

# UNISON City of Edinburgh

Local Government & Related Sectors Branch

## Annual General Meeting 2018

Monday 19 February 2018, 6.30pm  
Methodist Church, 25 Nicolson Square, Edinburgh

## AGM Agenda 2018 and Annual Report 2017

For extra copies of this booklet call 0131 558 7488 or download it from [www.unison-edinburgh.org.uk](http://www.unison-edinburgh.org.uk)





# AGM Calling Notice

To All Members  
*Dear Colleague,*

All members are urged to attend the Annual General Meeting of the branch on **Monday 19th February 2018 in the Methodist Church, 25 Nicolson Square, 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 6.30pm prompt and if the quorum is not met, the meeting cannot proceed.

**The meeting will conclude at 8.30pm at the latest** so that members using the creche or making care arrangements can plan as necessary.

## AGENDA

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

## AMENDMENTS

Any two members can propose amendments to motions. These must be in writing, signed by the proposer and seconder and arrive at the Branch Office by **Noon, Monday 12 February 2018. Questions on the Annual Report and Financial Statement** \* must be received by **noon on Tuesday 13 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*

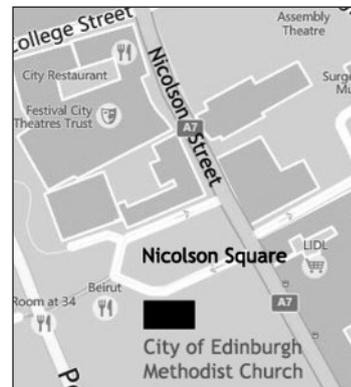
Tom Connolly  
**Branch Secretary**

\* *The Financial Statement will be in the supplementary agenda.*

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## AGM 2018



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# Agenda and Elections 2108

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1. Opening Remarks/ Introductions
  2. Appointment of Scrutineers
  3. Standing Orders
  4. Minutes of Branch Meetings 2017  
*Special Branch Committee 23 March 2017 (p14)*
  5. Annual Report 2017 (p 7-14)
  6. Financial Statement 2017  
*See Supplementary Agenda and website.  
Questions on the Annual Report and Financial Report must be submitted to the Branch Office by noon on Tuesday 13 February.*
  7. Election of Branch Officers *See below.  
Voting will be by secret ballot at the meeting.*
  8. Honoraria  
*No honoraria because auditor posts vacant.*
  8. Presentations and Question and Answer Session (on any urgent issues)
  9. Rule Changes *See page 17*
  10. Policy Motions *See pages 19-22*
  11. Any other business
- 

## Agenda Item 7 Election of Branch Officers

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

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### Branch President

**Kirsten Hey** (Health & Social Care)  
Nominated by: *John Stevenson and Tom Connolly (Communities & Families)*

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### Branch Chairperson

**Duncan Smith** (Chief Executive)  
Nominated by: *Place Shop Stewards Committee, Resources Shop Stewards Committee, Caroline McLean & Pamela Gifford (Chief Executive)*

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### Vice Chairperson (2)

*One of whom must be a woman.*

**Caroline McLean** (Safer & Stronger Communities)  
Nominated by: *Place Shop Stewards Committee*

### **ELECTION REQUIRED**

**Tom Howarth** (Place)  
Nominated by: *Place Shop Stewards Committee, Lorna Dunn and Susan Draper (Communities & Families), Heather Ellis and Len Fyfe (Communities & Families)*

**Tom Muir** (Resources)  
Nominated by: *Resources Shop Stewards Committee, Pauline Henderson & David Maguire (Communities & Families)*

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### Branch Secretary

**Tom Connolly** (Communities & Families)  
Nominated by: *Resources Shop Stewards Committee, Caroline McLean and Duncan Smith (Chief Executive)*

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### Branch Assistant Secretary

*No nomination received*

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### Branch Treasurer

**John Stevenson** (Communities & Families)  
Nominated by: *Tom Connolly and David Harrold (Communities & Families)*

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### Service Conditions Coordinator

**Tom Connolly** (Communities & Families)  
Nominated by: *Place Shop Stewards Committee, Communities & Families Shop Stewards Committee, Resources Shop Stewards Committee, Duncan Smith and Caroline McLean (Chief Executive)*

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### Service Conditions Convener

**David Harrold** (Communities & Families)  
Nominated by: *Kirsten Hey & Paul Flaherty (Health & Social Care), Joseph Greenan & James Elliot (Place), Gavin Farquhar and Billy Henry (Communities & Families), Communities & Families Shop Stewards Committee, Resources Shop Stewards Committee*

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### Service Conditions Officers (5)

#### General Posts (2)

**Ian Mullen** (Place)  
Nominated by: *Health & Social Care Shop Stewards Committee, Place Shop Stewards Committee, Communities & Families Shop Stewards Committee, Tom Howarth (Place) and Caroline McLean (Chief Executive).*

**Gerry Stovin** (Place)  
Nominated by: *Place Shop Stewards Committee, David Harrold and Tom Connolly (Communities & Families)*

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## Branch Officer Elections continued....

### Service Conditions Officers Women's Posts (3)

**Pamela Gifford** (Chief Executive)  
Nominated by: *Duncan Smith (Chief Executive) and Ian Mullen (Place)*

**Caroline McLean** (Place)  
Nominated by: *Place Shop Stewards Committee*

### Health and Safety Convener Ian Mullen (Place)

Nominated by: *Health & Social Care Shop Stewards Committee, Place Shop Stewards Committee, Communities & Families Shop Stewards Committee, Tom Howorth (Place) and Caroline McLean (Chief Executive).*

### Equalities Officer

**Peter Sharma** (Edinburgh College)  
Nominated by: *Janice Howard and Mikolaj Maliszewski (Edinburgh College)*

### Communications Officer

**John Stevenson** (Communities & Families)  
Nominated by: *Tom Connolly (Communities & Families) and Gerry Stovin (Place)*

**Lifelong Learning Convener**  
*No nomination received*

### Recruitment/ Membership Officer

**Peter Sharma and Jim MacKenzie** (Job Share) (Edinburgh College)  
Nominated by: *Bartosz Filipczak, Georgina Powch-Scott, Hannah Frost, Arlene Horribine (Edinburgh College)*

### Education Officer

**Pamela Gifford** (Chief Executive)  
Nominated by: *Duncan Smith (Chief Executive) and Ian Mullen (Place)*

### International Officer

*No nomination received*

### Young Members Officer

*No nomination received*

### Welfare Officer

**Mike Smith** (Resources)/ **Caroline McLean** (Place) **Job share**  
Nominated by: *Place Shop Stewards Committee, Resources Shop Stewards Committee*

### Auditors (2)

*No nominations received*

## Keep up to date with your UNISON Edinburgh branch

On your PC, laptop, smartphone, or tablet, keep up to date with all that's happening in UNISON Edinburgh branch on our website, on Facebook and on Twitter @unisonedin. Like and follow us to get all the news as it happens.

# A Brief Guide to Branch Meetings

(See full standing orders at [www.unison-edinburgh.org.uk](http://www.unison-edinburgh.org.uk))

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

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

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

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

**Motions:** Motions create policy that mandates the Branch. They are introduced by the mover named on the agenda. The seconder can then speak after or later in the debate.

**Amendments:** Can add,



change or delete bits of motions but they cannot merely contradict a motion.

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

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

**Right of Reply:** The mover gets another chance to answer at the end but new material cannot be raised.

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

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

**If you are unsure about anything at all - just ask the Chair. It's your meeting after all!**

## How motions are ordered on the agenda

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)
- Service Conditions Issues (issues like pay and conditions)
- Health & Safety

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

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

### EMERGENCY MOTIONS

Must be urgent, unable to have been submitted within the timescales and relevant. They require a two-thirds majority to be heard.

\* *marks motions which may be composited*

# UNISON City of Edinburgh Branch Annual Report

## Is this the year we say enough is enough?

Throughout 2017 we at last began to hear many councils across Scotland speaking up about the year on year savage cuts to local government.

UNISON exposed that nine out of 10 austerity jobs cuts were in local government.

The mainstream media has now woken up to the fact that 28,000 local government jobs have gone in the last seven years.

The Scottish Government has unashamedly piled the worst pain of austerity onto councils with further real terms cuts in 2018.

Its words on breaking the pay cap are meaningless if it doesn't provide the funds to pay for it.

We can't afford to sit back and protest while services vanish and our pay becomes worth less year on year - and while workloads increase to cover for the cuts.

So is this the year when we will say 'enough is enough?'

The lodging of a 6.5% pay claim in December was a statement of intent. It sounds a lot but it will still not make up for the £4,000 the average public sector worker has lost over the last 10 years.

And we won't get anywhere near it unless we are prepared to do something about it - at the very least by actually voting in a

ballot, let alone what we vote for.

In Edinburgh, Health and Social Care stewards didn't just moan about workloads, they went out and did something about it.

They put huge time and effort into a survey of members firstly on mental health issues then followed by widely acclaimed research that showed the real effects of cuts on workloads.

It showed that 85% of respondents would be prepared to take some form of industrial action due to excessive workloads.

But still we have difficulty convincing the public - and even some of our members - of the crisis caused by cuts to local services.

Councils don't have a good reputation with the public and that makes them easy targets for cuts and those impact on the voluntary sector too.

I am privileged to write the Voices of Scotland feature in the Morning Star newspaper a few times a year and I have used this regularly to promote the cause of local government.

We all need to do that with friends and family, in the pubs, cafes, and social media and remind people that the council is not an army of anonymous bureaucrats, but real people providing essential services for

the people of Edinburgh.

Remind them that about 10,000 of us require protection of vulnerable groups (PVG) clearance to do our jobs. That's how many provide direct services to children and vulnerable adults. And they can't do those jobs without the services to support them.

Let's make 2018 the year when we stand up for our services - and at last for ourselves.

After 10 years as branch president, I am standing down this year and I am delighted that Kirsten Hey is the unopposed candidate for the post. She has vast experience, great commitment and a fine sense of humour that she will no doubt need. I wish her all the best.

Finally, I would want to extend enormous thanks to our auditors **Alan Bennet** and **Stuart Mullen** who left the council this year. They served this branch from its inception with great diligence and deserve our appreciation.



John Stevenson  
Branch President

### Branch Officers 2017/2018

*President:* John Stevenson

*Chair:* Duncan Smith

*Vice Chairs:* Tom Muir, Caroline McLean

*Secretary:* Tom Connolly

*Treasurer:* John Stevenson

*Equalities:* Jamie McCormack

*Health & Safety:* Andrew Barnett to April 2017 then Ian Mullen

*Service Conditions*

*Co-ordinator:* Tom Connolly

*Convener:* David Harrold

*Service Conditions Officers:* Pamela Gifford, Gerry Stovin,

Caroline McLean, Ian Mullen

*Communications:* John Stevenson

*Welfare:* Mike Smith/ Caroline McLean

*International:* Amy McNeese-Mechan (until December 2017)

*Education:* Pamela Gifford

*Recruitment/ Membership Services:* Peter Sharma/ Jim MacKenzie

*Lifelong Learning:* Pam Gifford/ Lorraine Needham

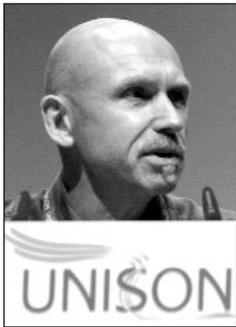
*Auditors:* A Bennett, S Mullen (part year)

### Branch employed staff



*Clockwise from top left:* Monica Niven (Branch Support Officer); Branch Support Assistants Nicola McDougall, Julieanne Finlay and Eileen Thomson; and Amanda Kerr, Organiser/Caseworker Voluntary and Community Sector.

# If we act together we can make a difference



Duncan Smith  
Chairperson

It looks like another round of savage cuts is due in 2018.

Already £240m has been pruned from the council services in recent years and further cuts of £101m to 2021 are predicted.

Over 1,000 staff have gone since Transformation began.

The result is many services are in crisis whether our councillors like to admit it or not.

Continual organisational change and loss of so many experienced staff has left

services in a chaotic state in many areas and morale is probably at an all-time low.

The question is what do we do about it? The answer is to build a stronger, bigger branch with a more active membership.

Nowadays with so much extra stress at work a union is essential to protect our basic health and welfare. We need to explain to non-members that by being in the union we can act together to resolve workplace problems more effectively.

Our branch has been successful in preventing compulsory redundancies and

tackling individual cases of injustice but less so in encouraging wider member involvement.

To be frank we will not be able to resist further cuts or secure the pay rise we deserve without increased participation by rank and file members.

So if your union rep calls a meeting it's important you attend and if you are asked to vote in a postal ballot, remember to open that letter!

As individuals we don't have much influence at work but if we act together we can make a difference.

*Duncan Smith*

## Health and Safety Report 2017

# Challenging misuse of absence management policy



Ian Mullen  
Health and Safety  
Convener

Increased workloads, reduced staffing and unachievable target setting has led to a substantial increase in work related stress and mental health illness.

Along with this is inconsistent interpretation of the Absence Management

Policy, with hospitalisation and industrial injury incidents included in several cases causing stress and anxiety for members.

In many cases this policy is being used as a disciplinary procedure without recourse to an appeal before possible dismissal at stage 3.

UNISON's Health & Safety Team have been proactive, raising our profile in the workplace.

Inspection programmes are in place and have identified several serious health and



safety concerns. Health and safety reports have been submitted and improvements made, albeit delayed.

UNISON's higher profile has led to several workplace improvements where joint working with Facilities Management and Corporate Health & Safety has taken place, including City Mortuary, Access Point, Drumbrae Hub, Newington and Moredun libraries.

Sixteen inspection reports have been submitted in the last eight months.

In addition to workplace inspections, in-depth investigations have taken place resulting in reports on Silica Dust and Asbestos with ongoing investigations into cancer related illnesses.

UNISON's inclusion on the Asbestos Working Group highlighted the increased illegal dumping of Asbestos on Civic Sites, resulting in a new training programme for Waste and Cleansing.

UNISON's Health & Safety Team has increased in the last year with representatives on many committees and working groups.

A successful 5-day branch health and safety training course was concluded in December with 14 accredited representatives attending.

*Ian Mullen*

# UNISON will never collude with cuts to jobs and services

As a result of the Tories' austerity agenda, and a unwillingness on the part of the Scottish government to protect council funding we have seen £250 million stripped from the City of Edinburgh Council's budget over the past five years.

There have been 1,000 jobs lost and with a further £140 million pound of cuts over the next five years it is difficult to see how the council can possibly provide meaningful and safe services, while at the same time ensuring that their remaining staff have the necessary resources and support to carry out their jobs.

UNISON has never, and will never, collude with the employer in implementing cuts to jobs and services.

Senior officials and the elected members are very aware that we have always challenged and provided alternatives to the austerity driven agenda.

UNISON is concerned that the council is extremely poor in providing meaningful equality and human rights impact assessments, or staff

risk assessments, while carrying out organisational reviews or in the development of policy and procedure. They have a legal duty to do so.

Throughout the so-called Transformation Programme, UNISON has been at the forefront of supporting our members through numerous organisational reviews,

**‘Staff who provide essential services to the public need to be treated with more dignity and respect.’**

ensuring that their rights are protected, and risks identified.

We are not opposed to change or transformation if it is meaningful and developmental, however budget reductions have completely driven the existing transformation program.

**The janitors' dispute** is a prime example. As this report went to press, janitors were on the verge of industrial action having voted by 95% to reject changes that would

badly affect their pay and conditions and the service to schools and community centres..

This is a real example of the chaos that trying to manage cuts throws up.

Make the council 'Lean and Agile' they say. What this really means is that staff need to do more with less and less. In real terms things have become too 'Lean and too Fragile.'

The council of course has a statutory obligation to set a legal budget.

On the other hand, they also have a statutory duty to protect the health and wellbeing of their employees. Balancing these responsibilities is becoming extremely risky.

Staff morale is low, absence due to work related stress is growing and a general feeling of insecurity and uncertainty prevails.

*Continued on page 10*



Tom Connolly  
Branch Secretary and  
Service Conditions Co-ordinator

## Service conditions team

### Convener

### Service Conditions Officers



David Harrold



Caroline McLean



Gerry Stovin



Pamela Gifford



Ian Mullen

## ... overwhelming support for 6.5% pay claim

*continued from page 9*

Staff who provide essential services to the public need to be treated with more dignity and respect.

Policies and procedures that deal with absence or performance are overtly punitive. We are working with HR and the employee relations team at the council to ensure that systems are in place that are designed and implemented in a manner that is more supportive.

We have witnessed more attention being paid to health and safety. This however has tended to focus on the traditional hazards such as trips and falls etc.

I have made it clear that lots of the work carried out by many local government workers may mean that they are at more risk from psychosocial factors.

Because of this the council will have this as their theme for this year's health and safety conference.

### Contact with elected members

Following the local government elections, we met with the leader and deputy leader of the council.

We made clear our expectation that they will maintain a commitment to no compulsory redundancies and that we will continue to see a 'member led' council. They have given a commitment to both.

There is also a commitment to regular meetings and a commitment to work with us.

When necessary throughout the year we have made deputations to council committees ensuring that our position is clear on issues relating to budget cuts and policies and procedures.

### Pay

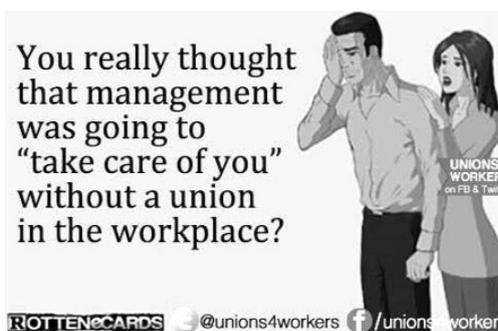
For years now, public service workers have seen their pay held back by government in the name of austerity.

First a freeze then a cap saw public sector pay rise by just 4.4% between 2010 and 2016 while the cost of living rose by 22%.

At the UNISON Scottish Local Government Conference held back in December 2017 there was overwhelming support for us to campaign for a 6.5% pay increase for 2018/19.

### Branch workload

The service conditions team has dealt with over 1,200 logged calls from members seeking assistance and they were working with 96 ongoing cases in 2017.



This is in addition to all the central negotiations on policies and terms and conditions.

### Participation at Scottish level

The branch continues to commit to attending and playing a full part at UNISON Scottish Council and Scottish Local Government Conference.

John Stevenson (branch president) is a member of the Scottish Committee and chairs the Scottish Communications and Campaigns Committee.

Rose Jackson is active on the Scottish Retired Members Committee and has represented them at Scottish Council and National Conference.

Before leaving for another job early in 2017, Andrew Barnett had been on the Scottish Health and Safety Committee. Amy McNeese-Mechan was on the

International Committee.

### National Conference

The branch played a full role at UNISON National Conference and Local Government Conference

John Stevenson spoke on the need to find better ways to organise in the voluntary sector, and on how we should make more use of the skills and experience of retired members in campaigning.

At the request of UNISON Scotland's communications team, I wrote a briefing on bullying for the Conference newsheet.

Edinburgh retired member Rose Jackson spoke in support of a motion calling for an additional Young Members' seat on the National Executive.

### Community and Voluntary Sector

Our membership in the Community and Voluntary Sector continues to grow. We have had to employ a member of staff to carry out the case work within this area. The worker has successfully managed to develop a positive and constructive relationship with many employers (see report on page 11).

Many of our members employed in the community and voluntary sector have also seen huge reductions in their organisations budgets. Jobs have been lost, and like the council there is a degree of anxiety moving forward.

Our members' terms and conditions are not always the best in these organisations and we will continue to support any member who has issues, and work with the employers to improve the terms and conditions of their workforce.

*Tom Connolly*

# Crisis in social care dominates work

It has been a very challenging year representing and organising across this sector and the associated bodies.

The branch currently has over 1,500 community, voluntary and related sector (CVRS) members spread across hundreds of different workplaces in Edinburgh, Midlothian, West and East Lothian.

Whilst our membership is made up of various types of nonprofit organisations, charities and private companies, by far our biggest membership is within social care.

It is no secret that this sector is in crisis. Over the last year organisations have been either forced to close services (BIELD), transfer services to alternative providers (Garvald supported living services transferred to The Thistle Foundation) or restructure.

Cuts in funding, poor pay and cost cutting changes to terms and conditions (Autism Initiatives are currently trying to implement radical change to members' terms and

conditions) have led to a lack of recruitment and staff retention across the sector.

These pressures on the sector have resulted in poor management, a bullying culture, high levels of absence and unreasonably high work demands.

**‘whilst all are highly committed to clients and service users, many believe they would be better off stacking shelves in the local supermarket’**

Members often report poor working practices and whilst all are highly committed to clients and service users, many believe they would be better off stacking shelves in the local supermarket.

UNISON must continue to lead the way in campaigning to finally get government investment in social care to tackle this crisis head on.

Organising across this fragmented workforce is difficult.

We have regular recruitment events in ELCAP and Edinburgh Leisure and we have held recruitment stalls at SSSC events and at Norton Park. I would hope to roll this out to other larger workplaces this year.

There has been a huge demand for advice and representation at disciplinary and grievance hearings and I would like to take this opportunity to thank the local shop stewards in ELCAP, SACRO, Garvald, Edinburgh Leisure, Edinburgh College and AMEY for their continuous support of members in their respective areas.



Amanda Kerr  
CVRS organiser/  
caseworker

*Amanda Kerr*

**NOTE:** The branch employed a staff member to organise, represent and negotiate in the voluntary and community sector following the decision of the main employer (The City of Edinburgh Council) to refuse facility time for those activities.

## Education Report 2017

# Setting the foundations for stewards' mentoring

As Branch Education Officer this year's focus has mainly been about setting the foundations for a robust mentoring program for stewards.

Branch officers attended a two day Mentoring and Training session with the regional organiser at UNISON's Belford Road training suite and from this a action plan was drawn up for

the branch.

Branch officers, department conveners and experienced stewards have been approached to take on the role of mentors and mentoring training is to follow.

One of the biggest challenges to education in the branch is fitting it in to everyone's busy schedules.

There has also been stewards training and health and safety

training provided in-house due to a lack of convenient training from head office.

Edinburgh's Women's Aid had also kindly agreed to provide a short session on domestic abuse but this has had to be rescheduled from December 2017 to early 2018.

This was open to all stewards and generated a great deal of interest.



Pamela Gifford  
Education Officer

## Much needed advice and support for members



Caroline McLean  
Welfare Officer



Mike Smith  
Welfare Officer

there  
for you

supporting UNISON members  
when life gets tough

Your Branch Welfare Officers have continued to provide support to our members and their families throughout 2017 onwards, providing much needed advice and appropriate financial assistance.

This advice can be with regards to day to day living expenses including utility bills, council tax, rent and mortgage arrears, and even being able to put food on the table and keep their home warm.

Life changing events can occur due to a sudden reduction

in salary due to long term sickness absence, or other family and household changes in circumstances.

We continue to promote our national charity, UNISON 'there for you', and their small grant schemes of winter fuel and school uniform grants, as well as promoting the other services that the charity can provide including free debt advice using UNISON's Debt Line.

We have sign-posted members to other welfare grant schemes and can provide our

members with details of appropriate agencies who can provide a more specialised service.

Your Branch Welfare Officers remain involved in maintaining links with UNISON Scotland, where last year we both attended the Scottish Welfare Seminar, which included meeting Jeane Freeman MSP, Social Security Minister. We discussed the future changes to the administration of some state benefits being devolved to Scotland.

We advise members on how they can maximise their entitlement to all benefits.

Thank you to all the members of our branch for the kind donations they make to the Branch Welfare Fund every month, which continues to assist members in the most difficult circumstances.

*Caroline Mclean, Mike Smith*

## Communications Report 2017

### New website and better use of social media

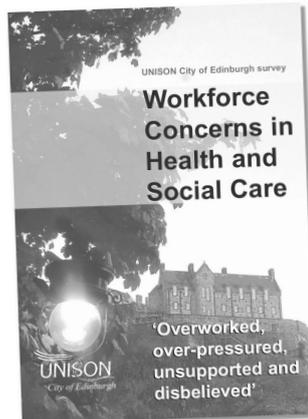
We launched our new website in July and all of the staff and several officers have now been trained on it.

The branch's website was one of the first in the UK. I have updated the design several times in the last 20 years but this time it is in a form that requires minimal training for others to update.

Over the whole year it has had 235,021 visits with 1,482,233 hits. The site has a mobile version which is important when so many people now access the web on smartphones.

It also makes integration with our facebook and twitter accounts much easier and we are using those regularly to update members.

I would encourage more members to follow us on twitter



@unisonedin or 'like' us on [facebook.com/unisonedin](https://www.facebook.com/unisonedin) because that's where you can get immediate news about any major issue.

It also helps if you register your email address with us which you can do on the website.

Internally we have produced six UNISON News bulletins on the cuts, reviews and other issues

along with a steady stream of leaflets and posters.

**Important research by Health and Social Care stewards** was designed into a booklet and is on the website. We got some press coverage but not as much as we had hoped. However, it has been widely praised by members and in the wider union movement.

#### Media

We had good press coverage for our budget lobby in addition to around 12 reports in the print media and several TV and radio interviews over the year.

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

*John Stevenson  
Communications Officer*

# 726 new members recruited despite all the job losses

As the City of Edinburgh Branch Membership and Recruitment Officers we continue actively recruiting new members into UNISON throughout the year.

No doubt the best recruitment tool we have is for existing members to promote work colleagues to join UNISON.

Over the year recruitment stalls have been organised at various locations in the City of Edinburgh Branch workplaces to encourage and promote the recruitment of both new members as well as shop stewards

We continue working in challenging times particularly many older members retiring, other staff taking voluntary severance, with staff not being replaced. Building our membership strategy, to ensure good working conditions for all.

As a direct result of the conservative government's austerity programme, cutting public funding and increased reductions in public service, the country as a whole has suffered greatly.

No matter how difficult is our environment we trade unionists cannot give up the fight, continuing to encourage members to become activists in UNISON thus raising the profile of UNISON in the workplace.

Nationally UNISON is relentless in its support in fighting for the low paid and is rewarded by the continuing growth of its own membership.

UNISON remains one of the largest and strongest unions in Europe and is influential both at local and national level. We cannot be complacent our support is strong and strength is our commitment to serving and delivering the best for our members

*Peter Sharma / Jim Mackenzie*

## Membership at 31 December 2017

Because of the change in council departments, some figures cannot be broken down to show comparisons with 2016 and some figures are affected by transfers between departments.

Department	31/12/2016	31/12/2017	Var
Associated Bodies	107	96	-11
Chief Executive	294		
Communities & Families	2,256	1,970	-286
Edinburgh College	218	183	-35
Edinburgh Leisure	103	98	-5
Health & Social Care Place	1,787	1,481	-306
Resources	1,005	826	-179
Valuation Joint Board	47	46	-1
Comm & Voluntary Sector	1,102	1,124	+22
Unallocated	21	34	+13
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7,494</b>	<b>7,097</b>	<b>-397</b>
Student	0		
Unemployed	30	21	-9
Retired Members	1,214	1,176	-38
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8,738</b>	<b>8,294</b>	<b>-444</b>
Recruited 1/1/17 - 31/12/17 = 726    Officially resigned = 131			

## Branch staff step in to recruit

The branch has been on a recruitment drive this year and all the branch admin staff have responded by stepping up to go out to workplaces with recruitment stalls themselves, or backing up the voluntary sector organiser and branch activists.

There have been monthly stalls at Waverley Court where staff and officers have attended, and staff have run or assisted at recruitment events at Edinburgh Leisure, Wester Hailes Healthy Living Centre, Norton Park and SSSC events.

They have reaped success in recruiting an encouraging 726 members this year, even more than last year, despite all the job losses.

But despite all the work, it is still not enough to make up for the jobs lost - and therefore the members we have lost - so we need all members to encourage their colleagues to join.



# Branch Committee Attendances 2017

Name	POSS	ACT	Name	POSS	ACT	Name	POSS	ACT	Name	POSS	ACT
<b>Branch Officers</b>			Peter Sharma	12	3	<b>Edinburgh College</b>			<b>Place</b>		
John Stevenson	12	4	Amy			Kevin Dixon	12	2	Tom Howarth	12	9
Duncan Smith	12	11	McNeese-Mechan	11	6	Jennifer Ousen	12	2	Stephen Devlin	12	1
Tom Muir	12	11	<b>Associated Bodies</b>			<b>Health &amp; Social Care (11)</b>			<b>Resources</b>		
Caroline McLean	12	8	No delegates appointed			Kirsten Hey	12	5	Stewart Dickson	12	8
Ian Mullen	12	11	<b>Chief Officers</b>			Gillian McFarlane	12	0	Hugh Thomson	12	4
Tom Connolly	12	7	No delegates appointed			Tara McCarthy	12	2	<b>Community &amp; Voluntary Sector</b>		
David Harrold	12	6	<b>Communities &amp; Families</b>			Paul Flaherty	12	3	No delegates appointed		
Pamela Gifford	12	4	Lorna Dunn	12	6	Kieran Crosby	12	0	<b>Self Organised Groups (8)</b>		
Lorraine Needham	12	9	Pauline Henderson	12	5	<b>Lothian Valuation Joint Board</b>			No delegates appointed		
Jamie McCormack	12	0	Heather Ellis	12	1	Jim Hood	12	0	<b>Retired Members (1)</b>		
Gerry Stovin	12	11	Graham Neal	12	3	David Harvey	12	0	Rose Jackson 12 0		
Mike Smith	12	9	<b>Edinburgh Leisure</b>								
Jim MacKenzie	12	2	No delegates appointed								

## Proportionality and Fair Representation Audit 2017

**Because of council reorganisation, unfortunately the usual comparisons cannot be made this year with 2016 figures at Departmental level.**

However, there is enough information to show that we have work to do to get to a position where the percentage of women in steward and officer posts gets closer to the percentage of women in the branch.(2016 figures in brackets).

### 1. Women

Branch	Branch Ctte	Officers	Stewards
70% (60%)	44% (44%)	27% (25%)	38% (38%)

### 2. Branch Committee breakdown

% of Women in membership = 70% (60%)

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

## Affiliations 2017

### Paid in 2017

Edinburgh TUC  
 Midlothian TUC  
 Scottish Palestine Solidarity Campaign  
 Labour Research  
 Campaign for Press and Broadcasting Freedom  
 Justice for Colombia  
 Nicaragua Solidarity Campaign

### Awaiting renewal notice

ACTSA, ACTSA Scotland  
 People's Assembly Scotland  
 Cuba Solidarity Campaign  
 Trade Union Friends of Bhopal  
 Scottish Pensioners Forum  
 Scottish Venezuela Solidarity  
 MENA Solidarity Network

## Minutes of Branch Meetings

### Minute of the Special Branch Committee Meeting on 23 March 2017

held in the Midlothian Suite, Lothian Chambers, George IV Bridge, Edinburgh.

Despite to attempts at holding and Annual General Meeting on 9 February and 2 March 2017, neither meeting was quorate. Business was referred to this Special Branch Committee.

#### ATTENDANCE:

John Stevenson, Duncan Smith, Thomas Muir, Andrew Barnett, Tom Connolly, David Harrold, Mike Smith, Amy McNeese-Mechan, Lorna Dunn, Pauline Henderson, Graham Neal, Kirsten Hey, Lorraine Needham, Joy Hadden, Ian Mullen, Stewart Dickson, Hugh Thomson

#### 1. OPENING REMARKS/ INTRODUCTION

For the first time in the branch's history, we did not have a quorate AGM after two attempts. A total of 270 people attended the AGM and the recall but not all unfortunately at the same meeting with the result that neither meeting

was quorate.

UNISON HQ has now confirmed that the business of the AGM should now fall to the Branch Committee and this Special Branch Committee has been called. Candidates for election who are not members of the Branch Committee will be invited to attend.

The meeting was chaired by the Branch President who shared the chairing with the Branch Chairperson.

The Supplementary Agenda was circulated to the meeting and included biographical details for candidates for the contested branch officer posts, an amendment to Motion 5, the branch financial statement and a financial statement from the branch Welfare Fund which is a separate charity and is published for information only.

#### 2. APPOINTMENT OF SCRUTINEERS

No need to appoint.

#### 3. STANDING ORDERS

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

#### 4. MINUTES OF BRANCH MEETING 2016

The minutes of the last Branch Annual General meeting of 22nd February 2016 were AGREED as a correct record with no matters arising.

#### 5. ANNUAL REPORT 2016

No questions were raised.

#### 6. FINANCIAL STATEMENT

The meeting AGREED the previously circulated financial statement which was included in the Supplementary Agenda and which has been posted on the branch website for past two weeks.

#### 7. HONORARIA

The committee approved £150 honorarium per branch auditor.

#### 8. ELECTION OF BRANCH OFFICERS

The undernoted posts were elected unopposed:

Branch President: John Stevenson (Communities & Families)

*Continued from page 14*

Branch Chairperson: Duncan Smith (Safer & Stronger Communities)

Vice Chairperson (2): Tom Muir (Resources) and Caroline McLean (Safer & Stronger Communities)

Branch Secretary: Tom Connolly (Communities & Families)

Branch Treasurer: John Stevenson (Communities & Families)

Communications Officer: John Stevenson (Communities & Families)

Welfare Officer: Mike Smith (Resources) and Caroline McLean (Place) Job Share

Auditors (2): A Bennet (Resources) and S Mullen (Resources)

Service Conditions Coordinator: Tom Connolly (Communities & Families)

Service Conditions Convener: David Harrold (Communities & Families)

Service Conditions Officer's Women's Posts (3): Pamela Gifford (Safer & Stronger Communities) and Caroline McLean (Place)

An election was required for the following branch officer posts (biographical details for candidates were included in the Supplementary Agenda).

Service Conditions Officer General (2): Following a ballot Ian Mullen and Gerry Stovin (Place) were elected to the posts.

Health & Safety Convener: Following a ballot Andrew Barnett (Place) was elected to the post.

Equalities Officer: Following a ballot Jamie McCormack (Place) was elected to the post.

Lifelong Learning Convener: Following a ballot Pamela Gifford (Safer & Stronger Communities) and Lorraine Needham (Health & Social Care) Job Share were elected to the post.

Education Officer: Following a ballot Pamela Gifford (Safer & Stronger Communities) was elected to the post.

International Officer: Following a ballot Amy McNeese-Mechan (Communities & Families) was elected to the post.

Recruitment/Membership Officer: Nominations received for Peter Sharma and Jim Mackenzie (Edinburgh College) Job Share. Concerns were raised that Edinburgh College was unlikely to provide facility time for recruitment outwith the college. As neither of the candidates were in attendance at the meeting to provide an update it was agreed to defer the election and invite both candidates to the next Branch Committee to allow them the opportunity to report how they plan to carry out the role.

No nominations were received for the post of Assistant Secretary (woman), Service Conditions Officer (woman) and Young Members Officer. These vacancies would be remitted to the Branch Committee for action.

## 9. PRESENTATION AND QUESTIONS AND ANSWER SESSION

No presentation.

## 10. RULES AND STANDING ORDER CHANGES RULE CHANGES

*NOTE: Although passed by the Branch Committee, rule changes can only be made and implemented by an AGM and so these will be submitted to the 2018 AGM in the name of the Branch Committee.*

### 1. Rule Change Section C.1

*Proposed Andrew Barnett (Place) Seconded David Harrold (Communities & Families)*

In Section C (1) Preamble:

In paragraph 5: replace "Stewards" with "Representatives"

In paragraph 6: replace "on occasion" with "often" Replace "should have" with "will have" Replace ", in certain instances," with "where a Health and Safety Representative is not elected in their constituency" Replace "Steward" with "Representative"

Decision: On being put to the meeting the terms of the Rule Change was CARRIED.

### 2. Rule Change B.6 Branch Employed Staff Structures

*Proposed: Andrew Barnett (Place) Seconded: John Stevenson (Communities and Families)*

Add new Rule B. 6 c) "The Branch will operate a procedure to be used for investigating any allegations of harassment of a Branch employee by a UNISON member which reflects the principles of the procedure in National Rules for investigating allegations of harassment of a UNISON employee by a UNISON member."

Decision: On being put to the meeting the terms of the Rule Change was CARRIED.

### 3. Rule C. 4 Election of Shop Stewards

*Proposed by Resources Shop Stewards Committee*

In C.4.2 after "(See Rule C.3 for definition of Workplace Meeting)", insert "or by a ballot (in hard copy or electronically as approved by the branch chair and secretary) of members in the constituency".

Decision: On being put to the meeting the terms of the Rule Change was CARRIED.

## POLICY MOTIONS

### 1. Defending members and the services they provide

*Proposed by John Stevenson and Tom Connolly (Communities and Families)*

This branch notes that Edinburgh Council is facing a further cut in Scottish Government funding of around £40 million on top of cuts that have seen up to 1,500 jobs lost over the last two years. We note that Council leader Andrew Burns has described this as "The worst revenue settlement since devolution." By 2020, Edinburgh will have endured cuts of almost £400 million over 10 years.

This branch deplores the Scottish Government spin that saw social care funding double counted in the health and local government budgets, and an assumed 3% rise in council tax included, to claim central funds for local services were rising.

This branch notes that the Scottish Government has refused to use its powers to raise taxes for the rich to protect services and has instead passed the responsibility for tax rises on to local government.

This branch welcomes indications that the City of Edinburgh Council will respond to the Branch's call from our 2016 AGM to publish an indicative budget to show what services would look like without these service cuts.

This branch recognises the huge pressures that cuts and reorganisations have put on members, the services they provide and on UNISON officers and stewards. It congratulates officers and stewards for successes in: -

- keeping the council to its no compulsory redundancy pledge through pressure, campaigning and promoting strategies like 'bumped redundancy'
- representing members through over 30 organisational reviews and in many areas greatly reducing the worst effects on staff and services
- lobbying at council and government level, organising deputations, submissions and demonstrations to expose the impact of cuts
- securing a pledge from the council to work towards implementing UNISON's Ethical Care Charter for home care.

This branch recognises that this silent slaughter of council services can be stopped or at least mitigated through Government action. While condemning the Tory austerity which is at the root of the problem, the Scottish Government has choices it can make and must not be allowed to merely heap austerity on to local councils.

This branch therefore calls on: -

- a. the Scottish Government to stop passing austerity on to local councils. 87% of all job cuts in devolved services have been in local government.
- b. the Scottish Government, councils and other public bodies to act on strategies in UNISON Scotland's 'Combating Austerity' report to mitigate the effects of austerity. These include measures like re-examining debt payments, PFI contracts, or Aberdeen's example of issuing bonds of £370 million for infrastructure development.
- c. the Scottish Government to work on a cross-party basis to reform council funding with a progressive property tax system that ensures everyone pays their fair share for quality council services.

This branch pledges to: -

1. continue to oppose cuts and redundancies through local action, joint action with other branches, service user groups, community groups and the People's Assembly Scotland.
2. continue to defend pay, conditions and dignity at work
3. respond to any compulsory redundancies via a ballot on industrial action.

*Continued from page 15*

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

Motion 1a 'Cuts Bite Hard' and Motion 2 'No Compulsory Redundancies' are not in conflict so to avoid repetition will be part of a grouped debate. It was agreed that each motion will be moved one after the other and then opened up for general debate.

## **Motion 1a: Cuts Bite Hard**

*Proposed by Gerry Stovin (Place) and Tom Connolly (Communities & Families)*

Following the completion of the Transformation Cuts within Place immediate pressure on staff and services came to our attention.

The rush to implement the cuts to make the savings resulted in new structures and work practices being implemented before vacancies were filled and staff received training. This left many staff with increasing pressure, higher workloads, failed targets and unsympathetic management.

UNISON has had several meetings with the Director, Heads of Service and HR and have made progress in ensuring vacancies are filled and management understand the unrealistic expectations being placed on staff and the effect it can have. Anything else is just not acceptable.

Just before the festive break a proposed consultative ballot for industrial action within Building Standards was called off as agreement was reached on the filling of vacancies and additional recruitment.

With the consultation now closed in the Health & Social Care and CLD/Libraries reviews the same mistakes cannot be made in the implementation of the cuts, as the stakes are even higher. Throughout every department, from Communities & Families to Resources we must remain strong and vigilant against the effects of cuts on staff and services.

This AGM instructs branch officers to continue to fight and lobby for our members where the cuts cause increasing workloads and stress while the service to the public, often for the most vulnerable in society, suffers.

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

## **2. No Compulsory Redundancies**

*Proposed by Place Shop Stewards Committee*

This branch calls for the continued policy of No Compulsory Redundancies! This key policy ensures that employers are focused on redeploying staff to vacant roles, not rushing to dismiss loyal staff as quickly as they can.

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

## **3. Stress and Overwork**

*Proposed by Andrew Barnett (Place) and David Harrold (Communities and Families)*

This Branch recognises:

16 • The increased workloads reported by

members because of the transformation cuts

- The risks associated with excess pressures arising from overwork

- Work-related stress accounts for 45% of all working days lost to ill-health in the UK

This branch notes: -

- The legal requirement to risk assess stress - especially that arising from overwork

- The Council's piecemeal approach to the implementation of preventative stress risk Assessment

- The excellent resources available for stress risk assessment from the HSE and Healthy Working Lives Scotland

- The successful campaign around overwork run by the Glasgow Branch

This Branch determines: -

- To run a campaign based around that run by Glasgow to reduce levels of overwork in the Council and the ensure preventative team stress risk assessments using the HSE or Healthy Working Lives tools are conducted annually

- To approach Glasgow Branch for background information in relation to their campaign to assist with the above.

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

## **4. Post Transformation - Surviving in the Workplace \***

*Proposed by Duncan Smith and Caroline McLean (Safer & Stronger Communities)*

This Branch notes: -

- We been successful in preventing compulsory redundancies but many staff have taken VERA or voluntary redundancy and many posts have been deleted.

- That the departure of many experienced staff has put extra strain on those that remain

This Branch believes: -

- That the health, wellbeing and safety of members and vulnerable service users we work with is paramount

- That the increase in the rate of sickness absence in 2016 is a symptom of the increased stress members are experiencing in the course of their work

- That some members may experience bullying as the drive to impose more work on a shrinking workforce intensifies

This Branch resolves: -

- To make negotiation of reasonable workloads in every area of work a priority
- To continue to campaign against bullying and undue pressure being put on members to cover for colleagues who have left the Council.

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

## **5. Pensions**

*Proposed Jim MacKenzie (Edinburgh College) and Peter Sharma (Edinburgh College)*

Great concern has been raised by our members at the increase of the state retirement age. As this particularly affects manual workers who regrettably lose their lives earlier than other sections of society.

We call on UNISON to lead a national campaign along with our fellow trade unions to equalises the retirement age at 65 for both men and women.

## **Amendment - Motion 5 Pensions**

*Proposed by John Stevenson and David Harrold (Communities & Families)*

In first paragraph, replace 'loss' with 'lose'. Delete second paragraph and replace with: -

This branch also notes that equalisation of the state pension age at 65 has disadvantaged hundreds of thousands of women born on or after 6th April 1951, leaving many women's retirement plans in chaos.

This branch therefore resolves, through all relevant UNISON levels, to: -

1. Support the Women Against State Pension Increase (WASPI) campaign;
2. Campaign for a full package of transitional arrangements for all women born on or after 6th April 1951;
3. Campaign, in the longer term, for a reduction in the equalisation age to 60; and
4. Campaign for an adequate, universal, basic State Pension for all citizens.

Decision: As neither the proposer or seconder of the motion were in attendance at the meeting to propose the motion both the motion and the amendment were LOST.

## **6. Pension Fund Divestment from Fossil Fuels**

*Proposed Angus MacLean, Community and Voluntary Sector, and John Stevenson, Communities and Families*

This branch acknowledges

- The Paris 2015 Agreement, committing our governments to keep the global temperature increase to under 2 degrees and aim for 1.5 degrees. Carbon budgets produced by the IPCC, UN and the IEA show that preventing 2 degrees of warming relies on not burning 60-80% of all proven fossil fuels.

- The Lothian Pension Fund (LPF) currently holds £173 million in fossil fuel public equities and corporate bonds.

- The Pensions Committee, which administers the fund, has so far resisted calls by the local campaigning group Divest Lothian to divest from fossil fuels. Doing so would address the risk of climate change to investment portfolios and safeguard the well-being of the fund members.

This branch agrees to

- Call upon the LPF Pensions Committee to invest safely for fund members' long-term wellbeing, by divesting from fossil fuels over 5 years and reinvesting into more sustainable projects, in line with their fiduciary duty.

*continued on page 17*

*Continued from page 16*

- Call upon National Delegate Conference to seek divestment of Local Government Pensions Schemes from fossil fuels over 5 years, in line with fiduciary duty.

- Submit the relevant parts of this motion for debate at the 2017 National Delegate Conference.

- Call upon UNISON Scotland to push for this motion to be prioritised for debate at the 2017 NDC.

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

## **7. Social Workers Without Borders (SWWB)**

*Proposed by John Stevenson and Tom Connolly (Communities and Families)*

This branch applauds the work of those volunteers, including several UNISON

members in social services throughout the UK, who have given their time to the work of SWWB, an activist organisation of social workers set up in 2016 to promote the interests of asylum seekers and refugees.

Reflecting UNISON Scotland's position in its 'Asylum in Scotland - Child's Welfare Paramount?' publication, such work is based on putting the child's welfare first.

It includes activity in the Calais refugee camp to support, assess and secure UK entry for children resident there prior to the camp's 'closure'.

We agree with SWWB's position that the 'refugee crisis' in Europe is a result of structural oppression both here and overseas - and is a crisis of care, not a crisis caused by those who flee wars, extreme oppression and poverty in their homelands.

We agree to support SWWB and help raise its

profile within and beyond our trade union by:

1. Supporting the development of activity of SWWB

2. Sending a suitably worded version of this motion to UNISON Scottish Council seeking their support for SWWB.

3. Sending a suitably worded version of the motion to 2017 UNISON National Local Government Conference and UNISON National Delegate Conference seeking national support for SWWB.

4. Seeking to support and/or sponsor a SWWB fringe meeting at June 2017 UNISON National Local Government Conference in Brighton - seeking support of UNISON Scotland and other UNISON Regions for this venture.

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

## **Agenda Item 9 Rule and Standing Order Changes - AGM 2018**

The full Branch Rules are available at [www.unison-edinburgh.org.uk/rules2016.pdf](http://www.unison-edinburgh.org.uk/rules2016.pdf)

*Notes in italics are provided by the branch president to explain the effect of the change.*

**Rule changes require a two-thirds majority.**

### **1. Rule C.1**

*Proposed by Branch Committee*

In Section C (1) Preamble:

In paragraph 5: replace "Stewards" with "Representatives"

In paragraph 6: replace "on occasion" with "often"

Replace "should have" with "will have"

Replace ", in certain instances," with "where a Health and Safety Representative is not elected in their constituency"

Replace "Steward" with "Representative"

**NOTE:** *Current rule with proposed changes in bold:*

*"Whenever possible a parallel structure for Health & Safety ~~Stewards~~ **Representatives** will be put in place.*

*It is recognised that Health & Safety matters will ~~on occasion~~ **often** overlap with Conditions of Service and as such all shop stewards ~~should have~~ **will have** at least a basic knowledge of Health & Safety requirements.*

*It will be necessary, ~~in certain instances,~~ **where a Health and Safety Representative is not elected in their constituency** for shop stewards to also carry out the role of Health & Safety ~~Steward~~ **Representative.** "*

### **2. Rule B.6 Branch Employed Staff Structures**

*Proposed by Branch Committee*

Add new Rule B. 6 c)

"The Branch will operate a procedure to be used for investigating any allegations of harassment of a Branch employee by a UNISON member which reflects the principles of the procedure in National Rules for investigating allegations of harassment of a UNISON employee by a UNISON member."

**NOTE:** *This reflects the need to be consistent with new provisions in National Rules.*

### **3. Rule C. 4 Election of Shop Stewards**

*Proposed by Branch Committee*

In C.4.2 after "(See Rule C.3 for definition of Workplace Meeting)", insert "or by a ballot (in hard copy or electronically as approved by the branch chair and secretary) of members in the constituency".

**NOTE:** *This would allow for flexibility in situations where it is not viable to hold workplace meetings due to local circumstances, for example where there are home workers or workers without workplaces.*

### 4. Aggregate Annual General Meetings: Rules B and H

*Proposed by Tom Connolly (Communities and Families) and Ian Mullen (Place)*

**Add to the end of rule B.1** "The AGM may comprise one meeting or a series of aggregate meetings based on sections, shift patterns or geographical areas in order to maximise the active participation of members. In the case of aggregate meetings, the agenda and order of business of each aggregate meeting will be identical and the results of voting will be the total of votes cast across all of the meetings. See H.3 for rules on attendance and voting."

**Replace B.4 with** "The quorum for any Branch general meeting shall be 200 members or where the meetings are aggregate the quorum will be at least 200 members attending the combined aggregate meetings"

**Replace exiting H.3 with** "The quorum for shall be 200 members or where the meetings are aggregate the quorum will be at least 200 members attending the combined aggregate meetings. The quorum for other meetings shall be as set out in Rule B.4"

**Add new H.4:** "All members have the right to speak and vote at Branch meetings, subject to any exclusion in the National Rules and the Regional and National Officer(s) shall have the right to attend and speak (but not vote) at the meetings. Members, other than Branch Officers, shall only be entitled to attend one aggregate meeting in each cycle of aggregate meetings. Branch Officers may attend all Aggregate Meetings but can only vote at one of them and can only be included in the quorum for one of them. The minutes should record at which aggregate meeting the Branch Officer(s) voted."

**NOTE:** *This would give the option of having aggregate AGMs, for example an evening and lunchtime meeting where the total of the attendance across the two meetings would be taken into account in terms of meeting the quorum and the votes for elections and motions would be added up across the two meetings.*

### 5. Quorum

*Proposed by Tom Connolly (Communities and Families) and Ian Mullen (Place)*

Delete the figure '200' in all references to branch meeting quorum throughout the Rules and Standing Orders and substitute with '150'

**NOTE:** *This, if approved by the national union, would reduce the quorum of branch meetings (and aggregate meetings) to 150.*

### 6. Rule H.19 Elections

*Proposed by Tom Connolly (Communities and Families) and Ian Mullen (Place)*

Insert 'or branch health and safety sub-committee or self organised group' after 'shop stewards committee'.

Delete 'the case of a nomination from a shop stewards committee, the signature of the convener of that committee with a copy of the relevant minute' and replace with 'the case of a nomination from quorate shop stewards committee, health and safety sub-committee or self-organised group, the signature of the convener or chair of that committee with a copy of the relevant minute'.

**NOTE:** *This would add the health and safety sub committee and self organised groups to the bodies that can nominate members for election to branch officer posts.*

## 1. Transfer from Industrial Action Fund

*Proposed by Branch Committee*

This branch notes that:

1. the Branch Industrial Action Fund has been almost wholly funded by transfers from the General Fund
2. Branch Rule D.12. iv) states “So far as is possible, the balance of funds at 31 December each year shall be maintained at at least 8% of the total income from members subscriptions remitted to the branch.”
3. The Industrial Action Fund currently stands at £151,708 which is over 57% of income from members’ subscriptions in 2017
4. The Branch has been supported by the national union in 2017 by an extra £50,000 as a result of our General Fund reserves dipping below the threshold, and to support the employment of a staff member to organise, represent and negotiate in the voluntary and community sector since the main employer (The City of Edinburgh Council) has refused facility time for those activities.

This branch believes that the Branch post for

the Voluntary and Community Sector is essential to branch functioning and ways must be found to continue it.

However, the required expenditure would exhaust branch reserves in the General Fund within 18 months at current levels of income. It is therefore essential that the Branch makes contingency plans to fund the post until there is further clarity from the national union about ongoing support and/or recruitment returns to a level which will restore the Branch’s previous income.

This Branch therefore resolves to:

A. Give the treasurer the authority to transfer of £50,000 from the Industrial Action Fund to the General Fund in the financial year 2018. This would leave the fund at over 38% of the annual income from members, far more than the required 8%.

B. As and when financially prudent, take measures to restore the level of the fund.

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### Council Budget, Cuts, Redundancies (local)

## 2. Health & Social care services - overworked and under pressure

*Proposed by David Harrold (Communities and Families) and Ben Owen (Health & Social Care)*

The disparity between resources and the growing need for health and social care services in Edinburgh has been well documented these past few months. Reports in the media have shown that these issues are exacerbated by the lack of real funding from the UK and Scottish Governments.

This AGM recognises that staff within the Health & Social Care Department are managing excessive workloads and higher rates of absenteeism caused by workplace injury and stress. These issues affect all pay grades and can be directly related to the Transformation Programme, accompanying staff reductions and the biggest changes to working practices seen in Edinburgh as a direct result of the integration agenda. No individual, no post and no grade are exempt from the above and other concerns.

This AGM remains committed to Health &

Social Care Integration, but recognition must be given to the significant funding shortfall and its impact on the ability of staff to deliver high quality services to the people of Edinburgh. We call upon our union and instruct our branch officers to:

1. Keep our members informed and involved by holding a series of workplace meetings throughout Edinburgh backed up by regular newsletters
2. Make contact and meet with the Scottish Government, City of Edinburgh Councillors and other relevant public bodies to focus and act upon strategies that will safeguard essential Health & Social Care services
3. To consider Industrial action to highlight the inability of members to carry on delivering services under current circumstances.

## 3. Staff-less libraries

*Proposed by David Harrold (Communities & Families) and Pauline Henderson (Communities & Families)*

UNISON have urged City of Edinburgh Council officials to give serious consideration to the many concerns that remain unanswered as to the proposed introduction of staff-less libraries. No evidence has been provided that shows safety of staff, service user and council property is guaranteed with the installation of Open Libraries Solutions.

The employer believes that CCTV and entrance to premises via library card will provide the relevant safeguards; UNISON say this reliance on basic technology is foolhardy. These functions alone will not provide the quick response that would be required in an emergency nor would it prevent the improper use of facilities or ensure the personal safety of those who would use the service out with normal hours.

No documentation or strategy has been provided by which would:

- Prevent libraries becoming the focus of antisocial behaviour
- Assist persons who fall ill or are incapacitated during staff-less opening hours
- Direct the public to safety in the event of a fire or flood
- Police library premises ensuring the safety of those who were to properly use services out with normal opening hours
- Give guarantee to the safety of unaccompanied children

On top of this, evidence from other local authorities shows that Open Libraries Solutions also raises serious issues of equality:

- Women are far less likely to enter an unstaffed building
- Physical access is prohibitive to those who are elderly, infirm or with a disability
- For those with learning difficulties it will be a struggle to use the facilities without staff support

There is also no acknowledgement that a library does not properly function without a well-trained and motivated staff. No self-service terminal or staff-less building can advise and guide young students in their education, help the long-term unemployed back into work and provide a sense of community for the elderly and infirm. UNISON believes that the Council would be better placed investing resources into ensuring the future sustainability of our library services as opposed to simply keeping these buildings open for longer.

This AGM calls upon the union to support this motion and instructs our branch officers to:

1. Be actively involved from the beginning of any pilot scheme or introduction of Open Libraries Solutions, ensuring that all relevant risk assessments and health and safety measures are conducted and acted upon prior to any implementation.
2. Highlight the professionalism, dedication and importance of library staff. Making it clear that the safety of library jobs is paramount and that if Open Libraries Solutions was to be used as justification for further cuts, or an alternative to employing new staff, UNISON would ballot our members for industrial action.

Service Conditions Issues (eg pay and conditions)

## 4. PA pay and conditions

*Proposed by Greg Holland (Voluntary Sector) and Jonathan Calthrop (Voluntary Sector)*

### **This Union notes:**

- 1.1 A PA is employed directly by the service user/disabled person using Direct Payment funding, which is part of Self Directed Support (independent living).
- 1.2 CEC had an informal agreement with the employers/service users that their employees (PAs) would have their pay increments matched to Council staff.
- 1.3 PAs were denied a 2.25% pay increase in 2009/10 when the Council reneged on the informal agreement to match pay with Council staff.
- 1.4 PAs were also denied a 1.0% pay increase in 2015/16, which was awarded to Council staff.
- 1.5 The Council has since agreed to reinstate the informal agreement but given the previous failure to honour the agreement, this cannot be trusted and is therefore unacceptable.

### **This Union believes:**

- 2.1 PAs provide a valuable service on a one to one basis meaning they are the first responder to emergencies.
- 2.2 With experience they develop a detailed knowledge of their employer's condition ensuring continuity of care and a better quality of life for their employers.
- 2.3 PAs provide care for their employers in their own home when they are ill

meaning large savings for the NHS.

- 2.4 There has been an approximate 13.5% pay cut in real terms added to the future 5% for NEST pension contribution within 2 years meaning approximately 18.5% pay cut in real terms.
- 2.5 Specialist/Consultant recognition and approval of complex support given, results in good health and wellbeing which reduces reliance on NHS and costly hospital admissions.
- 2.6 Specialist training by NHS staff has been cut resulting in current PAs training new employees.
- 2.7 Legally, pay increments are the responsibility of our employers but the Council will not increase their funding and the employers' reaction has been almost non-existent.
- 2.8 The nature in which PAs are regarded is highlighted by the fact such an important agreement is only informal.
- 2.9 PAs are not part of a collective bargaining agreement and so have been forgotten about and largely ignored.

### **This Union resolves:**

- 3.1 To achieve a contractual, legal written agreement to match PA pay increments to Council staff increments.
- 3.2 To regain the 2.25% plus 1% increases denied to us in 2009/10 and 2015/16.

### Health and Safety

## 5. Work Related Stress and Mental Health Wellbeing

*Proposed by Ian Mullen (Place) and Duncan Smith (Chief Executive)*

This Branch believes that:

As the result of the austerity agenda imposed by the Westminster Governments, and passed on by the Scottish government, the resulting huge budget cuts to local authorities has led to a massive loss of jobs and essential public services being removed.

The remaining staff have had to bare the burden of ever increasing workloads they are feeling overworked, unsupported by the employer, feeling greater levels of job insecurity, anxiety, work-related stress and are also feeling bullied and harassed.

This Branch therefore calls on the Council:

- To ensure that Departmental and individual Stress Risk Assessments are completed and updated annually or where there is a change in working practices/procedures.
  - To ensure that the early identification of Work Related Stress and/or Mental Health illness is treated as a priority.
  - To ensure that confidential specialist counselling services are made available to all staff on request or when referred by the Council's medical advisor or a GP.
  - To put in place a consistent support mechanism for staff with Work Related Stress or Mental Health Illness which incorporates regular reviews and avoids added stress or threat of dismissal.
- To ensure that management discretion is used appropriately when Absence Management reviews or hearings take place.

Further this Branch resolves:

- To develop an ongoing Awareness Campaign highlighting the effects of Work Related Stress and workplace risks to Mental Health Illness.
  - To carry out a Mental Health at Work training programme for all Unison representatives.
  - To highlight the ongoing psychosocial health concerns of UNISON's membership to the highest levels of the Council.
  - To work in partnership with the council's Corporate Health & Safety Team and HR Human Resources/Employee Relations to identify the demands which put staff at risk.
  - The Council has a statutory Duty of Care to all of its staff, they need to be reminded that this duty extends to all aspects of the employees' health and wellbeing including the serious problem of Work Related Stress and its potential to lead to more serious Mental Health difficulties. We will take all necessary steps to ensure that our members are protected and the employer is held to account if they fail in their duty to protect our members health and wellbeing.
-

## Branch Meetings

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

## Departmental Meetings

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

## Branch Committee

Consists of about 40 members made up of branch officers, stewards elected from Departmental Committees and reps from self organised groups. Steward delegates are accountable to their Stewards' Committees. Structures ensure stewards outnumber officers.

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

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

## Shop Stewards Committees

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

## Scottish Council

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

## National Conference

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

## National Executive

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

## Self Organised Groups

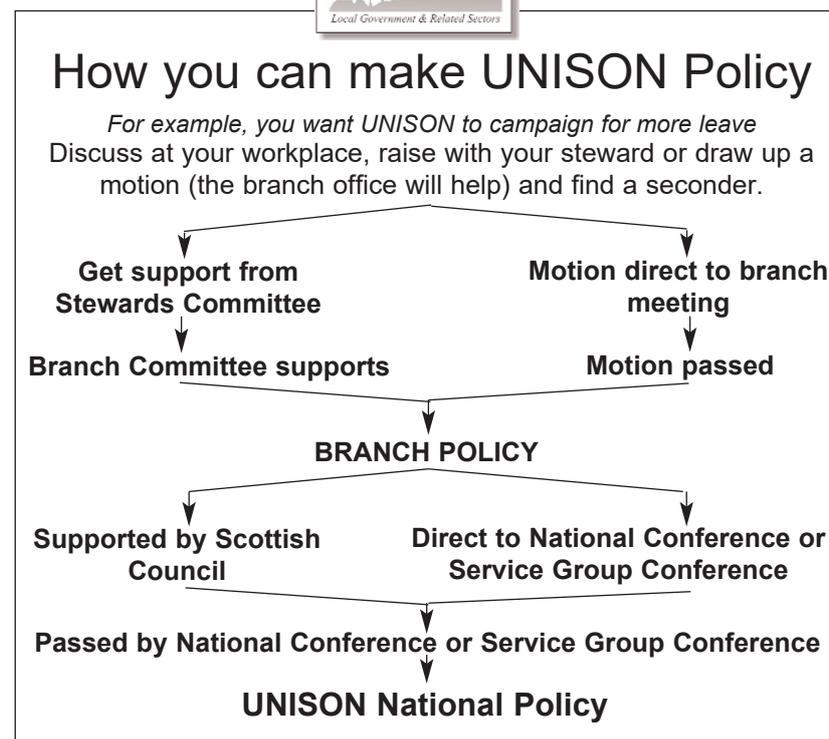
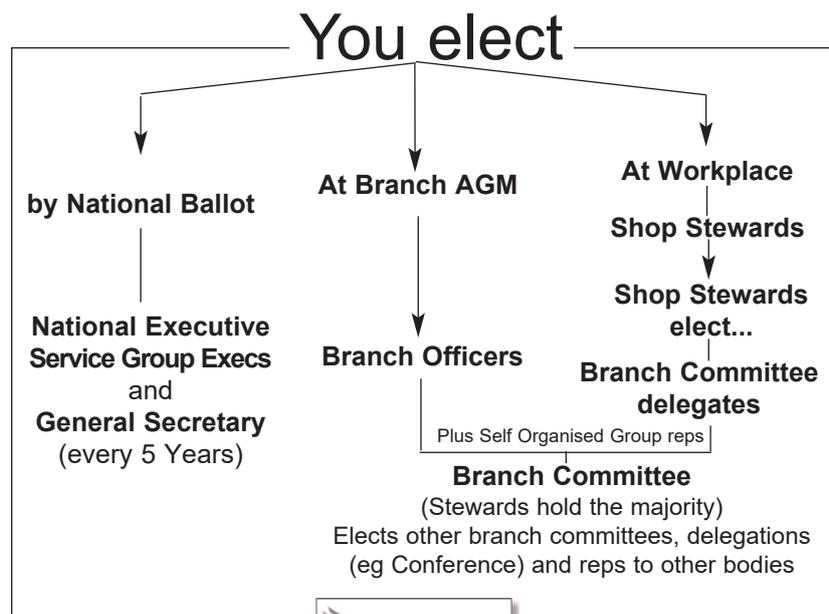
For structurally disadvantaged groups, eg Women's Group, Young Members, Black Members, Disabled Members, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Members.

# 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.





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