

# UNISON City of Edinburgh

Local Government & Related Sectors Branch

## Annual General Meeting 2022

### Aggregate meetings

Tuesday 22nd February 2022, 12:30 - 2pm

Thursday 24th February 2022, 6pm - 7:30pm

Members need only attend one meeting. The meetings will be held online via Microsoft Teams.

## AGM Agenda 2022 and Annual Report 2021



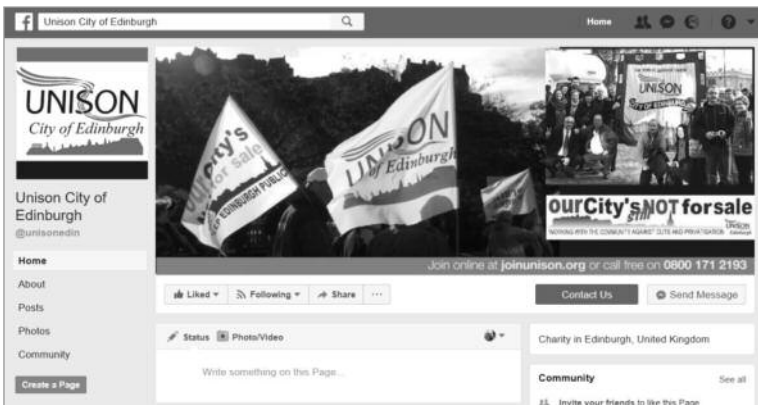
## ‘You are exceptional’

Branch praises members, staff and activists for their response to the pandemic



# 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.



# AGM Calling Notice

To All Members

Dear Colleague,

All members are urged to attend the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the branch which will take place online via Microsoft Teams due to the current health protection measures. A link will be sent to you along with instructions on how to access the meeting.

The AGM will be held across two aggregate meetings to offer members times that may be more convenient in terms of working patterns. Members need only attend one of the meetings. If they wish, they may attend more than one aggregate meeting but may only vote at one of them and can only be included in the quorum for one of them. The meetings will be held on:-

**Tuesday 22nd February 2022, 12:30 - 2pm**

**Thursday 24th February 2022, 6pm – 7:30pm**

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. The quorum is 150 and the total number of qualifying members attending the aggregate meetings will define whether that quorum is met.

## 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 made available to members.

## AMENDMENTS

Any two members can propose amendments to motions. These must be in writing and arrive at [branchoffice@unison-edinburgh.org.uk](mailto:branchoffice@unison-edinburgh.org.uk) by **Noon Monday 14th February 2022. Questions on the Annual Report and Financial Statement\*** must be received by **noon on Monday 21st February 2022** to ensure the information is available for a response.

## ACCESS

We recognise that to ensure all our members can fully participate it may be necessary to make adjustments. If you require any adjustment please contact the branch and we will discuss your requirements.

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.*



# AGM 2022

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# Agenda

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1. Opening Remarks/  
Introductions
2. Appointment of Scrutineers
3. Standing Orders
4. Minutes of Branch Meetings  
2021 (p 18-21)
5. Annual Report 2021 (p 7-14)  
*Questions on the Annual Report must be submitted to the branch office by noon on Monday 21 February.*
6. Financial Statement 2021  
*The Financial Statement and Treasurer's Report will be in the Supplementary Agenda and on the website.*
7. Honoraria  
*No honoraria because auditor posts vacant.*
8. Election of Branch Officers  
*See pages 4-5.*
9. Presentations and Question and Answer Session (on any urgent issues)
10. Rule Changes *See page 16*
11. Policy Motions *See page 17*
12. Any other business

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## Agenda Item 8 Election of Branch Officers

NOTE: If more than one nomination is received for any post an election will be held where all members of the branch are invited to vote to select the preferred candidate. In the event of an election voting papers will be circulated in advance of the AGM and returned before the AGM with the outcome announced at the AGM. Where no nominations were received, they will be sought via the Branch Committee.

### Branch President

**Kirsten Hey** (Health & Social Care)  
Nominated by: *Tom Muir & Dave McConnell*  
(Corporate Services)

### Branch Chairperson

**Tom Muir** (Corporate Services)  
Nominated by: *Mike Smith & Hugh Menzies*  
(Corporate Services); *Dave McConnell* (Corporate Services) & *Gerry Stovin* (Place)

### Vice Chairperson (2)

*One of whom must be a woman.*

**Caroline McLean** (Health & Social Care)  
Nominated by: *Tom Muir & Dave McConnell*  
(Corporate Services)

**Pauline Henderson** (Education & Children's Services)  
Nominated by: *Ian Mullen* (Place) & *Alistair Stevenson*  
(Education & Children's Services)

Agenda Item 8 Election of Branch Officers (continued)

**Branch Secretary**

**Tom Connolly** (Education & Children’s Services)  
 Nominated by: *David Harrold (Education & Children’s Services) & Gerry Stovin (Place); Mike Smith & Hugh Menzies (Corporate Services); Kirsten Hey & Caroline McLean (Health & Social Care); Kyle Bellamy (Place) & Tom Muir (Corporate Services)*

**Assistant Secretary**

**Caroline McLean** (Health & Social Care) & **Gerry Stovin** (Place) **Job Share**  
 Nominated by: *Tom Connolly & David Harrold (Education & Children’s Services); Tom Muir & Dave McConnell (Corporate Services)*

**Service Conditions Coordinator**

**Tom Connolly** (Education & Children’s Services)  
 Nominated by: *Mike Smith & Hugh Menzies (Corporate Services); Kirsten Hey & Caroline McLean (Health & Social Care); Kyle Bellamy (Place) & Tom Muir (Corporate Services)*

**Service Conditions Convener**

**David Harrold** (Education & Children’s Services)  
 Nominated by: *Education & Children’s Services Shop Stewards Committee; Karen O’Brien & Claire Brown (Education & Children’s Services); Mike Smith & Hugh Menzies (Corporate Services); Ian Mullen & Kyle Bellamy (Place); Gerry Stovin (Place) & Tom Connolly (Education & Children’s Services)*

**Service Conditions Officers (5)**

**General Posts (2)**

**Ian Mullen** (Place)  
 Nominated by: *Education & Children’s Services Shop Stewards Committee; Health & Safety Sub Committee; Mike Smith & Hugh Menzies (Corporate Services); Allan King & Kyle Bellamy (Place);*

**Gerry Stovin** (Place)  
 Nominated by: *David Harrold (Education & Children’s Services) & Tom Muir (Corporate Services)*

**Women’s Posts (3)**

**Pauline Henderson** (Education & Children’s Services)  
 Nominated by: *Education & Children’s Services Shop Stewards Committee*

**Caroline McLean** (Health & Social Care)  
 Nominated by: *Tom Muir & Dave McConnell (Corporate Services)*

**No nomination received**

**Health and Safety Convener**

**Ian Mullen** (Place)  
 Nominated by: *Education & Children’s Services Shop Stewards Committee; Health & Safety Sub Committee; Allan King & Kyle Bellamy (Place)*

**Welfare Officer**

**Mike Smith** (Corporate Services)/ **Caroline McLean** (Health & Social Care) **Job share**  
 Nominated by: *Ailsa Cunningham & Hugh Menzies (Corporate Services); Tom Muir & Dave McConnell (Corporate)*

**Equalities Officer**

**Zac Dean** (Health & Social Care)  
 Nominated by: *Gerry Stovin (Place) & David Harrold (Education & Children’s Services)*

**Education Officer**

**Ian Mullen** (Place)  
 Nominated by: *Education & Children’s Services Shop Stewards Committee; Health & Safety Sub Committee; Mike Smith & Hugh Menzies (Corporate Services); Allan King & Kyle Bellamy (Place)*

**Lifelong Learning Convener**

No nomination received

**Branch Treasurer**

No nomination received

**Communications Officer**

No nomination received

**LGBT+ Officer**

No nomination received

**International Officer**

No nomination received

**Black Members Officer**

No nomination received

**Women’s Officer**

No nomination received

**Young Members Office**

No nomination received

**Environment Officer**

No nomination received

**Auditors (2)**

No nomination received

# A Brief Guide to Branch Meetings

(See standing orders at [www.unison-edinburgh.org.uk](http://www.unison-edinburgh.org.uk) - The need to have online meetings may mean some changes to this advice)

**W**e 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 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 seven minutes to speak and other speakers get three. 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 (separate guidance will be given for online meetings). 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 2021

## Your vote counts when it comes to services

I'm writing this statement at the end of January. It's a sunny day, pandemic restrictions are gradually being removed, and it feels like spring will get here and we might have a better year.

But conditions in local government remain tough.

My own area, Health & Social Care, is struggling with under-funding, increased demand, vacancies and recruitment problems, and I know things are difficult in the other parts of the council too.

This year we all have a chance to make changes, as the local elections are due to be held in May.

Turnout in local elections is generally low, with Edinburgh only managing a 50.5% turnout in 2017.

It's easy to be cynical about politics, especially when we look at the current Westminster

### the decisions councillors make affect our jobs and the services we and our families use - make sure you're registered to vote'

government's antics, but the decisions councillors make affect our jobs and the services we and our families use.

Please do make sure you're registered to vote, if you're eligible, and take the time to find out what your local candidates are proposing - and then remember to vote!

As always, the branch staff continue to work hard, keeping things running and keeping us right.

Branch officers, stewards, health & safety reps go above and beyond for the membership, often

on top of their "real jobs."

Thank you to all of you for everything you do and the commitment you show.

Unions can't function without stewards and health & safety reps, so please, please consider standing for election.

If you don't want to be a steward or health & safety rep, volunteer to be a workplace contact to help us disseminate information.

The more activists we have, the better we can represent you.

I hope you've all managed to stay safe and well, and I wish you all the best for the challenges of the coming year.

Remember to get your booster vaccine!



Kirsten Hey  
Branch President

## Branch Officers 2020/2021

*President:* Kirsten Hey

*Chair:* Tom Muir

*Vice Chairs:* Caroline McLean  
/Gerry Stovin

*Secretary:* Tom Connolly

*Ass Secretary:* Caroline McLean/  
Gerry Stovin

*Treasurer:* Vacant

*Equalities:* Vacant

*Health & Safety:* Ian Mullen

*Service Conditions*

*Co-ordinator:* Tom Connolly

*Convener:* David Harrold

*Service Condition Officers:*

Caroline McLean, Pauline  
Henderson, Ian Mullen, Gerry  
Stovin

*Communications:* Gerry Stovin

*Welfare:* Caroline McLean/ Mike  
Smith

*Education Officer:* Ian Mullen

*Recruitment/Membership Officer:*  
Vacant

*International:* Vacant

*Lifelong Learning:* Vacant

*Young Members Officer:* Vacant

*Women's Officer:* Viv Thomson

*LGBT+ Officer:* Emma McLeary

## Branch employed staff



From left: Monica Niven, Branch Support Officer; Julieanne Finlay, Branch Support Assistant, and Amanda Kerr, Organiser/Caseworker Voluntary and Community Sector.

# Underfunding pushing our staff to the limit



Tom Muir  
Chairperson

We have now lived with COVID-19 for two years and sadly over 12,800 deaths in Scotland alone.

While our members have served the City of Edinburgh to no small cost to ourselves, we have seen those in power in Westminster throw parties when we couldn't meet our friends, conduct affairs in office whilst we could not hold our loved ones and give lucrative jobs and contracts to

their chums while we get a pay rise that doesn't cover the cost of living.

As an added insult some contracts were not fit for purpose and other appointments incompetent: they get paid where we would be under performance management.

In the coming year underfunding is going to result in further posts not being filled meaning more work for those remaining.

These so-called efficiencies mean overworked staff, exhaustion and stress.

Pay increases will not cover inflation let alone recoup the loss

in our pay from the years of Tory austerity when the low paid suffered and the banker's got bonuses.

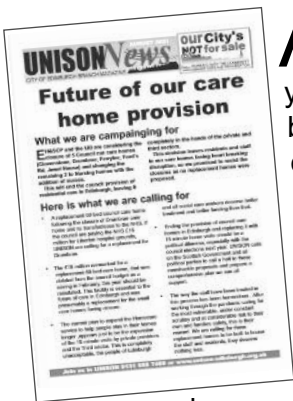
The branch will continue to act for you but under Tory anti-union legislation, a ballot requires over 50% to respond before industrial action can commence and in a targeted ballot in support of our last pay claim, we did not reach this threshold despite an overwhelming majority in favour.

As we move into a new round of pay consultation help us to help you by voting if balloted.

Together we are stronger in UNISON.

## Communications 2021

# Keeping members informed in newsletters, in the media, and online - follow us



A major focus this year has been the care homes campaign with a lively use of social media to build a

huge profile that got lots of engagement. Thanks go to the full time officer, staff and activists for all their work on this - and especially the members for their photos and support.

Alongside this there were 10 UNISON News newsletter updates on issues ranging from flexi changes, £500 for care workers, consolidation of the living wage, health and safety, equalities, international issues,

plug the gap, pay and the care homes.

### Website

The branch's website is well used and over the calendar year of 2021 it had 38,242 views.

The biggest month was March 2021 which included the £500 for care workers issue and living wage consolidation.

The site is mobile friendly which is important when so many people now access the web on smartphones.

### Social Media

It also makes integration with our facebook and twitter accounts much easier and we are using those much more regularly to engage and update members and to reach the public with our campaigns.

We have 1,140 Facebook likes

(up 307 on 2020) and 1,153 followers.

On Twitter we are followed by 1,338 people and organisations, up 184 on the previous year.

We would encourage more members to follow us on twitter @unisonedin or 'like' us on 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.

### Media

We had good press and TV coverage for the care homes campaign, the budget lobby and in relation to cuts issues throughout the year in the print and broadcast media. Just Google us!





# You are exceptional – COVID 19 and beyond

**Y**ou are exceptional. All our members are exceptional and deserve to be recognised and rewarded for the work that you and all our other members do day in and day out, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

If ever the role our members play in maintaining a civilised society has been magnified, it is by the work that has been done throughout the COVID pandemic. Members worked in care home, in people's homes, in schools, clearing the rubbish from our bins and streets, environmental health, digging graves and working in mortuaries.

Services provided by a whole range of staff in different jobs and in different services continued to provide services from the cradle to the grave.

You provided these services because you knew if it was not done the most vulnerable would have been left even more vulnerable.

If our streets had not been cleaned or bins emptied, we would have faced not just the damages of the COVID pandemic but also an environmental catastrophe.

In all these jobs and other jobs people put themselves and their families and friends at risk to ensure that our most vulnerable were cared for and looked after, and our environment was kept safe.

Exceptional people doing incredible jobs providing essential services.

For many of our members you had to start to work from home, we recognise that this itself had thrown up various challenges for many be it the lack of space, the lack of office furniture and equipment, IT

‘People put themselves and their families and friends at risk to ensure that our most vulnerable were cared for and looked after, and our environment was kept safe.

Exceptional people doing incredible jobs providing essential services’

support and more significantly poor risk assessments to ensure that health and safety requirements are being met.

Again, in many of these jobs the COVID crisis resulted in members having to take on extra duties associated with COVID funding provided by the Scottish government that needed to be administered by local government staff, this had to be done above and beyond the job tasks that you would normally have done, and we are aware of the stresses that this can and has caused and continue to raise this with the employer.

The branch has throughout the pandemic been at the forefront to ensure that all health and safety requirements applicable to all jobs have been and continue to be met.

Our health and safety officer and other reps will challenge all risks and the employers are aware of this and they continue to work constructively with us.



**Tom Connolly**  
Branch Secretary and  
Service Conditions Co-ordinator

## Convener



**David Harrold**

## Officers



**Pauline  
Henderson**



**Caroline  
McLean**



**Ian  
Mullen**



**Gerry  
Stovin**

*Continued on Page 10*

*Continued from Page 9*

As we move out of the pandemic, we cannot allow the roles that our members played before and after COVID to be forgotten.

Local government and the community and voluntary sector have seen massive cuts to their budgets over the period of austerity and we continue to see more budget cuts coming forward.

If the pandemic has shown us anything it is the need for well-funded, well-staffed services and that the staff that provide these services need to be well paid and fully respected for the exceptional work and services they deliver.

### **The year ahead**

There will be many challenges for us as we move forward in respect to campaigning against

cuts, improved pay and conditions and continuing to support members on individual and collective matters.

We need to continue to build an active membership and encourage the participation of more women members, young members, black members disabled members, and LGBT+ members.

Unless we do this, we cannot claim to be fully inclusive or fully reflect our membership.

While recognising that we all have busy lives and competing demands I would urge all members to consider becoming more active in the branch you will be given training and support and you only need to provide the time you can manage.

UNISON is a lay led union

none of your trade union reps are employed or paid by the union.

### **Your branch paid staff**

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our branch paid branch support staff, Monica Niven, and Julie Finlay for the invaluable support that they provide to the administration of the branch, and their support to branch officers, shop stewards and health and safety representatives and all the members that contact us.

Thank you to Amanda Kerr our Community and Voluntary Sector worker for all the essential work that she does supporting our members across a wide range of employers.

*Tom Connolly*

## Community, Voluntary and Related Sectors Report 2021

# Working in most difficult conditions ever



**Amanda Kerr**  
CVRS organiser/  
caseworker

The branch has around 1,600 members in the Community, Voluntary and Related Sector (CVRS) spread across various ALEOs, charities, voluntary and private employers.

Membership has remained steady throughout the

year despite the number of employers reorganising their workforces and shedding staff on account of the pandemic.

Members in Edinburgh Leisure have had an extremely difficult year with the uncertainties many of them have faced due to the ongoing impact of the COVID restrictions.

I am hopeful that things may

now begin to settle. As expected, a large proportion of our membership sits within the care sector. Our members here continued to step up to the further challenges that 2021 brought, reporting working in the most difficult conditions ever experienced.

Staff shortages has led to increased working hours, longer shifts, lack of support, insufficient rest times and short notice rota changes.

All of this has led to many cases of stress, anxiety, and sheer exhaustion. Keeping up to date with the continuous changes to government guidance has been difficult for employers and staff.

As a union we have had to learn to interpret this guidance and advise members

accordingly.

We have been organising across the whole of Scotland and have been working together to try to improve terms for these underpaid and undervalued members, using social media as a way of communicating.

Organising across this fragmented workforce has always been difficult but even more so when we are unable to be visible in workplaces.

We are fortunate however to have workplace representatives in COSLA, Canongate Youth, Edinburgh Leisure, ELCAP and SACRO and I would like to take this opportunity to thank them for their continuous support of members in their respective areas.

# UNISON prioritising health, safety, wellbeing and equality

I would like to say a personal thank you to all our front-line staff who have worked throughout these difficult times, indeed recognition should be given to all colleagues as we continue to provide services, especially to the elderly and most vulnerable.

Also, thank you to our UNISON health and safety team and school contacts, who continue to carry out workplace inspections and attend health and safety meetings, highlighting our members concerns.

COVID-19, and particularly the Omicron variant has had a significant impact on our members, families, and friends and won't improve whilst the Scottish Government continue to circulate poor guidance and reduce restrictions.

It's questionable whether Health Protection Scotland's advice on close contacts, self-isolation and track and trace has improved the situation with guidance changing on what seems to be a daily or weekly basis.

This has led to an inconsistent approach and understanding of guidance in certain areas of work in relation to COVID compliance, reporting and recording positive cases.

At the time of writing this report the community-based infection rates may be reducing, but front-line services are struggling as levels of absence increase, especially in Health and Social Care, Facilities Management and Schools and Early Years.

UNISON's proposal to pilot HEPA Air Purification units within schools, EYs and other workplaces has not been taken seriously. Instead, a pilot project was put in place with one of our universities and there has been

little feedback.

Again, the Scottish Government played down the use of these units stating there isn't "enough evidence", contradicting the UK government who were installing 7,000 units in English schools. Little consolation when there are



more than an estimated 340,000 classrooms in the UK.

There can be no disputing the fact that natural ventilation, CO2 units, mask wearing, and safe working procedures are vital progressing forward and HEPA units can be an integral element in developing a safe working environment.

This decision was taken after UNISON had organised two MS Teams meetings with a manufacturer, inviting several managers, politicians, and safety campaign groups.

A report compiled on behalf of a HEPA unit pilot in Spanish schools, was circulated to colleagues, this not only highlighted that these units were 99.95% effective in removing bacteria and viruses, including COVID-19, it also improved air quality and the attention span of pupils during the working day.

UNISON continue to monitor cases of long-COVID, work-related stress, anxiety, and fatigue syndrome. Indeed, the long-term psychological effect of the

pandemic will mean that improved support mechanisms must be introduced, and the government must invest in long-COVID clinics.

The latest statistical evidence estimates that 1.3 million people in the UK, are suffering long- COVID symptoms, including 117,000 children.

We cannot ignore the impact that homeworking is having on some members, many have reported having excessive workloads, working out of hours, or feeling bullied and harassed into meeting unachievable targets.

Unfortunately, the cases of bullying and harassment in other service areas are also increasing and we will continue to support those members.

We will continue to work proactively with the council's Corporate Health and Safety team and senior management to make sure that our workplaces are as safe as possible for front-line colleagues and those returning to work. However, we will reserve the right to contact the respective regulatory body if workplaces are found to be unsafe.

Please be assured that UNISON's Health and Safety team will continue to support all our members during these difficult times.

We are always looking for new health and safety representatives, if you are interested in joining our team, please contact the branch office 0131 558 7488 for further information.



**Ian Mullen**  
Health and Safety  
Convener

# Trade union education and training - It's the way forward for activists



Ian Mullen  
Education Officer

As we approach our second year of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, can I thank all members for their commitment

and dedication, as we continue to provide vital services.

There remain obvious anxieties for our front-line colleagues, different variants of COVID-19 are a potential risk, and we cannot be complacent in keeping staff and service users safe. UNISON is committed to supporting you.

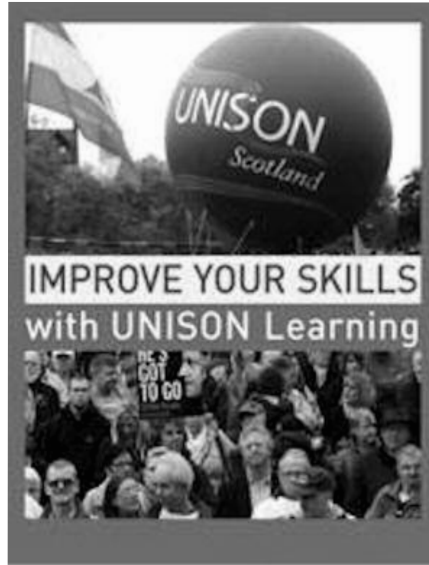
In last year's AGM report, I stated that UNISON and our Education and Training partners, STUC, TUC, Hazards and Scottish Union Learning had moved all training on-line.

This will remain in place for the foreseeable future with UNISON providing shop steward, health and safety and ERA Accreditation training, this will be reviewed later in the year.

A wider education and training programme has been provided by the above affiliate partners, updates have been circulated to all representatives.

I would like to thank all our branch representatives that have undertaken further education and training over the last 12 months as this is a fundamental part in developing representational skills.

In March 2021, I was nominated and elected to UNISON's Scottish learning and organisation committee and have taken an



“I would like to thank all our branch representatives that have undertaken further Education and Training over the last 12 months as this is a fundamental part in developing representational skills.

active part in committee discussions, including future training programmes and funding.

In April, I drafted our Branch Education and Training Strategy 2021, promoting UNISON, partner, and joint CEC training opportunities for all our branch representatives.

Bespoke online training can be organised and this was previously done for our school support members.

We have also held two health

and safety webinars and plans are in place for GDPR training for all branch representatives.

The strategy also highlights our branch commitment to equality and accessibility for all representatives including those with seen/unseen disabilities.

In August 2021, I completed UNISON Scotland's branch education officer training, specific to the role of education officer.

I am pleased to report that our branch strategy document was adopted as a template for other public, private, and voluntary sector colleagues taking part in this training. The strategy document is important as it is an integral part of the yearly Branch Plan.

At our January 2022, meeting of the Scottish learning and organising committee, we discussed the development, location and funding of a national UNISON education college.

A number of issues have been identified that might impact Scottish representatives and these have been highlighted to Scottish NEC delegates.

This is currently being discussed by the national executive council. No further details are known at the moment.

With regards to my own education plan, I continue to be active in UNISON and partner training and would encourage all our branch representatives to continue taking an active role in education and training in 2022.

I would be interested in hearing from any activist who might have ideas for future bespoke training.

# Unique welfare service no other union has

Mike and Caroline would like to thank all our members who have worked tirelessly to provide services throughout the COVID 19 pandemic often putting their own lives at risk.

It has been a difficult two years for all of us working in the public sector with little or no recognition as to the services we have provided.

We as Welfare officers have continued to provide support to our members and their families, providing much needed advice and financial assistance where required.

This unique membership service, which no other trade union in local government provides, can include advice and support with regards to day to day living expenses including utility bills, council tax, rent and mortgage arrears and where necessary, providing emergency grants to put food on the table and keep homes warm.

We have had an increased demand for emergency grants which have mainly been due to being off sick, having exhausted their sickness pay and their income being greatly reduced.

Members have had little or no advice from their employers regarding applying for benefits when their sick pay has been exhausted.

there  
for you

supporting UNISON members  
when life gets tough

Members often have no idea about the benefit system and its complexity, tending to borrow from family and friends or returning to work when they are still sick.

Stewards and branch officers often play an important role in advising members to seek help from UNISON Welfare as do members who have benefitted previously.

We have sent out numerous welfare applications to members who were seeking further financial assistance, although not all the applications forms are returned. It would be good to get feedback from members who have received the form but not completed it, as we can assist in completing the form. All you need to do is contact either Mike or Caroline at the branch office on 0131 558 7488 and the support staff will give us your details.

As we have in the past, we continue to promote our national charity UNISON 'there for you' and



Caroline McLean  
Welfare Officer



Mike Smith  
Welfare Officer

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 signposted members to other welfare grant schemes and can provide our members with details of appropriate agencies who can provide a more specialized service.

There is also the income maximization site turn2us which provides information regarding benefit entitlement.

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 their most difficult of circumstances.

## Labour Link Report 2021

# Tireless support for our care homes campaign

As a result of the pandemic, the branch has again been unable to hold a meeting to nominate a Labour Link officer and I have continued doing what I can in an 'acting' capacity.

An overriding priority over the last year has been getting involved in the branch's 'Save our Care Homes' campaign. From the beginning, Labour members responded positively to the campaign and passed motions of support in their constituency Labour parties.

UNISON delegates on Edinburgh Labour's local government

committee brought a motion supporting the campaign, agreed unanimously, which was covered by the Edinburgh Evening News. The motion was then endorsed by the council Labour group.

This in turn led to a strong turnout from Edinburgh Labour councillors and their parliamentary colleagues at a demo at the city chambers. Support for the campaign has come from all levels of the Party: Ian Murray MP provided a statement of support and Lothian list MSPs Sarah Boyack and Foysol Choudhury have met with the branch and been tireless in

their support of the campaign.

This is an example of the two wings of the labour movement, the Labour party, and the unions, working together to advance a campaign in their respective areas.

With local elections fast approaching, I would encourage union members to reflect on this unique relationship when casting their ballots.



Kyle Bellamy  
Acting Labour Link  
Officer

# Membership Audit 2021

The branch recruited 700 new members in 2021 but still managed to end up with a net reduction of 207. Of course the special circumstances of 2021 with COVID and staff cuts will account for much of this.

The crisis in employers attracting and holding on to staff in care jobs has also had its effect and UNISON is campaigning hard to win respect and much better pay and conditions for these jobs.

Still, the biggest reason people aren't yet members is that they've never been asked! Our strength lies in our numbers so it is in every member's interest to encourage colleagues to join.

## Membership at 31 December 2021

Some figures are affected by transfers between departments

Department	31/12/2020	31/12/2021	Var
Associated Bodies	63	62	-1
Corporate Services	850	854	+4
Education & Children's Services	2,372	2,285	-87
Edinburgh Leisure	109	90	-19
Health & Social Care	1,300	1,209	-91
Lothian Valuation Joint Board	52	52	-2
Place	733	758	+25
Community & Voluntary Sector	1,457	1,428	-29
Unallocated	13	41	+28
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6,984</b>	<b>6,777</b>	<b>-207</b>
Student	0	0	0
Unemployed	17	22	+5
Retired Members	1,185	1,174	-11
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8,186</b>	<b>7,973</b>	<b>-213</b>

Recruited 1/1/20 – 31/1/21 = 700 Officially resigned = 50

## Affiliations 2021

### Paid in 2021

ACTSA  
 Scottish Palestine Solidarity  
 Midlothian TUC  
 Edinburgh TUC  
 Nicaragua Solidarity Campaign  
 Labour Research  
 Living Rent

### Awaiting renewal notice

Cuba Solidarity Campaign  
 Justice for Columbia  
 LRD Workplace Reports  
 Trade Union Friends of Bhopal  
 Scottish Pensioners Forum  
 Scottish Venezuela Solidarity  
 Labour Behind the Label  
 MENA Solidarity Network

## Proportionality and Fair Representation Audit 2021

### 1. Women in branch

\*Figures in brackets show 2020 figures.

Branch	Officers	Stewards
70% (70%)	71% (40%)	48% (43%)

### 2. Branch Committee Breakdown

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

% of Women among delegates to Branch Committee = 47% (38%)

### 3. Department numbers at 31/12/20 (% women)

<b>Corporate Services (33%)</b> Women 285 Male 122 Other 11	<b>Lothian Valuation Joint Board (54%)</b> Women 27 Male 22 Other 1
<b>Education &amp; Children's Services (82%)</b> Women 1,875 Male 363 Other 46	<b>Place (28%)</b> Women 211 Male 529 Other 18
<b>Edinburgh Leisure (36%)</b> Women 32 Male 57 Other 1	<b>Community &amp; Voluntary Sector (70%)</b> Women 1,003 Male 360 Other 63
<b>Health &amp; Social Care (79%)</b> Women 960 Male 238 Other 11	

## Branch Committee Attendances 2021

Name	POSS	ACT	Name	POSS	ACT	Name	POSS	ACT	Name	POSS	ACT
<b>Branch Officers</b>			<b>Associated Bodies</b>			Jan McGuire 12 4			Kyle Bellamy 12 11		
Kirsten Hey	12	5	No delegates appointed			<b>Edinburgh Leisure</b>			Tom Howorth 12 8		
Tom Muir	12	11	<b>Chief Officers</b>			No delegates appointed			<b>Community &amp; Voluntary</b>		
Caroline McLean	12	5	No delegates appointed			<b>Health &amp; Social Care</b>			No delegates appointed		
Tom Connolly	12	9	<b>Education &amp; Children's Services</b>			Joan Lancashire 12 6			<b>Self Organised Groups</b>		
Gerry Stovin	12	10	Linda Blair	12	2	<b>Lothian Valuation Joint Board</b>			No delegates appointed		
David Harrold	12	5	Jacqui Bain	12	0	Gary Miller/Sean					
Ian Mullen	12	9	Graham Neal	12	5	Allen 12 0					
Pauline Henderson	12	4	<b>Corporate Services</b>			<b>Place</b>					
Mike Smith	12	9	Hugh Menzies	12	7	Christina Goddard 12 7					
Emma McLeary	12	5	Ailsa Cunningham	12	1	Allan King 12 9					
Viv Thomson	12	5									

# Rule changes and policy motions

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2022 year of  
**disabled**  
**workers**



**This campaign is for *all* workers,  
and not just disabled workers.  
Check out UNISON Scotland's plans  
and how you can get involved at  
[unison-scotland.org/2022-year-of-  
disabled-workers-in-unison/](https://unison-scotland.org/2022-year-of-disabled-workers-in-unison/)**

# Agenda Item 10 Rule and Standing Order Changes - AGM 2022

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The full Branch Rules are available at [unison-edinburgh.org.uk/about-us/branch-constitution-and-rules/](http://unison-edinburgh.org.uk/about-us/branch-constitution-and-rules/)

Changes to rules require a two-thirds majority of members voting across the total votes of the aggregate meetings.

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## 1. To rationalise the Committee Structure

*Proposed by Tom Muir (Corporate Governance) and Gerry Stovin (Place)*

The Branch Committee of the 4th August 2021 agreed to recommend the following rule changes.

### Introduction

The National Rulebook mandates that the Branch Committee governs the business of the Branch. In addition to that this Branch has several subcommittees which do not meet or duplicate the business of the Branch Committee and would be better served by working groups meeting under the auspices of the appropriate officer who would report and be responsible to the Branch Committee.

### Service Conditions Committee

The functions of this committee are duplicated within Branch Committee, specifically the Service Conditions Convenors Report. The actions currently undertaken would devolve to the responsible officers who report to Branch Committee.

### Equalities Committee

This currently does not meet

### Education & Communications Sub Committee

This currently does not meet

### **Rule Change 1 - Service Conditions Committee**

To delete Section D.3. Conditions of Service Sub Committee

To Amend section D.2. Branch Committee – Structure as follows:

- To append “2.m To be responsible for the Branch’s consultation on national negotiation”
- To append “2.n To support and co-ordinate Departmental negotiation,

To amend Section D.4 Service Conditions Team as follows:

- To replace all references to the Service Conditions Committee with Branch Committee.

### **Rule Change 2 - Equalities Committee**

To Delete Section D.5

To Amend section D.2. Branch Committee –

Structure as follows:

- To append “2.o To ensure all Branch business pertinent to the objective of ensuring equality in all matters relating to an individual’s membership of the Branch and shall pursue areas of improvement for disadvantaged groups. This will include matters of National or Regional Policy.

To amend Section D.4 Service Conditions Team as follows:

- To append “4.5 To ensure that all negotiations pertinent to the objective of ensuring equality in all matters relating to their employment and shall pursue areas of improvement for disadvantaged groups.

To amend Section E as follow

- In 23, 24, 25 & 26 to replace references to Equalities Sub Committee with Branch Committee

### **Rule Change 3 Education & Communications Sub Committee**

To delete Section D.7.

To Amend section D.2. Branch Committee – Structure as follows:

- To append “2.o To appoint an editorial committee and editor for the Branch Magazine”
- To amend Section D.4 Service Conditions Team as follows:

- To append “4.g To ensure that all stewards and officers can obtain and receive the appropriate training”
- 4.h. produce a regular branch magazine supplemented by newssheets as appropriate.
- 4.i. maintain a watch on the media to alert branch officers to issues requiring a UNISON response.
- 4.j develop and produce information for members and stewards”



## Pensions and Superannuation

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### 1. LPF Disinvestment from Fossil fuels

*Proposed by Gerry Stovin & Ian Mullen (Place)*

Lothian pension fund has over £229 million in the fossil fuel firms most responsible for the climate crisis, including oil companies BP, Eni, Chevron, Shell and Exxon.

This undermines the Council's pledge to become a net zero city by 2023, as its employees' pensions fund invests in fossil fuels.

Friends of the Earth Scotland, The Greens and others have challenged Lothian pension fund to disinvest from fossil fuels but they have been ignored.

LPF hides behind its fiduciary duty, a requirement to look after its members' money, to invest in the big oil companies.

Wandsworth's Council pension scheme recently stated ;

"We came to the conclusion last year that maximising the performance of the fund and supporting the council's pledge to tackle global warming did not have to be mutually exclusive. We have set the target of reducing investments in stocks and shares by five per cent, but we will continue to review this as we suspect it will make economic sense to reduce it still further.

"Switching to environmentally-friendly investments

will be a gradual process in order to minimise risk, but our equity portfolio in January was already thirty per cent below the nationally-set carbon footprint benchmark."

LPF also claims that by investing in these companies they can influence change, better than selling the shares to investors that "don't care", without publishing any data to back that up or disinvestment from poor companies.

Strathclyde pension fund have stated "as a last resort you'd maybe say 'you're not going to transition, you can't stay in the portfolio'.

While Lothian pensions CEO has said "My personal view is that divestment is daft."

Doesn't sound like companies are being challenged.

A recent UNISON survey of Lothian pension fund members indicated 83% want fossil fuel issues taken into account in where their pensions were invested, and 66% wanted to be consulted by their pension fund about its investment principles.

This AGM tasks the representatives in the branch to join the growing campaign in challenging LPF to listen and consult with its members, and start to take disinvestment, not as a last resort or daft, as part of the transition away from fossil fuels.

# Minutes of Branch Meetings 2021

## MINUTES OF AGGREGATE BRANCH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2021

Tuesday 2nd March 2021, 18:00  
– 19:30 – via MS Teams

Meeting 1: was chaired by  
Kirsten Hey, branch president. 84  
members attending

Wednesday 3rd March 2021,  
12:30 – 14:00 – via MS Team

Meeting 2: was chaired by Tom  
Muir, branch chairperson. 66  
members attending. Total  
members attending 150

### 1. OPENING

#### REMARKS/INTRODUCTIONS

A copy of the Supplementary  
Agenda which includes the branch  
financial statement was previously  
circulated to the membership and  
was posted on the branch website  
for the previous four weeks.

At the start of the meeting(s) the  
chair introduced Aditi Jehangir,  
Laura Smith, and Sinead McNulty, to  
address the meeting on the work of  
Living Rent.

Living Rent is Scotland's tenants'  
union. They are a democratic  
organisation run by and for their  
members. They organise and  
represent their members in the  
private and social rented sector and  
fight for safe, secure, and affordable  
housing for everyone.

The speakers encouraged anyone  
interested in joining their campaigns  
or considering affiliating to the  
tenant's union to contact them direct.

This was followed by a question-  
and-answer session.

### 2. APPOINTMENT OF SCRUTINEERS

Four Scrutineers were appointed to  
oversee the ballots being counted.

### 3. STANDING ORDERS

There were no proposed changes  
to standing orders.

### 4. MINUTES OF BRANCH MEETING 2020

The 2020 AGM was inquorate, and  
the recall meetings were cancelled  
due to COVID restrictions.

### 5. ANNUAL REPORT 2020

No questions were raised on the  
Annual Report.

### 6. FINANCIAL STATEMENT 2020

The meetings AGREED the  
previously circulated financial  
statement which was included in the  
Supplementary Agenda.

### 7. HONORARIA

No honoraria because auditor  
posts vacant.

### 8. ELECTION OF BRANCH OFFICERS

The following posts were elected  
unopposed:

#### Branch President

Kirsten Hey (Health & Social Care)  
Nominated by: Tom Connolly  
(Communities & Families) & Gerry  
Stovin (Place)

#### Branch Chairperson

Tom Muir (Resources)  
Nominated by: Resources Shop  
Stewards Committee, Tom  
Connolly (Communities & Families)  
& Gerry Stovin (Place)

**Vice Chairperson (2)** One of  
whom must be a woman

Caroline McLean (Communities &  
Families)

Nominated by: Gavin Snape  
(Communities & Families) & Ross  
Robertson (Health & Social Care)

#### Branch Secretary

Tom Connolly (Communities &  
Families)

Nominated by: Communities &  
Families Shop

Stewards Committee; Resources  
Shop Stewards Committee; Caroline  
McLean & Gavin Snape  
(Communities & Families); Kirsten  
Hey & Tara McCarthy (Health &  
Social Care); Tom Howorth &  
Christina Goddard (Place)

#### Assistant Secretary

Caroline McLean (Communities &  
Families) and Gerry Stovin (Place)  
(job Share)

Nominated by: Gavin Snape  
(Communities & Families) & Andrew  
Wynne (Resources)

#### Service Conditions Coordinator

Tom Connolly (Communities &  
Families)

Nominated by: Communities &

Families Shop Stewards Committee;  
Resources Shop Stewards  
Committee; Kirsten Hey & Tara  
McCarthy (Health & Social Care);  
Tom Howorth & Christina Goddard  
(Place); Caroline McLean  
(Communities & Families) & Gerry  
Stovin (Place).

#### Service Conditions Convener

David Harrold (Communities &  
Families)

Nominated by: Karen O'Brien &  
Claire Brown (Communities &  
Families); Lesley Sime & Ailsa  
Deans (Communities & Families);  
Colin Sutherland & Dion Macdonald  
(Health & Social Care); Dave  
McConnell (Resources) & Karen  
McConnell (Communities &  
Families); Kieran Crosby & Joan  
Lancashire (Health & Social Care);  
Gillian McFarlane & Sandra  
Somerville (Health & Social Care);  
Resources Shop Stewards  
Committee; Gerry Stovin (Place),  
Caroline McLean & Tom Connolly  
(Communities & Families)

#### Service Conditions Officers (5)

##### General Posts (2)

Ian Mullen (Place)

Nominated by: Scott Dobie &  
Ciorstaidh MacIver (Place); Tom  
Howorth & James Finlayson (Place);  
Resources Shop Stewards  
Committee; C Docherty, J Scammell,  
P Keenan, G Thom, B Hastie,  
A Johnston, S Smith (Place); Pauline  
Henderson & Graham Neal  
(Communities & Families); Tom  
Connolly & Caroline McLean  
(Communities & Families)

Gerry Stovin (Place)

Nominated by: Tom Connolly &  
David Harrold (Communities &  
Families)

##### Women's Posts (3)

Pauline Henderson (Communities  
& Families)

Nominated by: Graham Neal &  
Linda Blair (Communities & Families)

Caroline McLean (Place)

Nominated by: Gavin Snape  
(Communities & Families) & Ross  
Robertson (Health & Social Care);  
Tom Connolly (Communities &  
Families) & Ian Mullen (Place)

Continued on Page 19

**Health and Safety Convener**

Ian Mullen (Place)

Nominated by: Caroline McIntosh & Scott Dobie & Ciorstaidh MacIver (Place); Tom Howorth & James Finlayson (Place); Resources Shop Stewards Committee; C Docherty, J Scammell, P Keenan, G Thom, B Hastie, A Johnston, S Smith (Place); Tom Connolly & Caroline McLean (Communities & Families); Pauline Henderson & Graham Neal (Communities & Families)

**Education Officer**

Ian Mullen (Place)

Nominated by: Ciorstaidh MacIver, Scott Dobie & Caroline McIntosh (Place); Tom Howorth & James Finlayson (Place); Resources Shop Stewards Committee; C Docherty, J Scammell, P Keenan, G Thom, B Hastie, A Johnston, S Smith (Place); Pauline Henderson & Graham Neal (Communities & Families)

**Communications Officer**

Gerry Stovin (Place)

Nominated by: Tom Connolly & David Harrold (Communities & Families)

**International Officer**

Tara McCarthy (Health & Social Care)

Nominated by: Kirsten Hey (Health & Social Care) & Ian Mullen (Place)

**Welfare Officer**

Mike Smith (Resources) and Caroline McLean (Children & Families) Job share

Nominated by: Jill Drummond (Communities & Families) & Andrew Wynne (Resources); Resources Shop Stewards Committee

No nominations were received for the post of vice chairperson (general), equalities officer, lifelong learning officer, recruitment/membership officer, service conditions officer (women), treasurer, young members officer and auditors. These posts will be remitted to the Branch Committee for action.

**8. PRESENTATION AND QUESTIONS AND ANSWER SESSION**

The meeting received a brief update on the ongoing negotiations/discussions on the following matters: -

- Pay Claim
- Consolidation of Living Wage
- Flexi Scheme
- £500 for Care Workers

**9. RULE CHANGES****1. Update branch constitution to reflect changes to organization of LGBT+ members**

Proposed by Michael Richardson and Dean Williams (Resources)

Throughout the branch rules, Replace all occurrences of "lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender" with "lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender plus (LGBT+)"

All changes should reflect the current capitalisations.

(This rule change reflects changes agreed at UNISON National Delegate Conference 2019 and to bring the branch in line with National Rules).

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

**2. Update branch constitution with fully inclusive language**

Proposed by Michael Richardson & Dean Williams (Resources)

Throughout the branch rules, Replace all occurrences of "he/she" with "they"

Replace all occurrences of "she/he" with "they"

Replace all occurrences of "his/her" with "their"

Replace all occurrences of "him/her" with "them"

All changes should reflect the current capitalisations.

(This rule change calls on the branch constitution to be updated with fully inclusive language.

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

**3. Rule change 3 was withdrawn by the movers.****4. To create the following posts within the structure of the Branch**

Proposed by Branch Committee

To reflect the change in the National Rules (G 4.1.1) that the Branch have a "Women's Officer (who must be a woman)" by having an officer to

develop and support each of the self-organising groups, and to formalise the post of Environmental Officer to reflect the importance of this to our members.

Rule E.23 "23. Other Officers The Branch may appoint other officers from time to time as it thinks fit, for example Women's Officer, etc." to be replaced with:

23. Women's Officer

a) The postholder must be a Woman

b) Under the responsibility of the Equalities Sub Committee to develop and co-ordinate women's activities in the Branch in line with national and Scottish guidelines as issued.

c) Under the responsibility of the Branch Committee to facilitate the establishment and development of the self organised group for women, to work alongside their representatives to the Branch Committee and the Equalities Sub Committee, and act in support of the priorities and service conditions issues determined by that group

d) To develop strategies for recruiting, retaining and involving women.

e) To act as one of the Branch delegates to any approved UNISON or other Women's conferences etc.

24. Black Members Officer

a) The postholder must be a black member.

b) Under the responsibility of the Equalities Sub Committee to develop co-ordinate Black Members' activities in the Branch in line with national and Scottish guidelines as issued.

c) Under the responsibility of the Branch Committee to facilitate the establishment and development of the self organised group for black members, to work alongside their representatives to the Branch Committee and the Equalities Sub Committee, and act in support of the priorities and service conditions issues determined by that group

e) To act as one of the Branch delegates to any approved UNISON or other Women's conferences etc.

*Continued on Page 20*

## 24. Black Members Officer

- a) The postholder must be a black member.
- b) Under the responsibility of the Equalities Sub Committee to develop co-ordinate Black Members' activities in the Branch in line with national and Scottish guidelines as issued.
- c) Under the responsibility of the Branch Committee to facilitate the establishment and development of the self organised group for black members, to work alongside their representatives to the Branch Committee and the Equalities Sub Committee, and act in support of the priorities and service conditions issues determined by that group
- d) To develop strategies for recruiting, retaining and involving Black Members.
- e) To act as one of the Branch delegates to any approved UNISON or other Black Members' conferences etc.

## 25. Disabled Members Officer

- a) The postholder must be a disabled member
- b) Under the responsibility of the Equalities Sub Committee to develop co-ordinate Disabled Members' activities in the Branch in line with national and Scottish guidelines as issued.
- c) Under the responsibility of the Branch Committee to facilitate the establishment and development of the self organised group for disabled members, to work alongside their representatives to the Branch Committee and the Equalities Sub Committee, and act in support of the priorities and service conditions issues determined by that group
- d) To develop strategies for recruiting, retaining and involving disabled members.
- e) To act as one of the Branch delegates to any approved UNISON or other disabled members' conferences etc.

## 26. LGBTQ+ Officer

- a) The postholder must be a LGBTQ+ member
- b) Under the responsibility of the Equalities Sub Committee to develop coordinate LGBTQ+'s member's activities in the Branch in line with

national and Scottish guidelines as issued.

- c) Under the responsibility of the Branch Committee to facilitate the establishment and development of the self organised group for LGBTQ+ members, to work alongside their representatives to the Branch Committee and the Equalities Sub Committee, and act in support of the priorities and service conditions issues determined by that group
- d) To develop strategies for recruiting, retaining and involving LGBTQ+ Members.
- e) To act as one of the Branch delegates to any approved UNISON or other LGBTQ+'s conferences etc.

## 27. Environment Officer

- a) to raise and co-ordinate activities for the increase in members knowledge and understanding of Environmental issues
- b) to keep the branch informed, via the Policy and Finance Committee, on Environmental issues.

## 28. Other Officers

The Branch may appoint other officers from time to time as it thinks fit."

And so these posts can be democratically elected by the members via the AGM Section H 5 6) (s) "s) Other Branch Officers as may be decided by the branch "to be replaced with:

- "(s) Women's Officer (who must be a woman)
- (t) Black Members Officer (Who must be Black)
- (u) Disabled Members Officer
- (v) LGBTQ+ Officer
- (w) Environment Officer
- (x) Other Branch Officers as may be decided by the branch"

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

## 10. POLICY MOTIONS

### 1. Campaign against council cuts

Proposed by David Harrold and Tom Connolly (Communities and Families)

After years of austerity, this AGM believes that another round of cuts to City of Edinburgh's budget will be so long lasting and undermining that our essential services may never recover.

These essential services cannot be provided on the cheap, by cutting corners or letting experienced and knowledgeable staff go, they require investment. This AGM holds that any failure to ensure adequate staffing, back-up and resources will be to neglect the public we serve and undermine our professionalism.

Coronavirus and the subsequent lockdown showed us the importance of Council services that are bolstered by a dedicated and skilled workforce. Where would our elderly, infirm and vulnerable be without our care workers? Where would our children be without our school staff? What state would our streets be in without our refuse workers? This AGM knows their value and that of all within public service. It is time for those who govern us to also know your value and stand up for public services.

This AGM supports this motion and instructs the UNISON City of Edinburgh Branch Officers to:

- 1) Call upon City of Edinburgh Council Councilor's and their Waverley Court officials to reconsider their planned budget cuts and to look at more creative ways to secure and build upon existing Council services.
- 2) Petition City of Edinburgh Council to provide proper investment for services and also call upon them to request emergency funding from the Scottish Government.
- 3) Reinforce UNISON's complete opposition to compulsory redundancies and the use or interpretation of any Council policy and procedure that would cause our member's financial harm.
- 4) Organise and coordinate a campaign to oppose any instruction or decision that threatens job loss or financial detriment to Council serviced by working in partnership with our members, with our sister trade unions and the public.

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

*Continued on Page 21*



## 2. Lothian Pension Fund – Time2Divest

Proposed by Ian MacDonald (Retired Member) and Tara McCarthy (Health and Social Care)

This branch notes that:

1. Unison nationally has a policy of support for the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions campaign.

2. Unison Scotland jointly launched the TimetoDivest campaign in 2017 with Scottish Palestine Solidarity Campaign. This campaign targets the 11 local authority pension funds in Scotland that have investments in companies that support and profit from Israel's illegal occupation or are

involved in the arms trade with Israel.

3. The UN Human Rights Council database, published in 2020 highlighted 112 companies deemed to be most involved in the illegal settlements, and the human rights violations that inevitably result from this.

4. Lothian Pension Fund has investment in 2 companies on the UN list, Bank Hapoalim and Booking Holdings as well as in a number of large arms companies that sell weapons to Israel. The branch therefore resolves to:

- Express support for the local TimetoDivest campaign to end such

investments by Lothian Pension Fund

- Publicise at regular intervals the letter writing campaign to councilors in the Lothians

- Coordinate a meeting for TimetoDivest with Unison reps on the Pension Board in order to consider how they can influence the discussion on these unethical investment.

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

## 11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

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

CONCERNED ABOUT WORKLOADS, PAY AND  
CONDITIONS, SAFETY, EQUALITIES, HARASSMENT,  
PENSIONS, PRIVATISATION? WHO ISN'T?  
WANT TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT?



STEWARDS ARE THE LIFELBLOOD OF OUR BRANCH  
AND WE NEED YOU. YOU WILL HAVE OUR FULL  
SUPPORT, TRAINING AND A GREAT  
NETWORK FOR ADVICE.

**Go on, think about it.**

Contact us at 0131 558 7488

[branchoffice@unison-edinburgh.org.uk](mailto:branchoffice@unison-edinburgh.org.uk)

**Or elect a steward now at**

[unison-edinburgh.org.uk/elect-a-steward/](http://unison-edinburgh.org.uk/elect-a-steward/)

## 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

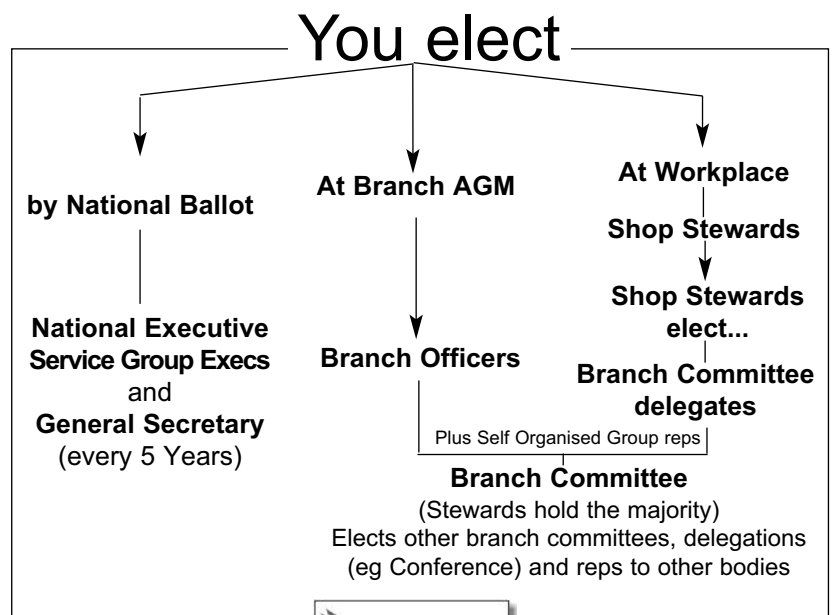
For structurally disadvantaged groups, eg Women's Group, Young Members, Black Members, Disabled Members, LGBT+ Members.

# Making your VOTE COUNT

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

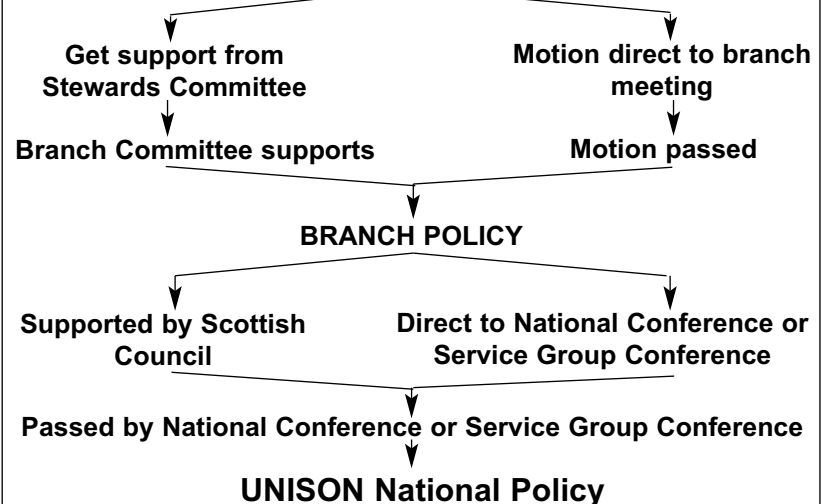
**UNISON is a lay member led union with democratic structures at all levels. But these structures are no good unless members themselves exercise their right to use them.**

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



## How you can make UNISON Policy

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







### Three simple ways to join UNISON today



**Join online at**  
[joinunison.org](http://joinunison.org)



**Call us on**  
**0800 171 2193**



**Ask your rep**  
**for a form**

You can also call 0131 558 7488 or download a form at  
[www.unison-edinburgh.org.uk](http://www.unison-edinburgh.org.uk)

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