



# UNISON City of Edinburgh Local Government & Related Sectors Branch Annual General Meeting 2024



## AGM Agenda 2024 and Annual Report 2023



### Aggregate meetings

(Members need only attend one - see details on page 3)

**Thursday 15 February 2024 18:30 - 20:00**

**Augustine Church, 41-43 George IV Bridge, Edinburgh**

**Tuesday 20 February 2024 18:30 - 20:00**

**Nicolson Square Venue, 25 Nicolson Square, Edinburgh**

**Thursday 29 February 2024 12:15 - 13:45**

**City Chambers, High Street, Edinburgh**



You can download a copy of this booklet 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 which will be held across three aggregate meetings to offer members venues and times that may be more convenient in terms of geography and 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.

**Thursday 15 February 2024, 6:30pm - 8pm**  
**Augustine Church, 41-43 George IV Bridge, Edinburgh, EH1 1EL**

**Tuesday 20 February 2024, 6:30pm - 8pm**  
**Nicolson Square Venue, 25 Nicolson Square, Edinburgh, EH8 9BX**

**Thursday 29th February 2024 12:15pm - 1:45pm**  
**Council Chambers, City Chambers, High Street, Edinburgh, EH1 1YP**

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.

The names of members attending at each meeting will be recorded for vote counting.

Members can only be admitted to the meeting on production of their current membership card or pay slip showing UNISON deductions or if their name appears on the branch list.

## 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 12th February 2024. Questions on the Annual Report and Financial Statement\*** must be received by **noon on Wednesday 14th February 2024** to ensure the information is available for a response.

## CRECHE/ CARERS ALLOWANCE

A creche is being arranged for the 15th February meeting only. Members intending to use the creche should inform the branch office by **Noon on Thursday 8th February**.

For safety reasons, the creche cannot be made available to members who have not contacted the office. Carers allowance is also available for this meeting but must be arranged in advance with the branch office.



## AGM 2024

## Contents

Calling Notice . . . . .	3
Agenda/ Elections . . . . .	4
Meetings Guide . . . . .	6
Annual Report . . . . .	7
Officers and staff . . . . .	7
Chairperson's Report . . . . .	7
Secretary's Report . . . . .	8
Service Conditions . . . . .	8
Education Report . . . . .	11
Health & Safety . . . . .	10
Welfare . . . . .	12
Labour Link . . . . .	12
Attendances . . . . .	13
Fair Rep. Audit . . . . .	13
Membership . . . . .	13
Rule Changes and Motions . . . . .	14
Making Your Vote Count Guide to UNISON Structures . . . . .	18

# AGM Calling Notice (continued from page 3)

## ACCESS

All buildings have wheelchair access. If any member has any special requirements or requires a signer, 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.*

---

## Agenda

---

- |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                         |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Opening Remarks/ Introductions                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | <i>Office by <u>noon on Wednesday 14th February.2024</u></i>            |
| 2. Appointment of Scrutineers                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                         |
| 3. Standing Orders                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | 8. Honoraria<br><i>No honoraria because auditor posts vacant.</i>       |
| 4. Minutes of Branch Meetings 2023<br><i>The 2023 AGM and recall AGM were both inquorate. A Special Branch Committee took place on 17th May 2023 and confirmed the appointment of all branch officers and the policy motions were overwhelmingly carried..</i> | 7. Election of Branch Officers<br><i>See pages 4-5..</i>                |
| 5. Annual Report 2023 (p 7-12)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | 8. Presentations and Question and Answer Session (on any urgent issues) |
| 6. Financial Statement 2023<br><i>See Supplementary Agenda and website. Questions on the Annual Report and Financial Report must be submitted to the Branch</i>                                                                                                | 9. Rule Changes <i>See page 14-15</i>                                   |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | 10. Policy Motions <i>See page 15-17</i>                                |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | 11. Any other business                                                  |

## Agenda Item 7 Election of Branch Officers

NOTE: Ballot Papers will be issued at the AGM for any contested posts. Biographical details of candidates in contested posts will be on the website and available from the branch office from a week before the AGM and circulated on the night.

### Branch President

No nomination received

---

### Branch Chairperson

**Graham Neal** (Education & Children's Services)  
Nominated by: Corporate Services Shop Stewards Committee, David Harrold (Place) & Pauline Henderson

(Education & Children's Services)

---

### Vice Chairperson (2)

*One of whom must be a woman.*  
No nomination received.

---

Agenda Item 7 Election of Branch Officers (continued)

**Branch Secretary**

**David Harrold** (Place)

Nominated by: *Corporate Services Shop Stewards Committee, Kyle Bellamy & Ian Mullen (Place)*

**Assistant Secretary**

**Pauline Henderson** (Education & Children's Services)

Nominated by: Graham Neal (Education & Children's Services) & David Harrold (Place)

**Branch Treasurer**

No nomination received.

**Service Conditions Coordinator**

No nomination received.

**Service Conditions Convener**

**David Harrold** (Place)

Nominated by Jane Brown & Lynne Greenan (Health & Social Care); Dave McConnell & Mike Smith (Corporate Services); Joseph Greenan & Mark Stanton (Place); Karen O'Brien & Claire Brown (Place); Place Shop Stewards Committee, Corporate Services Shop Stewards Committee.

**Service Conditions Officers (5)**

**General Posts (2)**

**Ian Mullen** (Place)

Nominated by: Place Shop Stewards Committee, Corporate Services Shop Stewards Committee

**Kyle Bellamy** (Place)

Nominated by: Place Shop Stewards Committee, Corporate Services Shop Stewards Committee

**Women's Posts (3)**

**Pauline Henderson** (Place)

Nominated by: *Place Shop Stewards Committee, Corporate Services Shop Stewards Committee* vices Shop Stewards Committee

**Health and Safety Convener**

**Ian Mullen** (Place)

Nominated by: *Place Shop Stewards Committee, Corporate Services Shop Stewards Committee*

**Education Officer**

**Ian Mullen** (Place)

*Place Shop Stewards Committee, Corporate Services Shop Stewards Committee*

**Recruitment/ Membership Officer**

No nomination received.

**Equalities Officer**

No nomination received.

**Lifelong Learning Convener**

**Graeme Nisbet** (Corporate Services)

Nominated by: Corporate Services Shop Stewards Committee

**Communications Officer**

No nomination received.

**LGBT+ Officer**

No nomination received.

**Welfare Officer**

**Mike Smith** (Corporate Services)/**Pauline Henderson** (Place) **Job share**

Nominated by: *Corporate Services Shop Stewards Committee, Place Shop Stewards Committee*

**International Officer**

No Nomination received

**Young Members Officer**

No nomination received

**Black Members Officer**

**Isabella Ingibina** (*Health & Social Care*)

Nominated by: *Ian Mullen & Allan King (Place)*

**Disabled Members Officer**

No nomination received

**Auditors (2)**

No nomination received.

Where no nominations were received, they will be sought via the Branch Committee.



# 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 mo-



tions 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 2023

## Your branch needs you!

Another year has passed for branch officers, stewards and support staff.

It has been a busy year however, the work does not stop, and we need further assistance from our members to become active within UNISON.

We are still facing an economic crisis which is affecting members and their families. It's a total disgrace that working people are having to make choices with regards to heating their homes or feeding their families.

UNISON is continuing to campaign for better pay deals for our public sector workers and the negotiations have began once more.

Our Branch carried out a violence at work survey for all employees working for the City of Edinburgh Council and we received a good response from frontline staff working in schools, locality offices and health and

social care.

No one goes to work to be physically, verbally or sexually abused and our employer needs to start dealing with this properly.

**‘We need members to become more active in UNISON’**

UNISON will continue to campaign for zero tolerance in schools and for all employees who work within public services.

I want to thank all the staff in schools and early years who took part in strike action.

Last year (2023) was the year of the Black Worker and we managed to recruit a Black Members officer who has been a great asset to the branch.

She organised several stalls at Waverly Court and the locality offices to promote the campaign.

2024 is the year of LGBT+

Worker so hopefully members will get involved in the campaign.

The branch have been supportive with the Stop the War

Campaign in all regions of the world where people are being oppressed and fighting for survival.

I could go on for ever, but we do need members to become stewards and branch officers.

I retire in April and have enjoyed my time with UNISON, at times I have found it challenging but rewarding, and here's hoping for a brighter future for our members.

Best wishes to you all.



Caroline McLean  
Branch Chair

## Branch Officers 2022/2023

**President:** Vacant  
**Chair:** Caroline McLean  
**Vice Chairs:** Pauline Henderson / Tom Howorth  
**Secretary:** Tom Connolly  
**Ass Sec:** Caroline McLean  
**Treasurer:** Vacant  
**Equalities:** Vacant  
**Health & Safety:** Ian Mullen  
**Service Conditions**  
**Co-ordinator:** Tom Connolly  
**Convener:** David Harrold  
**Officers:** Caroline McLean, Pauline Henderson, Ian Mullen, Kyle Bellamy

**Communications:** Vacant  
**Welfare:** Caroline McLean/ Mike Smith  
**Education Officer:** Ian Mullen  
**Recruitment/Membership:** Vacant  
**International:** Vacant  
**Lifelong Learning:** Vacant  
**Young Members Officer:** Vacant  
**Women's Officer:** Mairi Byatt  
**LGBT+ Officer:** Vacant

## Branch employed staff



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

# Working in UNISON

Throughout the year your branch and representatives have continued to campaign and organise on work related issues and represent members in disciplinary, grievance and sickness absence meetings.

## Pay

A huge thanks must go out to our members who took part in the industrial action in both schools and early years centres linked to schools. Their action was taken in support of all members in the council and without their preparedness to strike and organise fantastic picket lines we would have not achieved the extra funding we got from the Scottish Government.

We recognise that many of our members in the community and voluntary sector have not seen decent pay rises for years, this is a major concern for us. We would insist that the Scottish Government provide the finance to these organisations to ensure that staff are paid a fair wage.

I would also encourage members in these areas to put themselves forward to be a workplace representative this would enable us to have a greater link into your workplace.

I am pleased to hear that the City of Edinburgh Council has agreed to provide further finance to Edinburgh Leisure. Intervention was made by

UNISON, and we have worked hard to see this outcome.

## Violence in the workplace

Both physical and emotional violence continues to increase across public services.

**‘A huge thanks to members who took part in the selective industrial action’**

The branch carried out a survey of members employed at the City of Edinburgh Council and the findings highlighted the impact on the physical and emotional health of our members.

More information can be found on the branch website or contact the branch office if you have immediate concerns.

## Workplace stress

Our members continue to see cuts to jobs and being asked to do more and more. It is therefore hardly surprising that the highest cause of long-term absence is stress and mental health related illness.

We urge members to only work the hours they are contracted to and if the employer does not protect you from overwork and unnecessary stress make sure that you get in touch with us.

I would encourage

members to also consider becoming a health and safety representative in their workplace full training is provided by the union.

## Year of the Black worker 2023

The branch was active in organising stalls in workplaces to highlight the Year of the Black Worker and we have seen someone taking up the role of Black members officer, Isabella Ingibina. Isabella has represented the branch at the National Black Members conference and took part in a video promoting Black members involvement.

There was also a survey carried out amongst Black members that showed how those members viewed the union and the workplace, it shows that there is still much work to do if we are to be confident that Black members feel that they will be supported by their union and feel



Tom Connolly  
Branch Secretary and  
Service Conditions Co-ordinator

## Convener



David Harrold

## Officers



Pauline  
Henderson



Caroline  
McLean



Ian  
Mullen



Kyle  
Bellamy

*continued on page 9*

## .....Working in UNISON

*continued from Page 8*

protected in the workplace and our wider society. The results of the survey can be found on the UNISON website.

### **Community and Voluntary Sector**

Our membership in the community and voluntary sector continues to grow

The conditions of service for our members in these sectors are not always the best, but with the growing membership UNISON is able to have a stronger voice to campaign and organise around the issues of poor pay and other inadequate terms and conditions.

This impact of the austerity agenda has had a hugely negative impact on the community and voluntary sector, and many have seen their funding from the council drastically cut or stopped.

### **Thanking our branch employed staff.**

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our branch support and admin staff Julie Finlay and Monica Niven. The skill they provided to the branch is vital to the smooth running of the branch.

Amanda Kerr is employed as a caseworker/organiser for the voluntary sector carrying out a vital role in advising and representing members in those services.

Finally a welcome to our latest new colleague Denise McKenzie who has joined us as an area organiser. Her project-based post is joint funded by the branch and the Scottish region.

Denise will initially focus on building our representation and capacity in the council's

Education and Children's Services and Edinburgh Health and Social Care Partnership.

### **The next year**

The financial settlement from the Scottish Government makes it clear that the funding of local government is less than adequate to meet the cost of providing meaningful and safe services to the most vulnerable in our communities.

The cuts already experienced throughout the period of austerity, resulted in the loss of over 50,000 jobs in Scottish local governments.

**‘We will continue to campaign and organise around cuts to jobs and services’**

The impact in councils is that staff continue to be asked to do more with less and the massive levels of stress experienced by staff across departments continue to grow.

The other significant impact is the reduction of funding provided by the council to the community and third sector.

The result in the cuts to their funding means poor pay awards and in some cases no increase at all.

The impact on us as a trade union is that we will continually need to campaign and organise around the cuts to job and services, highlighting the negative impact on our membership and the most vulnerable in our communities.

### **Equality and Diversity**

The branch must prioritise the expansion of its membership and make concerted efforts to better reflect the diversity within its ranks.

Currently, 71% of our members are women, a demographic that is not proportionately represented in the branch's leadership.

Additionally, there is a noticeable absence of representation from our Black, disabled, and LGBT+ members.

To address this disparity, ongoing efforts should be made to understand the factors contributing to this imbalance, and proactive steps should be taken to enhance the branch's inclusivity.

It is imperative that the leadership and regional actively works towards creating a more representative and diverse structure, ensuring that our structure aligns with the varied demographics of the membership.

We enthusiastically invite individuals from diverse backgrounds, including those who identify as Black, disabled, LGBT+, and younger members, to actively participate in their union.

Embracing this diversity is key to creating a branch that is not only reflective of our current membership but is also equipped for the future.

Your involvement is crucial in shaping a branch that is dynamic, inclusive, and well-positioned for the challenges ahead.

*Tom Connolly*



# UNISON Identify Increase in Violence and Aggression

My thanks to all our branch health and safety representatives and school contacts who continue to keep our workplaces safe and to our branch support staff for their continued support.

Over the last 12-months our branch has continued to campaign for additional protection and support for colleagues who have tested COVID-19 positive whilst carrying out essential work for service users.

We supported the council's Green Group who submitted a motion to council on signing the COVID Safety Pledge, which was rejected by the City Leadership Team.

In February 2023, our branch was part of a delegation who gave evidence to the Scottish Government's long-COVID Inquiry.

UNISON is also part of the STUC delegation to the ongoing Scottish Government COVID public inquiry.

Our Scottish Health and Safety Committee submitted a Freedom of Information request to all 32 Scottish local authorities in 2023, asking how many public service employees had been dismissed on the grounds of being diagnosed with long-COVID.

The final report was submitted to our national seminar in Stirling on the 10 November, identifying 83 employees had been dismissed, several had no access to their pension due to their age. Five authorities did not respond, and some did not record the dismissals as COVID related.

The outcome of this report is shameful, and councils must

improve how they support colleagues with long-term clinical and terminal ill-health stay in employment.

The branch health and safety team continue to carry out workplace inspections, representation and investigations into accidents and incidents.

The increase in violence and aggression towards our front-line staff has now reached unacceptable levels, particularly in schools and locality offices.



As a result of inspections, several reports have been submitted to the senior management team with recommendations for improvements and a request to review all security measures.

You can find further details of our December "Violence in the Workplace Survey" at: <https://unison-edinburgh.org.uk/>

The non-reporting of incidents and near misses on the SHE portal remains a serious issue, which we have continually raised with senior management, as is the lack of feedback on actions taken to improve identified risks.

Many of our public buildings, including our education establishments, have been surveyed for Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) and Asbestos

following UK Government advice.

UNISON have worked pro-actively with our management teams to identify what remedial actions have been required taking into account safety and service provision.

Since April 2022, our branch has been working with HR colleagues on developing and procuring bespoke Suicide Aware and Prevention workshops for trade union representatives and management which have been running since December 2023.

Our branch continues to monitor the increase in absence from work related to bullying, harassment, work related stress and fatigue syndrome, which has more than doubled over the last five years, much of it caused by heavy workloads, unachievable target setting and reduced staffing levels.

Finally, I want to thank all the branches that supported my re-nomination to the Scottish Health and Safety Committee at the Scottish Council meeting in February 2023.

If you are interested in becoming a health and safety representative, please contact the branch office on 0131 558 7488 or [branchoffice@unison-edinburgh.org.uk](mailto:branchoffice@unison-edinburgh.org.uk)



Ian Mullen  
Health and Safety  
Convener

# Improve your skills with UNISON Learning

A huge thank you to all our branch representatives who have continued to take part in our education and training programme throughout 2023, and to our branch support staff for their continued assistance.

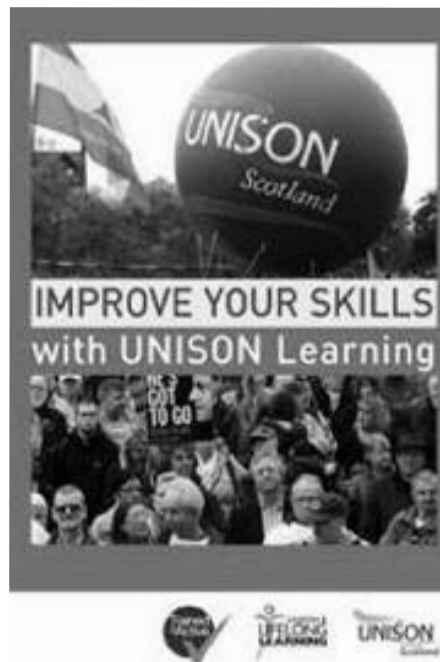
The new UNISON 2024 education and training calendar has been circulated to all our representatives and I would encourage you to continue your trade union education, which is an integral process in developing the skills, knowledge and confidence required to represent our members in the workplace, at corporate and national level.

Recent decisions taken at our 2022/23, National Delegates Conference (NDC) have prioritised mandatory training in GDPR, Challenging Racism and Equality training for all new and experienced branch reps, in addition UNISON have developed new training opportunities for our environmental representatives.

This year has seen a large number of new shop stewards, health and safety and branch officers joining our team and for the first time in several years the branch has run its own Organising Stewards Stage 1 and 2

training course for new stewards.

The branch education and training strategy has been updated to reflect the above NDC priorities and there are plans to progress and develop regular in-house training on the employers new and updated policy documents.



Further education and training options are available via our affiliation to the STUC, TUC, Scottish and UK Hazards and Scottish Union Learning (SUL).

At the Scottish Council meeting

held in Glasgow in February 2023, I was grateful to be re-elected to UNISONS Scottish Learning and



**Ian Mullen**  
Education Officer

and Organising Committee, and I have taken an active role in committee discussions and decisions on future training programmes and funding.

Finally, I would like to congratulate the members of UNISON's Black Members Committee and all the members that were involved in the successful Year of the Black Workers campaign 2023.

Our branch made six commitments to the campaign at the start of 2023 and completed all of them. This campaign will establish a legacy to generate change.

Congratulations also to Isabella Ebiye Ingibina, branch Black members Officer, who was elected onto the Scottish Black Members National Committee as education officer.

## The NEW 2024 learning programme is out now

Get more active with confidence

UNISON Scotland's new training programme is packed with courses for new and experienced activists to help you make a difference.

Learn more skills and get more active.



# Help for our members when they need it

Your elected branch welfare officers have had a busy year, not only dealing with our members financial issues during the cost-of-living crisis, but also assisting our members who have suffered additional hardship while undertaking industrial action on behalf of local government workers throughout Edinburgh and Scotland.

On behalf of the branch, we thank them for their individual sacrifices and ensured that where it was necessary, no member was left in financial detriment when they applied to us for help. Both the cost-of-living crisis and the well fought industrial action affected the lowest paid the worst.

The use of foodbanks is still on the increase and being used by low paid public sector workers.

Your welfare officers have again continued to provide support and

financial advice to our members and their families across our branch.

UNISON Welfare (There for You) is a unique membership service which no other trade union in local government provides.



The help provided can include financial assistance from day to day living expenses, utility bills, providing emergency grants as well as DWP/HMRC and Social Security Scotland benefits advice.

We have also signposted members to third party advisory



Caroline McLean  
Welfare Officer



Mike Smith  
Welfare Officer

channels including free debt advice from UNISON's debt line.

Finally, this is our colleague Caroline McLean's last year of service as one of your branch welfare officers as she plans to retire this year from both her substantive post within the City of Edinburgh Council and her other branch officer roles.

We would like to thank her profoundly for her service to the branch in some of the most difficult times over the years.

## Labour Link Report 2023

### “First and foremost a party of labour”

At UNISON Scotland's Labour Link Forum in January 2023, Anas Sawar, leader of the Scottish Labour Party, described his party first and foremost as a party of labour with no conditions attached to Scottish Labour's support of workers on picket lines and the right to strike.

He also made the welcome point that Scottish Labour's elected representatives should not act as managers or administrators but as political leaders.

On 23 February 2023, Edinburgh councillors passed a budget motion put forth by the Liberal Democrat Group. This budget motion sought to remove the commitment to no compulsory redundancies and introduce 'best value service reviews' to generate savings, specifically in waste and cleansing.

This budget motion passed with the support of the Labour Group Councillors. Your branch's response to this was twofold.

The branch immediately wrote to the group leader and to Anas Sawar requesting an immediate explanation of the Labour Group's support of a motion undermining our members' terms and conditions.

Approaches were also made to UNISON Scotland's Labour Link Committee, who facilitated a meeting between members of the committee, the branch, the group leader and Anas so that the branch could relate your concerns directly.

The branch launched – with the support of our sister unions – the Pledge for Public Services campaign. The campaign asked Edinburgh's elected representa-

tives and members of the public to sign up in support of three commitments: No compulsory redundancies; Keep public services publicly owned; Demand more funding for our council. This was signed by all Labour, SNP and Green councillors.

Since then, the branch has ensured that regular contact is maintained with the Labour Group so that they - in Anas's words, as elected representatives of a party of labour – understand the concerns and priorities of members of the labour movement in Edinburgh.



Kyle Bellamy  
Acting Labour Link  
Officer

The branch recruited 2,353 new members in 2023.

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.

Numbers keep us strong, more effective and a driving force to defend jobs, services, pay and conditions for all local authority, associated bodies and voluntary and community sector staff.

**Membership at 31 December 2023**

Some figures are affected by transfers between departments

Department	31/12/2022	31/12/2023	Var
Associated Bodies	67	59	-11
Corporate Services	499	83	-16
Education & Children's Services	2,540	3,455	+915
Edinburgh Leisure	101	125	+24
Health & Social Care	1,153	1,079	-73
Lothian Valuation Joint Board	48	51	+3
Place	1,368	758	+25
Comm & Voluntary Sector	1,611	1,667	+56
Unallocated	12	18	+6
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7,399</b>	<b>8,424</b>	<b>+1,025</b>
Student	0	0	0
Unemployed	19	27	+8
Retired Members	1,160	1,169	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8,578</b>	<b>9,611</b>	<b>+1,033</b>

Recruited 1/1/223 – 31/1/23 = 2,353 Officially resigned & lapsed = 1,406

**Proportionality and Fair Representation Audit 2023**

**1. Women in branch**

\*Figures in brackets show 2022 figures.

Branch	Officers	Stewards
71% (70%)	50% (33%)	63% (45%)

**2. Branch Committee Breakdown**

% of Women in membership = 71% (70%)

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

**3. Department numbers at 31/12/23 (% women)**

Associated Bodies (59%)	Lothian Valuation Joint Board (49%)
Corporate Services (67%)	Place (48%)
Education & Children's Services (83%)	Community & Voluntary Sector (68%)
Edinburgh Leisure (34%)	
Health & Social Care (78%)	

**Branch Committee Attendances 2023**

Name	POSS	ACT	Name	POSS	ACT	Name	POSS	ACT
<b>Branch Officers</b>			Pauline Henderson	12	6	<b>Corporate Services</b>		
Amy Cowie	7	3	Rose Jackson	12	4	Hugh Menzies	12	9
Ashley Oldham	7	3	Stacey Monteith-Skelton	3	1	<b>Health &amp; Social Care</b>		
Caroline McLean	12	9	Tefsu Gessesse	3	0	<i>No delegates appointed</i>		
David Harrold	12	8	Tom Connolly	12	11	<b>Lothian Valuation Joint Board</b>		
Don Naismith	9	8	Tom Howorth	9	9	Sean Allen	12	0
Ewan Davies	9	2	Tom Muir	3	3	<b>Place</b>		
Graeme Nisbet	7	4	<b>Associated Bodies</b>			Christina Goddard	7	1
Hannah Bradley	3	0	<i>No delegates appointed</i>			Allan King	11	7
Ian Mullen	12	11	<b>Community &amp; Voluntary</b>			Michael Addy	7	4
Isabella Ingibina	7	3	<i>No delegates appointed</i>			Ginder Cutt	11	1
Jamie McCormack	3	0	<b>Education &amp; Children's Services</b>			Kyle Bellamy	12	11
Kirsten Hey	3	2	Graham Neal	2	2	Tom Howorth	12	8
Kyle Bellamy	12	12	Alistair Stevenson	5	0	<b>Self-Organised Groups</b>		
Lynne Spence	10	3	<b>Edinburgh Leisure</b>			Belinda Norton	11	1
Mairi Byatt	7	1	<i>No delegates appointed</i>					
Mike Smith	12	11						

# Agenda Item 10 Rule and Standing Order Changes - AGM 2024

---

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.

---

## 1. Standing Order H.5.6 (a)

*Proposed by David Harrold & Kyle Bellamy (Place)*

Delete Standing Order H.5.6 (a)

---

## 2. Standing Order H.5.6 (g)

*Proposed by David Harrold & Kyle Bellamy (Place)*

Delete Standing Order H.5.6 (g)

---

## 3. Rule E.2 - Role of Branch President

*Proposed by David Harrold & Kyle Bellamy (Place)*

The reason and more detail as to the above can be given at our AGM. Until then, I will keep explanation mercifully short and advise that by deleting this particular Standing Order it prevents further election to the post of Branch President. This would take immediate effect from 2025.

If successful, this would mean that the above Rule Change would be automatically carried. If

it were to fail, then so would the proposed Rule Change.

The format to the deletion and rule change has precedent as it had been agreed to in 2015 by the then Branch President and Service Conditions Team and was ratified at the AGM of that same year by our members when the Service Conditions Convenor (Manual) was removed from our roll call.

---

## 4. Rule E.10 – Role of Service Conditions Coordinator

*Proposed by David Harrold & Kyle Bellamy (Place)*

The reason and more detail as to the above can be given at our AGM. Until then, I will keep explanation mercifully short and advise that by deleting this particular Standing Order it prevents further election to the post of Service Conditions Coordinator. This would take immediate effect from 2025.

If successful, this would mean that the above Rule Change would be automatically carried. If it were to fail, then so would the proposed Rule Change.

The format to the deletion and rule change has precedent as it had been agreed to in 2015 by the then Branch President and Service Conditions Team and was ratified at the AGM of that same year by our members when the Service Conditions Convenor (Manual) was removed from our roll call. All responsibilities that were within the remit of said post would move over to that of the Service Conditions Convenor.

*continued on page 15*

# Agenda Item 10 Rule and Standing Order Changes - AGM 2024 continued ....

---

## 5. Hybrid Meetings

*Proposed by David Harrold & Kyle Bellamy (Place)*

Hybrid meetings will make AGMs more accessible to our membership, helping to facilitate participation, and therefore the branch will be more inclusive of said membership. To amend Section B. Structures Section B (1) (a), insert the following text

between penultimate sentence and final sentence:

“AGMs can be either physical, virtual or hybrid. In terms of aggregate meetings, a mixture of physical, virtual or hybrid meetings may be held.”

---

## 6. Accreditation of Branch Officers

*Proposed by Ian Mullen & Kyle Bellamy (Place)*

To amend Section E. Role of Branch Officers. Insert Section E (1) (c) reading as follows: “All Branch Officers must secure accreditation by completing the Shop Steward Stage 1 & 2 training course and any other mandatory training for Stewards including GDPR, Equalities

and Challenging Racism.

All Branch Officers must maintain said accreditation when required via ERA refresher training.”

---

# Agenda Item 11 Policy Motions - AGM 2024

---

## Council Budget, Cuts, Redundancies (local)

### 1. Care Workers Deserve Better

*Proposed by David Harrold (Place) & Isabella Ebiye Ingibina (Health & Social Care)*

This AGM notes that the past few years have not been good for Health & Social Care Services in Scotland. Westminster and Holyrood have consistently failed to properly fund these essential services and Edinburgh has felt the full brunt of this. Our care workers, at all grades, are managing excessive workloads with limited resources, are prone to workplace injury and stress and for what they do remain one of the most poorly paid groups within City of Edinburgh Council. These failures to safeguard these services and those who provide them has caused significant problems in regard to recruitment and retention and are compounded by some of the biggest changes to working practices as a result of the integration agenda.

This AGM notes the ongoing restructure of the Edinburgh Health & Social Partnership

(EHSCP) and calls upon UNISON and the newly elected branch officers to meet with the employer and address these problems by:

1. Seeking to secure a re-evaluation of every EHSCP job description to ensure they truly reflect the responsibilities and financial worth of each post.
2. Seeking to make permanent all employees who have been acting up and/or on fixed term contracts for a period of 4 years or more.
3. Seeking to put in place a meaningful action plan for successful recruitment.
4. Seeking to bolster existing support frameworks to ensure proper care for our care workers.

*continued on page 16*



## Service Conditions Issues

### 2. Unacceptable and threatening behaviours towards Housing and Homelessness staff

*Proposed by Kyle Bellamy & Keith Harper (Place)*

Over the last year, there has been a significant increase in incidents of unacceptable or threatening behaviour directed towards staff within the Housing & Homelessness Service. Colleagues in this area regularly engage with clients in their homes and locality offices and as such can often find themselves in positions of risk.

This AGM acknowledges the work already done by UNISON to address these issues and now seeks for representatives to build on these foundations. Therefore, this AGM calls on the UNISON City of Edinburgh Branch to:

● Raise at every opportunity with the employer the need to record appropriately and meaningfully address all incidents of unacceptable and threatening behaviours.

● Raise with the employer the importance of ensuring they and their staff have a strong understanding of the *Protecting Colleagues from Unacceptable Behaviour Policy* and the

correct recording procedures.

- Ensure that this "strong understanding" of the appropriate policy, procedure, and mechanism equally applies to all UNISON representatives.
- Educate our members about the range of unacceptable or threatening behaviours, which can range from unwanted filming to graffiti.
- Work towards a branch recording system of unacceptable or threatening behaviours to ensure we have the data to back up engagement with the employer.
- Continue to treat as a priority any reports of unacceptable or threatening behaviour from our members.
- Continue to press the employer on measures that can be taken to minimise the risk of unacceptable behaviour.

---

### 3. Getting it right for Education Members

*Proposed by Amy Ferguson & Kirsti McDonald (Education & Children's Services)*

This motion is presented on behalf of our education support colleagues to draw attention to a significant concern within our union's negotiating structures.

While we appreciate UNISON Scotland's local government committee's focus on school support staff during strikes, a considerable portion of our workforce in Edinburgh felt disheartened and let down after the resolution of the 2023/24 pay dispute.

#### **Revisiting Negotiating Structures and Timelines for Pay Disputes:**

Waiting for months for a pay uplift is not acceptable. Our predominantly part-time and sessional workforce needs proper consultation well in

advance of the 2024 pay round.

#### **Addressing Deflation Among Members:**

The optimism after successful strikes has turned to disappointment among education members who have seen the smallest pay increase despite taking on the risk of industrial action.

This realisation has affected the morale of our dedicated workforce and raised concerns about the fairness of the negotiation outcomes.

#### **Issues Beyond Pay:**

Our roles have evolved significantly over the years, requiring us to handle more complex childcare needs and facing higher levels of workplace violence.

*continued on page 17*

## Agenda Item 11 Policy Motions - AGM 2024 continued ....

---

We acknowledge UNISON City of Edinburgh's commitment to addressing workplace violence through a dedicated campaign, reflecting our dedication to overall well-being.

Therefore, we urgently call upon:

- UNISON City of Edinburgh branch to strongly represent our case to UNISON's Local Government Committee, Education Issues Group, and Scottish Council, emphasising the need for early consultation with term-time workers when formulating pay negotiating strategies. This ensures informed decisions and proportional benefits from negotiated pay increases.
- UNISON City of Edinburgh branch to advocate for better and transparent communication from UNISON Scotland's Local Government Committee about the potential impact of negotiation outcomes on different contract types, empowering members and fostering solidarity within the union.
- UNISON City of Edinburgh branch to push for a critical analysis of this years settled pay dispute, with lessons learned shared with members, by making representations to UNISON's Local Government Committee, Education Issues Group, and Scottish Council.

- UNISON City of Edinburgh branch to insist that any future pay strategy targeting education workers is considered only after full Scotland-wide member consultation and proper strategic analysis, by making strong representations to UNISON's Local Government Committee, Education Issues Group, and Scottish Council.
- UNISON City of Edinburgh branch to advocate for the development of a national campaign and resources focused on improving job evaluation outcomes for education workers, by making strong representations to UNISON's Local Government Committee, Education Issues Group, and Scottish Council. These campaign resources will better help local negotiations and give our members a better chance of procuring the reward and recognition we deserve.

**Conclusion:**

This motion aims to ensure that the passion and dedication shown during strikes translate into fair outcomes for all members, creating a stronger and more united union.





## 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

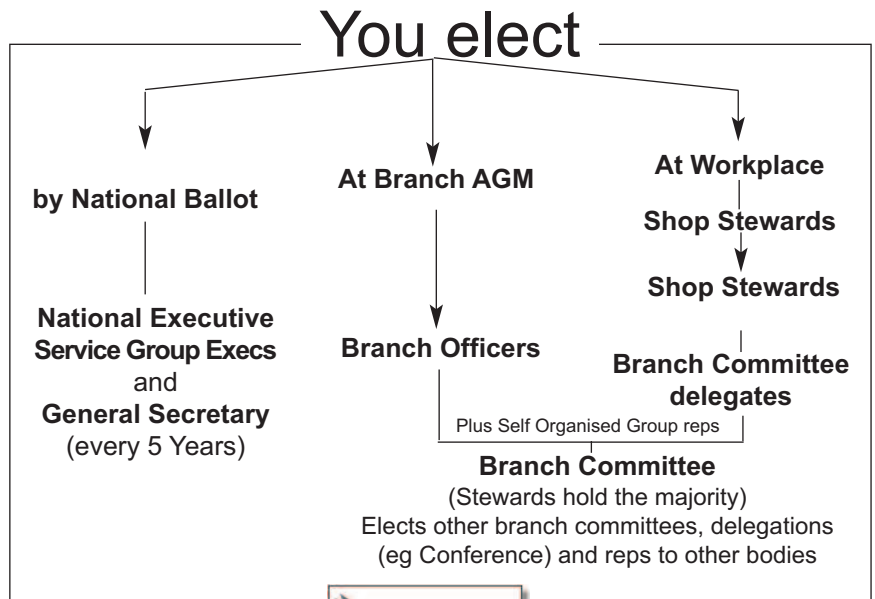
For structurally disadvantaged groups, eg Women's Group, Young Members, Black Members, Disabled Members, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Members.

# Making your VOTE COUNT

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

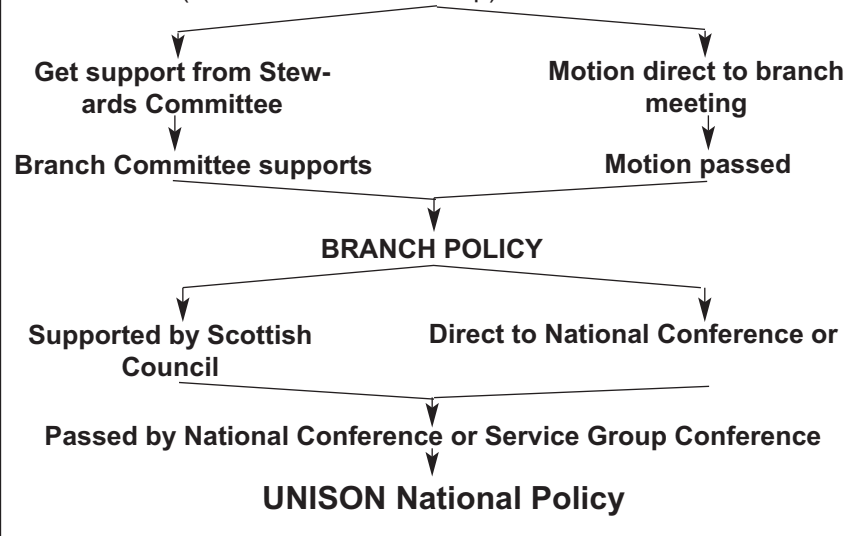
**UNISON is a lay member led union with democratic structures at all levels. But these structures are no good unless members themselves exercise their right to use them.**

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



## 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.





**Check out UNISON Scotland's plans and how you can get involved at [unison-scotland.org/2023/12/04/2024-the-year-of-lgbt-workers/](https://unison-scotland.org/2023/12/04/2024-the-year-of-lgbt-workers/)**

Published by UNISON City of Edinburgh Local Government and Related Sectors Branch,  
Broadside, 2 Powderhall Road, Edinburgh, EH7 4GB. Tel 0131 558 7488  
[branchoffice@unison-edinburgh.org.uk](mailto:branchoffice@unison-edinburgh.org.uk).



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

 @unisonedin  @unisonedin