 3,164.17
Trades Council	£ 200.00	£ 175.00
Unison-Annual Conferences	£ 9,069.28	£ 8,084.92
Unison-Conf/Meet/Rallies	£ 9,361.09	£ 8,925.52
Unison-Donations	£ 200.00	£ 50.00
Welfare	£ 310.00	£ 173.50
Welfare-Grants to Members	£ 200.00	£ 1,100.00
Women's SOG	£ 964.26	£ 2,195.21
Young Members SOG	£ 0.00	£ 0.00
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>£ 275,302.35</b>	<b>£ 221,740.18</b>
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>£ 252,265.05</b>	<b>£ 320,802.54</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>£ 275,302.35</b>	<b>£ 221,740.18</b>
<b>SURPLUS/ (DEFICIT)</b>	<b>£ (23,037.30)</b>	<b>£ 99,062.36</b>

## Treasurers Report

This year we had a surplus of approximately £99,000. The reason for this is that we had an increase in income over the previous year due to a missing payment from the previous year, which has now been rectified by Headquarters. We remain in a healthy financial state and it is proposed that we transfer £50,000 of the surplus to a new premises fund for our future move to new premises.



Mike McCrossan,  
Branch Treasurer

### UNISON City of Edinburgh Local Government & Related Sectors Branch

ASSETS	2005	2006
Cash in Hand	£ 28.98	£ 17.34
General Fund	£ 106,858.11	£ 165,166.96
Petty Cash	£ 21.64	£ 151.41
Strike/Hardship Fund	£ 146.60	£ 40,781.98
Welfare Fund	£ 100.00	£ 100.00

### TOTAL CASH AND BANK ACCOUNTS

Other Assets	£ 0.00	£ 0.00
Total Other Assets	£ 0.00	£ 0.00

### TOTAL ASSETS

Other Liabilities	£ 0.00	£ 0.00
Total Other Liabilities	£ 0.00	£ 0.00
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>£ 0.00</b>	<b>£ 0.00</b>

### EQUITY

### TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY

Mike McCrossan  
Branch Treasurer

We have examined the books and accounts of UNISON City of Edinburgh Local Government & Related Sectors Branch and in our opinion the above balance sheet and income and expenditure account gives a true and fair view of the financial position of the branch at 31 December 2006 and for the period ended on that date.

Alan Bennett  
Branch Auditor

Stuart Mullen  
Branch Auditor

## Minutes of Branch Meetings 2006

### MINUTES of BRANCH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING held on 21 FEBRUARY 2006 in the CITY CHAMBERS, HIGH STREET, EDINBURGH

#### 1. OPENING REMARKS/ INTRODUCTIONS

The meeting AGREED the Emergency Motion on Equal Pay Claims would be submitted to the Agenda.

#### 2. APPOINTMENT OF SCRUTINEERS

Four Scrutineers were appointed - Gerry Corbett (Health & Social Care), Elaine Wishart (Corporate Services), Eileen Thomson (Branch Support Staff), Julie Finlay (Branch Support Staff)

#### 3. STANDING ORDERS

The Branch Standing Orders were AGREED for the following year.

#### 4. MINUTES OF BRANCH MEETING 2005

The minutes of the last Branch Annual General meeting of 14th March 2005 were AGREED as a correct record with no matters arising.

#### 5. ANNUAL REPORT

The Chair advised the meeting that due to an administrative error the Lifelong Learning Officer's report was omitted from the AGM Annual Report. It was agreed a copy of the Lifelong Learning report would be circulated to the meeting.

The following question was raised on the Annual Report.

#### Proposed New Care Home

*Proposed by Marlyn Tweedie (Health & Social Care)*

"The AGM 2005 supported a campaign opposing the proposal to tender the management of 4 new care homes for the elderly.

So far there hasn't been a campaign. Can we now agree to implement the decisions of last year's AGM and build a campaign? All the evidence suggests that the feeling of our members is as strongly against privatisation as it was a year ago."

The Service Conditions Convener (Manual) advised the meeting that the proposed new build of two facilities would be serviced in-house but should any further expansion lead to any proposals to externalise service delivery the branch would mount a robust campaign of opposition.

The movers of the question accepted this

as a positive response.

#### 6. FINANCIAL STATEMENT

The meeting AGREED the financial statement as detailed in the Annual Report.

#### 7. SPECIAL REPORTS

The Service Conditions Co-ordinator appraised the meeting on the progress in negotiations on the following issues: -

- i. Equal Pay
- ii. Job Evaluation

#### 8. ELECTION OF BRANCH OFFICERS

The undernoted were elected unopposed: -

President: Joe Galletta

Chairperson: John Stevenson (Children & Families)

Secretary: George Lee (Health & Social Care)

Assistant Secretary: Agnes Petkevicius (Children & Families)

Treasurer: Mike McCrossan (Housing)

Service Conditions

Co-ordinator: John Mulgrew (LVJB)

Convener (APT&C): John Ross (Housing)

Convener (Craft): Walter Weir (City Development)

Convener (Manual): Kevin Duguid (Finance)

Health & Safety Officer: Tom McLeod (City Development)

Equalities Officer: Irene Stout (Culture & Leisure)

Education Officer: Dot Paterson (Health & Social Care)

Communications Officer: John Stevenson (Children & Families)

Welfare Officer: (Job-Share) Gillian Allan (LVJB) Mike Smith (Finance)

International Officer: Matthew Creighton (City Development)

Service Conditions Officers (4): (at least two must be women)

Agnes Petkevicius (Children & Families)

Elaine Wishart (Corporate Services)

Alan Brown (Children & Families)

Gerry Corbett (Health & Social Care)

Recruitment/Membership Officer: Irene Heggie (Finance)

Lifelong Learning Officer: Dot Paterson (Health & Social Care)

**Election required for the following Branch Officer post:**

Vice-Chairperson

Ballot results recorded were: -

Matthew Creighton (City Development) 122 votes

Rose Jackson (Health & Social Care) 123 votes

Lyn Williams (Children & Families) 63 votes

Matthew Creighton and Rose Jackson were duly elected Vice-Chairperson

No nominations were received for the post of Young Members Officer. Nominations will continue to be sought via the Branch Committee for this post.

#### 9. RULE CHANGES

##### Rules B,C,D and H - APT&C and Manual Conditions

*Proposed by John Stevenson (Children & Families) John Ross (Housing)*

The meeting was advised the motion had been withdrawn. Full terms of the motion can be obtained from the Branch Office.

#### 10. POLICY MOTIONS

Emergency Motion - The Branch Secretary appraised the meeting on the current position with regards to Equal Pay. An Emergency Motion was tabled on this issue and received the required support to be submitted to the Agenda.

With the agreement of the movers Motion 1 (Equal Pay, Single Status and Outsourcing) and Motion 2 (Equal Pay) fell.

##### Emergency Motion - Equal Pay Claims

*Proposed by John Stevenson (Children & Families) John Ross (Housing)*

This meeting notes the updated legal advice for members who are being offered compensatory payments in relation to Equal Pay Claims.

The focus at this stage is on large groups of predominately women workers who are not in receipt of bonus payments which have been applied to groups of predominately male workers whose jobs have been assessed at the same grade.

We also note with concern the compensatory payments do not equate to the full value of the potential bonus payments.

Further, we note the compensatory payments will only be made following the employee signing a binding legal document which removes an individual's rights to pursue any issue pertaining to equal pay as opposed to addressing the

*Continued on page 21*

*Continued from page 20*

sole issue of bonus payments.

This meeting therefore supports the legal advice that members should not agree the terms of the legal document and that, where an Equal Pay claim can be demonstrated to have substance, we will request the union's legal officer pursue it on behalf of the member(s).

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

**3. Housing Stock Transfer**

*Proposed by John Ross (Housing) John Stevenson (Children & Families)*

This meeting commends the partnership working between UNISON and Edinburgh Against Stock Transfer (EAST) which led to the council tenants rejecting the council's attempt to transfer their houses to a Housing Association.

We note the intensity of the council's campaign for a YES vote and call upon Branch Officers to seek the costs of that campaign and to issue them into the public domain.

The rejection of stock transfer in Edinburgh may be pivotal to other such campaigns across Scotland and full benefit of that result must be taken by UNISON Scotland.

We call upon UNISON Scotland to convene a conference on options which may or may not be open to councils who wish to modernise their housing stock. Such an event should be open to all stakeholders with local branches being encouraged to urge local councillors, MSPs and MPs to attend along with representatives from Tenants Organisations and other Trade Unions.

**Amendment to Motion 3 - Housing Stock Transfer**

*Proposed Duncan Smith (Housing) and Luke Henderson (Environmental & Consumer Services)*

Final paragraph, at the end of the first sentence after "housing stock" insert "while keeping it under council ownership."

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

**4. Disability Leave**

*Proposed by John Ross (Housing) John Stevenson (Children & Families)*

This meeting agrees current sickness absence monitoring procedures discriminate against disabled members who may have higher absence levels due to their

disability.

We consider this to breach the terms of the Disability Discrimination Act.

We note the growing campaign from Trade Unions and pressure groups for such absences to be excluded from sickness absence monitoring processes and support those representations made by the Staff Side to the Joint Consultative Group on this matter.

It is recommended a briefing paper be issued to Branch Labour Link representatives and all City of Edinburgh Councillors.

We call upon Branch Officers to draft a suitable motion for Annual Conference with a view to increasing pressure on parliamentarians to recognise this is an issue they should legislate on.

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

**5. New Council Headquarters**

*Proposed by John Ross (Housing) and John Stevenson (Children & Families)*

This meeting requests the Branch set up a Working Group with involvement from all departments who would be based in the new Headquarters with the group being led by the Branch Health & Safety Officer.

The purpose of such a group would be to monitor progress and to ensure they are satisfied with accommodation proposals as they affect the individual departmental work areas and any joint accommodation.

The Group would also take responsibility for communications with the membership with appropriate involvement of the Branch Communications Officer.

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

**6. Discrimination in Pensions**

*Proposed by John Ross (Housing) Irene Stout (Culture & Leisure)*

The terms of this motion to be adopted as branch policy and forwarded to National Delegate Conference.

This Conference welcomes the Civil Partnership legislation which will give parity of pension provisions (as currently provided to married couples) to same gender partnerships.

We view this as a major step forward but note with regret the same improvement has not been extended to non-married heterosexual couples.

We call upon the union at all levels to

work with other interested parties to campaign for Equal Rights for all contributors to Public Sector Pension Schemes.

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

The meeting AGREED it would appropriate for Motion 7 and Motion 8 to be taken as a group debate.

**7. Pensions**

*Proposed by the Housing and Health & Social Care Shop Stewards Committees*

This branch condemns:

1. The findings of the Turner Report that recommends raising the state pension retirement age to 68.
2. The Government's proposals to increase the retirement age in Local Government to 65 and abolish the 'Rule of 85'.
3. The hypocrisy of the CBI who talk about a two-tier pension provision between public and private sector when they sit on huge pension savings.

This branch believes:

4. Raising the retirement age will mean that after a lifetime of work many more, particularly manual workers, will die before receiving any kind of pension.
5. The so-called pensions 'crisis' is being exaggerated in order to justify the government's attacks on all our pensions.

This Branch resolves:

6. To submit this motion to the next Scottish Council.
7. To call upon the Local Government Service Group Executive to organise a mass campaign in defence of the Local Government Pension Scheme which includes an industrial action ballot leading on to possible strike action.

**8. Protect our Local Government Pensions**

*Proposed by Health & Social Care Shop Stewards Committee)*

This Branch:

1. Condemns the finding of the Turner Report that recommends raising the state pension retirement age to 68.
2. Condemns the Governments proposals to increase the retirement age in Local Government to 65.
3. Condemns the hypocrisy of CBI bosses who talk about a two-tier pension provision between the public and private sector when they sit on huge pension savings.

This Branch believes:

*Continued on page 22*

*Continued from page 21*

1. The real pension divide is between top bosses who continue to access their huge pensions at 60 and everybody else who at best can accrue modest pensions if any at all.

2. Raising the retirement age will mean that after a lifetime of work many more, particularly manual workers will die before receiving any kind of pension.

3. The so called pension 'crisis' is being exaggerated in order to justify the government's attacks on all our pensions.

4. That the Economic Support Ratio statistics show that by 2045 the proportion of those working will fall to from 33% to 27% but that a modest growth rate of only 1.75% per year will see gross national product doubling in the same time, more that offsetting that fall.

This Branch resolves:

1. To call upon the Local government Service Group Executive to organise a mass campaign in defence of the Local Government Pension Scheme which includes an industrial action ballot leading on to possible strike action.

2. To publicise this motion.

3. Send this motion to the next Scottish Council.

**Decision:** On being put to the meeting the terms of Motion 7 and Motion 8 were CARRIED unanimously.

### 9. Management of Offenders Act 2005

*Proposed by Catriona Grant (Health & Social Care) and Vikki Kerr (Health & Social Care)*

This branch recognises that the management of Offenders Act 2005 has a major impact on legislation and service provision regarding offenders both in the community and serving prison sentences. We recognise the setting up of the Edinburgh, Lothian and Borders Community Justice Authority (CJA) and the effect this will have on service provision and possible reorganisation within the five local authorities.

This branch resolves to initiate a UNISON Criminal Justice meeting with the other relevant UNISON branches in the local CJA in order that shop stewards and branch officers can support members and negotiate for members regarding re-organisations, pay and conditions, keeping services in-house and good practice. This meeting will be called as near as April 2006 as possible.

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

### 10. Protection of Asylum Seeker Families

*Proposed by John Stevenson (Children & Families) John Ross (Housing)*

The terms of this motion to be adopted as branch policy and forwarded to National Delegate Conference.

Conference deplores the unacceptable treatment of asylum seeker families, many of whom have been happily settled for years in the UK and in particular the practice of removing these families from their homes in dawn raids.

Conference is particularly concerned about the impact of these tactics on the children of asylum seekers, and believes that such inhumane and degrading treatment breaches their rights under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and possibly domestic legislation. It creates distress and fear not only for those children directly affected, but also for other refugee children who must live in terror that it could happen to them.

Conference also condemns the practice of this government of deporting unaccompanied asylum seeking children as they become adults, after they have been cared for in this country, often for many years.

Conference fully supports the online petition "An amnesty for Scottish asylum families" and other similar initiatives to highlight the injustice of the current policy and undertakes to promote these to branches and members.

Conference further resolves:-

1. to campaign for an end to the forcible removal of asylum families and in particular, an end to the practice of dawn raids.

2. to campaign for an amnesty for all asylum families living in this country for a year or more, in line with the precedent set in 2002 by the then Home Secretary.

3. to campaign for alteration to regulation to entitle individuals admitted to this country as "unaccompanied asylum seeking children" to receive right of residence.

4. to urge branches to write to their MPs, MSPs, and AMs to raise these matters and seek their support.

Conference recognises that if there are measures that UNISON members can take in the interim to protect the interests and safety of children and families who are asylum seekers, they should be fully supported in doing so.

It recognises that legislation designed to protect the interests of children and their families in England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland may have a role in

protecting children of asylum seekers from abusive situations created by practices under other legislation.

Conference therefore instructs the NEC to build urgent links with the relevant Children's Commissioners, UNISON members who are practitioners in the field and relevant legal advisers to research whether and how such legal action may be applicable.

This AGM also calls on the Branch to progress support structures for staff who may become involved in such situations via a working group of Branch Officers and senior stewards from the Children & Families and Health & Social Care Shop Stewards Committees.

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

### 11. Edinburgh Trade Union Council

*Proposed by Matthew Crighton (CityDevelopment) and Duncan Smith (Housing)*

The meeting agrees that the branch should affiliate to the Edinburgh Trades Union Council (ETUC) and instructs the Secretary to bring a report to the Branch Committee with a recommendation about implementing this decision. This should cover the likely areas of co-operation with ETUC, the management of the Branch input to ETUC, the number of delegates and the affiliation payment.

**Decision:** The meeting AGREED with the Branch Secretary's comments that to preclude a Working Party to consider this matter whilst passing a motion recommending a particular course of action was not appropriate.

The meeting therefore AGREED the subject matter of re-affiliation be remitted to the Branch Committee for consideration without recommendation.

**At this point of the meeting the Chair advised the AGM was closed with all remaining motions and vacant Branch Officers posts being remitted to the Branch Committee for decision and action.**

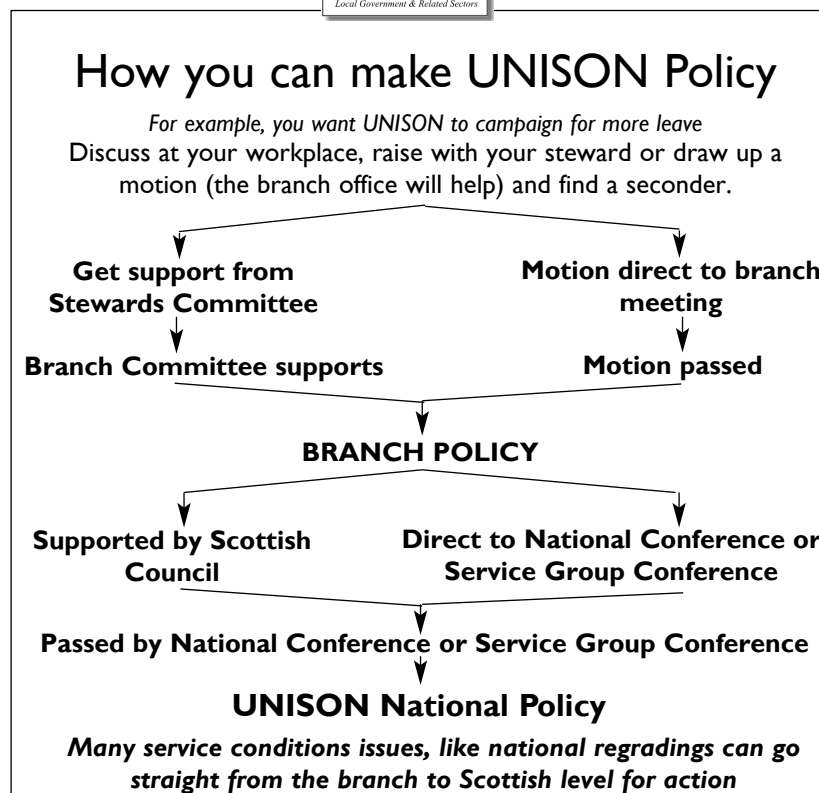
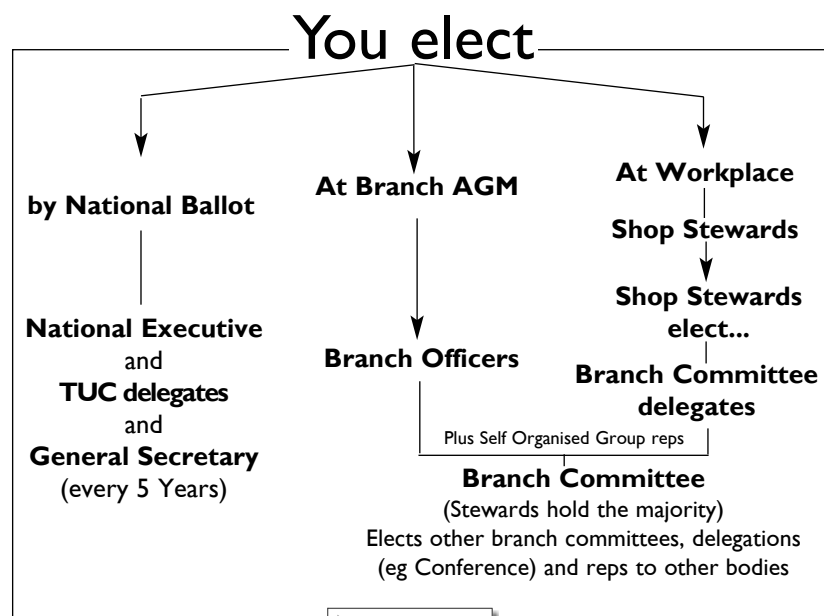


# Making your VOTE COUNT

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.



## Branch Meetings

These are the supreme branch policy making 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 70 members made up of branch officers, stewards elected from Departmental Committees and reps from self organised groups. Steward delegates are accountable to their Departmental 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.

The plan to ensure proportionality of women, fair representation for APT&C, Manual & Craft and low paid workers is developing and now Shop Stewards Committees must comply.

## 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 sectors for groups like the Voluntary Sector.

## 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.





## Did you know about these UNISON special deals?

### ❖ **Special legal advice**

**FREEPHONE 0800 80 12 99**

Special legal advice FREEPHONE 0800 80 12 99 and you can get access to advice via Thomsons Solicitors from specialists in the fields of Family Law Service, Criminal Law Service (24hr Advice Helpline: 0141 950 1441), Road Traffic Scheme, Non Work Related Accidents & Diseases, Property, Mortgage & Estate Agency, Free Wills, Trust & Executry, Independent Financial Advice, Benefits & Consumer Law, Human Rights, Leaflets Available, Work Related Accidents & Diseases, Health & Safety and Employment Law.

**NOTE: for Employment Related issues you must contact the Branch on 0131 220 5655**

❖ **Britannia Building Society** Exclusive mortgage rates for UNISON members - and as a UNISON member we can lend you more. Special savings rates too. **0800 77 88 88**

❖ **UIA Insurance** UIA is part of UNISON. As a mutual company with over 100 years experience, we can offer exclusive insurance to UNISON members: Home Insurance **0800 66 88 55** Personal Accident Plan **0345 842 842** Holidaycare travel insurance **01438 761 760**

❖ **Frizzell:** As a member of UNISON, you'll get special deals on a range of services including: *Motor insurance* **0800 122 000** *Personal loans* **0800 373 191** *Independent Financial Advice* **0800 272 151**

❖ **Holiday and travel discounts.** UNISON Holiday Club Fully ABTA bonded, offering discounts on nearly every ABTA brochure holiday, savings on flights worldwide and ferry travel. **Call 0990 50 50 00**

❖ **Our own holiday centre in lovely, unspoiled Devon - that's Croyde Bay Holiday Village.** With comfortable chalets, nightly entertainment and friendly staff, it's a great way to get away. **Telephone: 01271 890890**

❖ **Roadside Assistance: Britannia Rescue.** Britannia Rescue, UNISON's official road rescue partner has been named a Best-Buy by the UK's leading testing consumer magazine for the third consecutive time! With a 20% discount on breakdown cover, a further £5 off when you join online and no price increases for 2007. For more information on what's on offer including: Xtend parts and labour cover, Personal cover and European cover call 0800 591563 quoting 'UNISON' or click on [www.britanniarescue.com/go/UNISON](http://www.britanniarescue.com/go/UNISON)

❖ **Apply on-line for a UNISON Credit Card.** You can apply online for your UNISON Credit Card, issued by Bank of Scotland. Choose the product that suits your own financial needs and benefit from a MasterCard that has been negotiated on your behalf using the strength of all our members. Or call us free today on 0800 032 2036, quoting ref: UNISON02.

❖ **The UNISON-endorsed Health Cashplan** not only pays you cash when you are ill, but also meets the aims and values of UNISON and supports the NHS. Medicash is a not-for-profit organisation which pays back over 80 per cent of contributory income every year to members in cash benefits. **Call 0151 243 3203 and ask for the UNISON plan.**

❖ **UNISON Welfare** is a registered charity providing help to members and their families in times of financial hardship or personal difficulties. We also have a local fund financed by voluntary contributions. **Contact the welfare officer via 0131 220 5655.**

❖ **Got a problem at work? See your local steward or phone 0131 220 5655. Or contact UNISON Direct on 0800 5 97 97 50**

❖ **WANT TO JOIN US? See your local steward or phone 0131 220 5655** You can access all these deals and much more at

[www.unison-edinburgh.org.uk](http://www.unison-edinburgh.org.uk)

## AGM 2007, Agenda, Annual Report

