

UNISON City of Edinburgh

Local Government & Related Sectors Branch

Annual General Meeting 2025

Aggregate meetings

Tuesday 18th February 2025, 6:30 – 8pm

Thursday 20th February 2025, 6:30 – 8pm

Tuesday 25th February 2025, 12:15 – 1:45pm

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

AGM Agenda 2025 and Annual Report 2024



You can download a copy of this booklet from www.unison-edinburgh.org.uk

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.



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.

AGM Calling Notice

To All Members

Dear colleague,

All members are urged to attend the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the branch which will be held across **three** aggregate meetings to offer members times that may be more convenient in terms of working patterns.

Members can choose to join in-person or online via Microsoft Teams. A link for members joining online will be sent along with instructions on how to access the meeting. 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 18th February 2025, 6:30 - 8pm

Thursday 20th February 2025, 6:30 - 8pm

Tuesday 25th February 2025, 12:30 - 1:45pm

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 by **Noon, Wednesday 12th February 2025. Questions on the Annual Report and Financial Statement*** must be received by **noon on Monday 17th February** 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

David Harrold

Branch Secretary

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



AGM 2025

Contents

Calling Notice	3
Agenda/ Elections	4
Meetings Guide	6
Annual Report	7
Chairperson Report	7
Officers and staff	7
Branch Secretary & Service Conditions Report	8
Equalities	9
Health and Safety	10
Welfare	10
CVRS	11
Education	11
LGBT+	12
Womens	12
Black Members	13
Membership	14
Fair Rep. Audit	14
Attendances	14
Minutes	15
Rule Changes	18
Policy Motions	18
Making Your Vote Count Guide to UNISON structures	19

Agenda

1. Opening Remarks/
Introductions
 2. Appointment of Scrutineers
 3. Standing Orders
 4. Minutes of Branch Meetings
2024
See pages 15-17
 5. Annual Report 2024 (p 7-13)
Questions on the Annual Report must be submitted to the branch office by noon on Monday 17th February.
 6. Financial Statement 2024
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
No Rule changes received.
 11. Policy Motions *See page 18*
 12. Any other business
Tribute to Agnes Petkevicius (p 22)
-

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 Chairperson

Ian Ludlam (Corporate Service)

Nominated by: Corporate Services Shop Stewards Committee, Education & Children's Services Shop Stewards Committee, Health & Social Care Shop Stewards Committee, Health & Safety Sub Committee, Place Shop Stewards Committee

Vice Chairperson (2)

No nomination received

Branch Secretary

David Harrold (Place)

Nominated by: Corporate Services Shop Stewards Committee, Education & Children's Services Shop Stewards Committee, Health & Safety Sub Committee, Health & Social Care Shop Stewards Committee, Place Shop Stewards Committee, Karen O'Brien & Claire Brown (Place), Nicky Scally

& Martyn Arnold (Health & Social Care), Amanda Ford & Debbie Marshall (Corporate Services), Lynne Greenan (Corporate Services) & Jane Brown (Health & Social Care), Gillian McFarlane & Karen Collins (Health & Social Care)

Assistant Secretary

No nomination received

Service Conditions Convener

Kyle Bellamy (Place)

Nominated by: Corporate Services Shop Stewards Committee, Education & Children's Services Shop Stewards Committee, Health & Safety Sub Committee, Health & Social Care Shop Stewards Committee, Place Shop Stewards Committee

Treasurer

No nomination received

continued from page 4

Agenda Item 8 Election of Branch Officers)

Service Conditions Officers (5)

General Posts (2)

Allan King (Place)

Nominated by: Education & Children's Services Shop Stewards Committee, Health & Safety Sub Committee, Health & Social Care Shop Stewards Committee, Place Shop Stewards Committee

Ian Mullen (Place)

Nominated by: Corporate Services Shop Stewards Committee, Education & Children's Services Shop Stewards Committee, Health & Safety Sub Committee, Health & Social Care Shop Stewards Committee, Place Shop Stewards Committee

Women's Posts (3)

Katrina Baird (Education & Children's Services)

Nominated by: Corporate Services Shop Stewards Committee, Education & Children's Services Shop Stewards Committee, Health & Safety Sub Committee, Health & Social Care Shop Stewards Committee, Place Shop Stewards Committee

Pauline Henderson (Place)

Nominated by: Corporate Services Shop Stewards Committee, Yvonne McGregor & Lorraine Anderson (Education & Children's Services), Aynsley McFarlane & Diane Yule (Place)

Equalities Officer

Mark Laidlaw (Education & Children's Services)

Nominated by: Education & Children's Services Shop Stewards Committee, Health & Safety Sub Committee, Health & Social Care Shop Stewards Committee, Place Shop Stewards Committee

Black Members Officer

Isabella Ingibina (Health & Social Care)

Nominated by: Education & Children's Services Shop Stewards Committee, Health & Safety Sub Committee, Health & Social Care Shop Stewards, Place Shop Stewards Committee

Disabled Members Officer

No nomination received

LGBT+ Officer

Ian Ludlam (Corporate Services)

Nominated by: Corporate Services Shop Stewards Committee, Education & Children's Services Shop Stewards Committee, Health & Safety Sub Committee, Health & Social Care Shop Stewards Committee, Place Shop Stewards Committee, Alannah Ainslie (Place) & Christine Essex (Education & Children's Services), Barbara Byahurwa (Voluntary Sector) & Tom Martin (Place)

Communications Officer

No nomination received

Education Officer

Ian Mullen (Place)

Nominated by: Corporate Services Shop Stewards Committee, Education & Children's Services Shop Stewards Committee, Health & Safety Sub Committee, Health & Social Care Shop Stewards Committee, Place Shop Stewards Committee

Environment Officer

No nomination received

Health & Safety Officer

Ian Mullen (Place)

Nominated by: Corporate Services Shop Stewards Committee, Education & Children's Services Shop Stewards Committee, Health & Safety Sub Committee, Health & Social Care Shop Stewards Committee, Place Shop Stewards Committee

International Officer

No nomination received

Lifelong Learning Officer

Graeme Nisbet (Corporate Services)

Nominated by: Corporate Services Shop Stewards Committee

Membership/Recruitment Officer

No nominations

Welfare Officer

Mike Smith (Corporate Services)

Nominated by: Education & Children's Services Shop Stewards Committee Health & Safety Sub Committee, Health & Social Care Shop Stewards Committee, Place Shop Stewards Committee

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

Nominated by: Corporate Services Shop Stewards Committee

Women's Officer

Lynn McLaughlan (Place)

Nominated by: Education & Children's Services Shop Stewards Committee, Health & Safety Sub Committee, Health & Social Care Shop Stewards Committee, Place Shop Stewards

Young Members Officer

Tom Martin (Place)

Nominated by: Education & Children's Services Shop Stewards Committee, Health & Safety Sub Committee, Health & Social Care Shop Stewards

A Brief Guide to Branch Meetings

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

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 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 2024

We encourage your participation in filling vacant posts or joining our self-organised groups

This time last year I was a newly elected shop steward, by June, I was the LGBT+ officer and late last year, due to the sudden departure of the sitting chairperson, I was elected to this post by Branch Committee colleagues. So, at the time of writing, I don't have very much else to report.

As our employers' face implementing huge budget cuts and new ways of working, participation is key to the running of a democratic organisation such as UNISON City of Edinburgh branch to ensure we can support our underfunded public services and those who provide them.

A few full-time branch officials, seconded from their substantive posts are supported by a few part-time volunteers who are allowed time off to carry out their duties. However, we need you to

‘The difference between doing something and doing nothing is everything’

consider helping to fill those roles that remain vacant. Please take some time to look over Agenda Item 8 devoted to branch officers and note where no nomination has been received. If you would like to take on a new challenge and feel you may be suited to the role, please reach out to anyone officiating at AGM for further information.

“The difference between doing something and doing nothing is everything”

There are several members groups, who are always looking for members to take part in group

activities and conferences.

The Women's Members Group is open to all female full and retired members

The Black Members Group is open to all black and Asian full and retired members

The LGBT+ Members Group is open to all Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transexual, Queer, Asexual, Aromantic full and retired members

Contact details are available from the branch website and social media pages.



Ian Ludlam
Branch Chairperson

Ian Ludlam

Branch Officers 2024

Chair: **Graham Neal** (Feb-Nov)

Ian Ludlam (elected Nov)

Secretary: **David Harrold**

Asst. Secretary: **Pauline Henderson**

Service Conditions Convener: **David Harrold**

Service Condition Officers: **Pauline Henderson, Kyle Bellamy, Ian Mullen, Katrina Baird**

Black Members Officer: **Isabella Ingibina**

Education Officer: **Ian Mullen**

Equalities Officer: **Mark Laidlaw**

Health & Safety Officer: **Ian Mullen**

LGBT+ Officer: **Ian Ludlam**

Lifelong Learning Officer: **Graeme Nisbet**

Treasurer: **Stephen Harrold** (April- Dec)

Young Members Officer: **Tom Martin** (elected Dec)

Welfare Officer(s): **Mike Smith/Pauline Henderson**

Women's Officer: **Lynn McLaughlan** (elected Oct)

Vacant posts: *Vice Chairs (2), Disabled Members Officer, Communications Officer, International Officer, Recruitment/Membership Officer*

Branch employed staff



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

UNISON needs you and you need UNISON

To great fanfare Prime Minister Keir Starmer and First Minister John Swinney met last year to promote their joint Council of the Nations initiative. The purpose of this meeting was to establish a new relationship between Scotland and the rest of the UK with a focus on economic growth and rebuilding the public sector. After years of being underpaid and understaffed, many thought this a major step forward until it was discovered that no democratically elected councillor or trade union representative from Scotland was present or had even received an invite.

Equally noticeable was both gentlemen were more than happy to break bread with Holyrood's many flunkies in attendance, and equally happy to bump snouts at the trough with representatives from the world of big business. I mention this only to show that despite their many worthy statements and soundbites, they still announced soon afterwards the proposal to make public sector cuts to the tune of £500m. Their barefaced hypocrisy is only outdone by their audacity to blame those same cuts on you, the public sector worker.

It is clear that neither Holyrood nor Westminster are friends to you, the working men and women of City of Edinburgh Council and our associated bodies. Asking for a decent pay rise does not make the Care Worker responsible for the lack of beds available for our elderly. Asking for a decent pay rise does not make School Support Staff responsible for the increase of violence in our educational establishments. Asking for a decent pay rise does not make Housing Officers responsible the lack of affordable accommodation in Edinburgh.

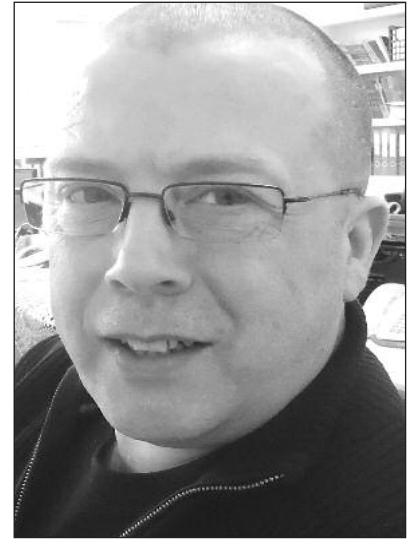
‘Our strength comes not just from your service conditions team but from each and every one of you, our members, the employers greatest asset.’

Their failure to adequately fund essential services does.

So, who speaks for you when the politicians have let you down and not for the first time? The only answer that can be given is UNISON, your trade union. We continue to be the biggest and most effective trade union in Edinburgh. Our strength comes not just from your service conditions team but from each and every one of you, our members, the employers greatest asset. Even though 2024 has not been a comfortable year for us, together we have fought on many fronts. Whether it be in local government or the voluntary and third sectors, we have held fast, met the challenges and kept the faith.

You will recall that it was the intention of City of Edinburgh Council to delete the Education Welfare Officer service. This vital service provides additional support to the school service and children's families, helping to address the issue of repeated absenteeism. The decision to close down this service was overturned as a result of UNISON putting pressure on the employer and the affected staff standing firm with their trade union.

UNISON has also been busy elsewhere in the Education & Children's Services Department. With your support we have stopped the very worst excesses



David Harrold
Branch Secretary and
Service Conditions Co-ordinator

Officers



Katrina Baird



Pauline Henderson



Kyle Bellamy



Ian Mullen

of the employer from taking hold and prevented outside influences from adversely affecting your employment. Workplace meetings have been being held throughout our schools and other educational establishments, with our membership in this department steadily growing, and we have close to 20 new stewards strengthening the link between the shopfloor and the service conditions team.

continued on page 9

Within the Edinburgh Health & Social Care Partnership there was uncertainty amongst colleagues within our care home service as to whether their employment would continue due to visa sponsorship issues. Those colleagues, many of whom are from overseas, were fearful that they and their families may be deported. UNISON intervened and those colleagues continue to be employed by City of Edinburgh Council.

While representing our members in the Housing & Homelessness Service Organisational Review, crucial documentation was being withheld at the start of the consultation period. UNISON swiftly intervened and the employer provided the required paperwork as well as agreeing to extend the consultation period. Over in the Cultural Partnerships & Strategy Organisational Review, our members who were on time-sensitive fixed term contracts were given the opportunity to apply for internal roles before their contracts expired as a direct result of UNISON intervention.

Reports that City of Edinburgh Council intended to close the People's Story Museum were met with horror. UNISON immediately

sprang into action and made contact with the Council's Convenor of Culture & Communities voicing our members concerns. And after much discussion, the option to close the museum was rejected outright by councillors.

‘There is a very real need for us all to pull together, if we are to stop the austerity agenda from destroying our services’

UNISON continue to give significant input into new policies and procedures. Obvious examples are the new sexual harassment policy which will secure much-needed protection for all employees who fall victim to inappropriate behaviour. This would not have been possible if not for UNISON and, in particular, our female colleagues stepping up and giving their important and practical feedback to the employer helping to make our workplaces that much safer. UNISON, in partnership with City of Edinburgh Council, helped create a Suicide

Awareness & Prevention Programme which is training staff to be aware of colleagues in distress and those who may need support.

Important though they are, these achievements do not negate that we are entering into a difficult period for us all, nor does it suggest that we should rest on our laurels. Rather it emphasises that with the present lack of political leadership and support from Holyrood and Westminster there is a very real need for us all to pull together, if we are to stop the austerity agenda from destroying our services.

2025 will be just as challenging as 2024 but I am confident that with your continued support we will make a difference. Come to the AGM's, stand up and be counted, make your voice heard, make the decisions that will point UNISON in the direction that you want it to go. If your workplace has no stewards, then stand or elect one in place. UNISON needs you and you need UNISON. We are united by more than what separates us.

David Harrold

Equalities Officer Report 2024

Fighting for fairness

The equalities team have had a busy year with the appointments of both an LGBT+ officer and a women's officer and the successful relaunch of the self-organised groups (SOG) for both.

The Black Members SOG will relaunch in 2025, date will be announced soon.

During 2024 we attended and supported various events in both

Edinburgh and Glasgow including Pride and anti-racist demos.

We have been using our social media channels to let members know about special religious holidays and other equality related events as well as keeping the branch up to date with any updates and law changes that could affect our members and keep us as inclusive as possible.

The equalities team's work will

continue in the New Year with various meetings and events and we will continue to encourage members to attend and get more involved.



Mark Laidlaw
Equalities Officer

Violence and Aggression - it's not part of the job!

As branch health and safety officer, I want to start by thanking the health and safety team for their continued good work within our workplaces, and for their support in what has been a very challenging 12 months.

In last year's AGM report we highlighted our growing concerns at the unacceptable levels of violence and aggression against front-line staff, especially in the education sector. Regrettably, the employer has failed in their Duty of Care to reduce the number of physical and verbal threats against our members, including incidents of a sexual or racial nature.

The under reporting of accidents, incidents, and near misses remains a serious issue as does the lack of support, debriefing, and feedback for those injured while carrying out their daily working duties. Our call for a review of security in all public buildings has also been ignored.

Where serious or re-occurring

incidents take place, including those of a sexual or racial nature, UNISON is now encouraging our members to report these to Police Scotland and obtain an incident number.

Please go to our website to see a copy of our National 2024 Workplace Violence at Work report.

In 2023, the branch started discussions with HR colleagues about bespoke Suicide Prevention and Awareness training for managers and trade union representatives, this resulted in the procurement of SamH, Scottish Action for Mental Health.

Throughout 2024, we held ten well attended workshops, which has now been extended into 2025. Our branch's main objective from these workshops has been a policy or guidance document on suicide prevention, support for those with mental health issues including self-harm, and for those in supportive roles.

Our health and safety team are committed to a programme of workplace inspections with the full co-operation of management and/or the employers responsible person.

Finally, I want to thank the branch for their continued support in being re-elected to the National Health and Safety Committee and for allowing me to complete UNISONS Lay Tutor training course.

I also want to congratulate Ian Ludlam, LGBT+ officer, the National LGBT+ Committee and all the members that were involved in the successful Year of the LGBT+ Worker's campaign 2024, which the branch actively supported and promoted.



Ian Mullen
Health and Safety
Convener

Welfare Report 2024

Supporting UNISON members when life gets tough

Your elected branch welfare officers have had the usual busy year, not only dealing with our members financial hardship issues and subsequent applications for assistance, but also making the necessary arrangements for assisting our members who may have suffered additional hardship in the event of undertaking any industrial action on behalf of Local Government workers throughout Edinburgh and Scotland. Our Branch had to ensure that we were ready to award grants for exceptional hardship should the need have come, and although the industrial action didn't materialise during

2024, we are better setup for such an eventuality for future years. Both the continuing cost-of-living crisis and any potential industrial action will proportionally affect the lowest paid the worst.

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



Mike Smith and Pauline Henderson
Welfare Officers

Security Scotland benefits advice. We continue to signpost our members to third party advisory channels including the free debt advice service from UNISON's Debt Line and our partners PayPlan.

Education and training in 2025 - it's there for you!

As education officer, I would like to thank all our branch representatives who have taken part in the education and training programme throughout 2024.

The new Education and Training calendar 2025, was launched at December's Scottish Council meeting in Glasgow. The new programme has been circulated to all our branch representatives and I would encourage you're continued active participation in trade union education. Our courses are designed to enhance the skills, knowledge, and confidence of new and experienced representatives. A copy of our 2025 Training Programme is on our website: <https://unison-edinburgh.org.uk/>

The 2022/23 National Delegates Conference, prioritised mandatory on-line training in GDPR for all

branch representatives from the first day of being elected to the post. In addition, training in Challenging Racism and Equalities in the Branch, must be completed by all representatives within a 3-year period of being elected to the post. Our branch is committed to fighting all forms of discrimination and encourage the completion of the Challenging Racism and Equalities courses at the earliest opportunity. As part of that commitment several self-organised groups have been set up by Mark Laidlaw, equalities officer.

The branch Education and Training Strategy 2025 has been updated to reflect the above priorities and commitments, with further plans to develop in-house training on new and updated council policies.

Finally, I want to thank the branch for their continued support in being re-elected to the national Learning and Organising Committee and for allowing me to complete UNISON's Lay Tutor training course.

I also want to congratulate Ian Ludlam, LGBT+ Officer, the national LGBT+ committee and all the members that were involved in the successful Year of the LGBT+ Worker's campaign 2024, which the branch actively supported and promoted.

Yours in comradeship and solidarity.



Ian Mullen
Education Officer

Community, Voluntary and Related Sectors Report 2024

Membership soars across the private and third sector

This has been another extremely busy year across our third sector. Membership has soared to 2,100+ members employed in the community and voluntary sector. This spreads across various ALEOs, charitable, voluntary, and private employers.

This notable increase can be attributed in the main to the sizeable proportion of our membership in care who have taken on roles under the Governments Skilled Worker Visa Scheme. Whilst all our members across this sector continue to face challenging working conditions, including; staff shortages, excessive workloads, long working hours, a lack of support,

insufficient rest times, short notice rota changes among other things, these workers also face the additional threats from employers to either do as they are told or lose their right to remain in the UK.

Many of these employers are highly reluctant to engage with trade union officials, and this has led to these members and their families suffering from extreme stress, anxiety, and confusion. As a union we must campaign and organise to try to improve terms and conditions for these members. We need to raise awareness and place pressure on both the Council and the Government to address the exploitation of this

group of members. It really cannot be allowed to continue. Throughout the last year, I have been fortunate to have the support of workplace reps in COSLA, Canongate Youth, Edinburgh Leisure, ELCAP, Garvald and SACRO and I would like to take this opportunity to thank them for their continuous support of members in their respective areas.



Amanda Kerr
CVRS organiser/
caseworker

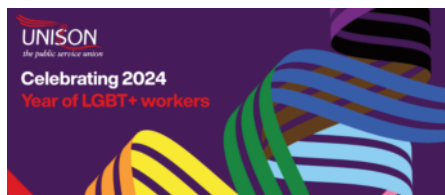
Celebrating 2024 Year of the LGBT+ Worker

Last February saw the beginning of UNISON's Year of the LGBT+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual plus) worker.

This branch was until June without an LGBT+ officer but nevertheless promoted the year at all available opportunities.

Especially visible was the UNISON 2024 LGBT+ commemorative flag at stalls and events.

Soon after my election to the officer role, Edinburgh Pride was upon the horizon. Marching on the day with myself and members of the Scottish LGBT+ Committee were a half dozen, branch officials flying the flag while wearing rainbow makeup and our own commemorative tee-shirts. A



couple of us managed to recruit from the stall while the rest moved onto a local hostelry to continue the Pride celebrations.

August saw the relaunch of the LGBT+ Members Group with a buffet for supper. The group had become moribund without an LGBT+ officer, but those few who turned out on the evening became the cornerstone of a group that now numbers 25 members.

October saw my election to the Scottish LGBT+ Committee at their AGM.

The year's highlight was UNISON's National LGBT+ Conference at the Edinburgh Conference Centre. The City of Edinburgh Branch had one of the biggest delegations of 8 (seven plus one visitor). A full report is available on the branch website.



Ian Ludlam
LGBT+ Officer

Throughout the year various dates were celebrated and/or promoted. Significantly £150 was raised for the National AIDS Trust in December.

Women's Officer Report 2024

Calling all women members!

My name is Lynn McLaughlan, I have been a UNISON representative for a number of years and in October I was appointed branch women's officer.

I have worked for the City of Edinburgh Council for 19 years and have always been part of a trade union.

I am employed as a Housing Officer in the Preservation/Damp Team. I previously worked within the Temporary Accommodation team for 18 years carrying out various roles.

As women's officer I hope to encourage our strong women members to get involved in the branch self-organised groups and help to play an important role in



keeping women's issues and successes at the forefront of our strong union.

In December we set up our first women's self-organised group session which was a great success. A further meeting is planned for late January where I hope to discuss specific workplace concerns, share experiences and provide support on matters

women members find important in their working lives.

Our last meeting touched briefly on the menopause and shift working, and I plan to look at this in more detail at our next meeting.

I would encourage all women members to get involved in UNISON activities and issues and to connect with other women members



Lynn McLaughlan
Women's Officer

Building momentum - advancing equality empowerment for Black Members in 2024

As Black members' officer for the City of Edinburgh branch, I am proud to present this report highlighting our progress, challenges, and plans for the future.

This year has been marked by a continued commitment to promoting equality, empowering Black members, and fostering a sense of solidarity and inclusion within our branch.

Progress

Support and Representation:

- Actively support Black members facing workplace challenges, ensuring their concerns were raised and addressed effectively partnered with other officers and stewards to provide tailored advice and guidance.

Challenges

While few progress has been made, challenges remain:

- Low awareness of union resources among Black members, which we are working to address through targeted communication.
- Barriers to participation, such

as work commitments and time constraints, limiting member involvement in events and meetings.

Plans for 2025

Expand Membership

Engagement:

- Increase outreach efforts to engage more Black members and raise awareness of the benefits of joining the self-organised group.
- Host informal networking sessions to build a stronger sense of community.

Strengthen Advocacy Efforts:

- Advocate for greater representation of Black members in leadership roles within UNISON.

- Collaborate with other branches and regional groups to share best practices and drive collective action.

Enhance Communication:

- Use social media to amplify the voices of Black members and celebrate achievements.

Focus on Intersectionality:

- Address the intersectional

challenges faced by Black members who also belong to other under represented groups, such as women, LGBTQ+ individuals, and disabled members.



Isabella Ingibina
Black Member Officer

As Black Members' officer, I remain committed to ensuring our union is a welcoming and empowering space for Black members.

I would like to thank the branch for their ongoing support and collaboration, and I look forward to building on this year's successes in 2025.

Together, we can continue to create a fairer, more inclusive workplace and society.

Update your UNISON details

0800 0 857 857

To take part in our consultations, surveys and ballots, we need accurate information: your work, email & mobile.

To update your membership details via telephone, please call the branch office on 0131 558 7488 or call UNISON Direct 0800 0857 857. Alternatively, you can update them yourself online <https://www.unison.org.uk/my-unison>

Membership continues to increase

The branch recruited 1,478 new members in 2024, the largest increase is in the third sector.

Still, the biggest reason people aren't yet members is that they've never been asked!

The best people to recruit new members are the UNISON members working alongside you.

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 2024

Department	31/12/2024	31/12/2023	Var
Associated Bodies	50	59	+9
Corporate Services	33	34	+1
Educ & Children's Services	3,232	3,455	-223
Edinburgh Leisure	127	125	+2
Health & Social Care	1,036	1,079	-43
Lothian Valuation Joint Brd	48	51	-3
Place	1,465	1,393	+72
Comm & Voluntary Sector	2,061	1,667	+394
Unallocated	8	12	-4
TOTAL	8,492	8,324	+186
Student	0	0	0
Unemployed	23	19	+4
Retired Members	1,158	1,160	-2
TOTAL	9,673	9,503	+170

Recruited 1/1/24 – 31/12/24 = 1,478 Officially resigned 80

Branch Committee Attendances 2024

Name	Possible	Actual	Name	Possible	Actual	Name	Possible	Actual
Branch Officers			Graham Nisbet	12	9	Health & Social Care		
Tom Connolly	2	2	Kyle Bellamy	12	12	No delegates		
Caroline McLean	2	2	Mike Smith	12	10	Lothian Valuation Joint Board		
Mari Byatt	4	2	Rose Jackson	12	2	Gary Miller	12	0
Stephen Harrold	9	7	Associated Bodies			Place		
Mark Laidlaw	10	10	No delegates			Allan King	12	8
Lynn McLaughlan	10	6	Corp. Services			Tom Howorth	12	9
Ian Ludlam	10	10	Hugh Menzies	12	5	Michael Addy	12	8
Katrina Baird	10	5	Education & Children's			Pamela Gifford	10	1
David Harrold	12	8	No delegates			Ginger Cutt	6	1
Pauline Henderson	12	7	Edinburgh Leisure			Community & Voluntary		
Isabella Ingibina	12	7	No delegates			No delegates		
Graham Neal	12	7	Self Organised Groups			Bella Norton		
Ian Mullen	12	11				12		2

Proportionality and Fair Representation Audit 2024

1. Women in branch

*Figures in brackets show 2023 figure.

Branch	Officers	Stewards
69% (71%)	57% (63%)	81% (63%)

2. Branch Committee Breakdown

% of Women in membership = 69% (71%)
 % of Women among delegates to Branch Committee = 43% (38%)

3. Department Numbers at 31/12/24 (% women)

Associated Bodies (51%) Female 25 Male 25 Othr 0	Lothian Valuation Joint Board (53%) Female 49 Male 26 Other 1
Corporate Services (64%) Female 299 Male 150 Other 6	Place (49%) Female 714 Male 667 Other 22
Education & Childrens (81%) Female 2,627 Male 299 Other 39	Community & Voluntary Sector (64%) Female 1,329 Male 505 Other 45
Edinburgh Leisure (33%) Female 42 Male 72 Other 3	
Health & Social Care (75%) Female 778 Male 209 Other 14	

Minutes of Aggregate Branch Annual General Meetings held on Thursday 15th February, 6:30pm-8pm, Augustine Church, George IV Bridge, Edinburgh 44 members attending (Meeting 1).

Tuesday 20th February, 6:30pm-8pm, City of Edinburgh Methodist Church, 25 Nicolson Square, Edinburgh, 38 members attending (Meeting 2).

Thursday 29th February, 12:15pm-1:45pm, Business Centre, The City Chambers, High Street, Edinburgh 71 members attending (Meeting 3).

Total members attending = 153

1. OPENING

REMARKS/INTRODUCTIONS

All meetings were chaired by Caroline Mclean, branch chairperson.

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.

An Emergency Motion on 'No Cuts in 2024' was included in the previously circulated Supplementary Agenda. The Emergency Motion received the required two thirds support to be submitted to the Agenda.

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

2. APPOINTMENT OF SCRUTINEERS

Four Scrutineers were appointed from the body of the hall to oversee the motion counts.

3. STANDING ORDERS

There were no proposed changes to Standing Orders.

4. MINUTES OF BRANCH MEETING 2023

The minutes of the 2023 AGM and recall were both in quorate. 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.

5. ANNUAL REPORT 2023

No questions were raised on the Annual Report.

6. FINANCIAL STATEMENT 2023

The meetings AGREED the previously circulated financial statement which was included in the Supplementary Agenda and which had been posted on the branch website for the previous four weeks.

7. HONORARIA

No honoraria because auditor posts vacant.

8. ELECTION OF BRANCH OFFICERS

The following posts were elected unopposed:

Assistant Branch Secretary
Pauline Henderson (Education & Children's Services)
Nominated by: Graham Neal (Education & Children's Services) & David Harrold (Place)

Branch Chairperson
Graham Neal (Education & Children's Services)

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

Branch Secretary
David Harrold (Place)

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

Education Officer
Ian Mullen (Place)

Corporate Services Shop Stewards Committee, Place Shop Stewards Committee

Health and Safety Convener
Ian Mullen (Place)

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

Lifelong Learning Convener
Graeme Nisbet (Corporate Services)

Nominated by Corporate Services Shop Stewards Committee
Service Conditions Convener
David Harrold (Place)

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

Service Conditions Officers (5)
General Posts (2)

Ian Mullen (Place)
Nominated by: Corporate Services Shop Stewards Committee; Place Shop Stewards Committee

Kyle Bellamy (Place)
Nominated by Corporate Services Shop Stewards Committee, Place Shop Stewards Committee

Women's Posts (3)
Pauline Henderson (Place)

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

Welfare Officer
Mike Smith (Corporate Services) & Pauline Henderson (Education & Children's Services) Job Share

No nominations were received for the post of Black Members Officer, Branch Treasurer, Communications Officer, Disabled Members Officer, Equalities

Officer, International Officer, LGBT+ Officer, Recruitment/ Membership Officer, Service Conditions Officer Women (2), Vice Chairperson (2), Young Members Officer, Auditors (2). These posts would be remitted to the Branch Committee for action.

9. PRESENTATION AND QUESTIONS AND ANSWER SESSION

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

- Pay Claim
- Stress at Work
- Providing statutory services

10. RULE CHANGES

1. Standing Order H.5.6 (a)

Proposed by David Harrold & Kyle Bellamy (Place)

Delete Standing Order H.5.6 (a)

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

2. Standing Order H.5.6 (g)

Proposed by David Harrold & Kyle Bellamy (Place)

Delete Standing Order H.5.6 (g)

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

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 Convener (Manual) was removed from our roll call.

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

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.

Continued on Page 16



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

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."

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

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.

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

11. POLICY MOTIONS

1. Emergency Motion – No Cuts in 2024

Proposed by David Harrold & Pauline Henderson (Place)

Despite the unique demands of being a capital city and ever greater demands made upon our essential services, particularly within housing, education, and social care, it is distressing to see that

Edinburgh will remain the lowest funded local authority in Scotland. As such, City of Edinburgh Council will make cuts to their budget that will have a damaging effect on those essential services we provide. These cuts would see the door being closed on quality services accountable to the local population and another opening for the private sector. Profit should play no part or be a priority over the needs of the most vulnerable. 2024 will be a challenging year for Council employees and we must do all we can, not just to protect our jobs and terms & conditions but to protect those services we provide. Whether the blame lies with Westminster, Holyrood or any one political party or organisation we must stand together and fight for public services.

Therefore, this AGM instructs UNISON and the newly elected Branch Officers to:

- 1) Reaffirm to the employer our opposition to compulsory redundancies and maintain our commitment to use all available methods to resist their implementation.
- 2) Organise and coordinate a campaign involving our members, the democratically elected councillors, local community groups and the public. The purpose being to educate people as to the detrimental effects of opposition to them.
- 3) Support our members who object or make complaint regarding excessive workloads caused by the taking on of additional duties due to redundancy or unfilled vacancies

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

2. Care Workers Deserve Better

Proposed by David Harrold (Place) & Isabella 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.

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

3. 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 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.

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

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

4. Getting it right for Education Members 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 Time lines for Pay Disputes:

Waiting for months for a pay uplift is not acceptable. Our 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.

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 year's 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.

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

12. ANY FURTHER 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 LIFEBLOOD 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

Or elect a steward now at

unison-edinburgh.org.uk/elect-a-steward

Agenda Item 10 Rule and Standing Order Changes - AGM 2025

The full Branch Rules are available at 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.

None submitted

Agenda Item 11 Policy Motions - AGM 2025

Council Budget, Cuts, Redundancies (local)

1. Fair funding not underfunding

Proposed by David Harrold and Kyle Bellamy (Place)

City of Edinburgh Council suffers as a result of the constant underfunding from the Holyrood and Westminster Governments. The last 10 years have seen a slow but steady reduction in the workforce which in turn is the cause for a drop in the quality of our essential services. If we continue on this pathway, the door will be closed on publicly owned services, which will not only affect us but those we serve, the most vulnerable people of our city. The private sector profiteers are already circling, and we need to fight back.

Therefore, this AGM commits our union to take decisive action and instructs our Branch Officers to:

1. Call upon all the political parties that hold seats within City of Edinburgh Council to be proactive in their defence of our essential services and forceful in their demands for our

city to receive fair and appropriate funding from Westminster and Holyrood.

2. Call upon City of Edinburgh Council to secure a return of meaningful staffing levels and to safeguard the delivery and quality of all services to the people of Edinburgh and provide us with a list of posts that have been deleted or left vacant as part of recent budget cuts.

3. Highlight the invaluable role that public sector workers play in our city, ensuring that recognition is given to their dedication to duty despite being hampered by constant restructuring and budget cuts.

4. Reaffirm our absolute opposition to any form of redundancy that would cause harm to our essential services and any use or interpretation of the Managing Change Policy that would cause our members financial or career harm.

Service Conditions Issues (issues like pay and conditions)

2. Care workers still deserve better

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

This AGM notes that there has been no improvement in the funding of health & social care in Scotland, with Westminster and Holyrood continuing to fail in providing adequate funding for these essential services.

The double whammy being that despite putting

more money into the national coffers than any other local authority, Edinburgh remains one of the most poorly funded local authorities in Scotland.

This AGM believes that to continue on this path with cuts on top of cuts will be so devastating

Service Conditions Issues (issues like pay and conditions) continued...

Continued from Page 18

and so long-lasting that in Edinburgh these vital services may never recover. Care of our older people can't be provided on the cheap, it requires investment not corner cutting via organisational reviews with the inevitable loss of experienced and knowledgeable staff.

Failure to invest and nurture will only see a rise in excessive workloads and a limiting of resources, accompanied by an inevitable rise in absenteeism due to anxiety, stress and workplace injury. Our care workers, at all grades, are struggling and when they struggle so do the people who need their support. It's time for everyone to stand up and be counted for one of the most poorly paid groups within City of Edinburgh Council.

This AGM says that failure to ensure meaningful staffing levels, resources and support will not only undermine the quality of our essential

services but be an abandonment of Edinburgh's older and more vulnerable residents.

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

- 1) Call upon councillors and officers of the Edinburgh Health & Social Care Partnership (EHSCP) to reconsider planned and existing budget cuts and look at more creative ways to secure and build upon our care services.
- 2) Urge City of Edinburgh Council to provide proper investment for EHSCP services, calling upon them to forcefully request adequate funding from the UK and Scottish Governments.
- 3) Seek a meaningful re-evaluation of every EHSCP job description to ensure they truly reflect the responsibilities and financial worth of each post.

3. More for less' is causing you stress

Proposed by Place shop stewards committee

This AGM recognises that work-related stress, fatigue and anxiety is a constant issue raised by our members. Stress has been identified as the leading cause of absence at the City of Edinburgh Council in recent years and has been covered by articles in the local press.

This AGM recognises that stress, fatigue and anxiety at work can result from a host of different factors, not least our members being asked over years of austerity to 'do more with less.'

This AGM recognises that, while not all causes of work-related stress, fatigue and anxiety are caused deliberately or maliciously, we educate our Stewards and members that the Unacceptable Behaviours at Work Policy section 3 includes 'giving you unachievable tasks or "setting you up to fail"' as an unacceptable behaviour.

This AGM commits our branch to:

- Educate our members and reps about the Stress Management Policy to in turn ensure that it is followed by the employer.
- Encourage our members to raise any concerns about their workloads and any issues causing them stress with their line manager in the first instance. If the situation is not resolved, our members are encouraged to raise formal grievances with the full support of their branch.
- Raise at the appropriate forums areas that are identified as 'hotspots' of work-related stress and anxiety so that issues are addressed accordingly.

Service Conditions Issues (issues like pay and conditions) continued...

4. End violence in our schools

Proposed by Katrina Baird and Dalwinder Singh (Education & Children's Services)

This AGM recognises that violence and abusive language against school support staff has escalated to a dangerous level. Violence has now become an everyday occurrence happening with frustrating regularity in all schools across the city.

UNISON Scotland's Violence at Work Report shows the total number of incidents reported between April 2021 & March 2024 come in at a staggering 40,306. 77% of these incidents reported are experienced by school support staff such as Pupil Support Assistants, Early Years Practitioners and the janitorial staff.

This AGM also notes with concern that not all incidents are being properly reported, which advises that incidents of violence and abusive behaviour are much higher than the 40,306 incidents being presented.

Therefore, this AGM requests that the trade union advocates for:

- a. City of Edinburgh Council to commit to and sign up to UNISON's End Violence at Work" Charter.
- b. The proper reporting and recording of all incidents of concern as per Council policy and procedure, with supportive measures also being put in place for those members of staff who fall victim to violence in the workplace.
- c. The early intervention of educational psychologists and the Additional Support for Learning Team when reports of violence/abusive behaviour are received.
- d. The reporting of all violent incidents to Police Scotland where the school service cannot adequately resolve matters at source.

5. Debriefing after a violent incident

Proposed by Corporate Services Shop Stewards Committee

This AGM recognises that violence in the workplace is a frequent issue raised by our members dealing directly and indirectly with members of the public.

This AGM recognises that violence in the workplace can result in direct injury, work-related stress, fatigue, anxiety and fear.

Violence in the workplace can take several forms:

- Verbal abuse, threats, aggression, bullying and harassment, including face-to-face, online and via telephone; and physical attacks.

Regarding members who work in front line services, this AGM commits our Branch to:

- Encourage our members and representatives to participate in Personal Safety Training.
- Educate our members and representatives about the Protecting Colleagues from Unacceptable Behaviour Policy to then ensure that the policy is being adhered to by the employer.
- Encourage our members to report violence in the workplace with their line manager in the first instance.
- Encourage our members to check incidents are being properly recorded by line managers by requesting a "myHS" incident report reference number (myHS will replace the SHE reports)

Continued on Page 21

Service Conditions Issues (issues like pay and conditions) continued...

Continued from Page 20

- We as a branch tailor our own bespoke version of the 'Debriefing after a Violent Incident' document created by UNISON Scotland Education Issues Group with the intention of distributing this bespoke version to all activists and members.

Having a Branch-wide standard approach to all violent incidents will help us monitor and record such incidents to hold the employer accountable and to develop improvements in policies and procedures.

Policy and Campaigning

6. Ensuring the legacy of 2024, the Year of the LGBT+ Worker

Proposed by LGBT+ Members self-organised group

In 2024, UNISON celebrated the year of the LGBT+ (Lesbian, Gay, bisexual and Transgender plus) worker. This was an opportunity for UNISON to:

- Showcase the trailblazing work UNISON have done in this area over the past 40 years
- Cement our reputation for making our communities more inclusive
- Recruit more allies in the fight against LGBT+ discrimination in the workplace
- Continue to highlight the discrimination our LGBT+ members face

This last 12 months has included the following successes:

- Recruitment stalls in the workplace and at community events showcasing the work UNISON does in highlighting LGBT+ issues and the support that is available
- The recruitment to the previously vacant post of an LGBT+ Officer
- The formation of a LGBT+ members group
- A UNISON-Edinburgh visible presence at Edinburgh Pride

- Sending our largest LGBT+ delegation yet to the National LGBT+ Conference Edinburgh 2024

- The largest Branch representation at the Scottish LGBT+ committee (3 members)

The LGBT+ Members Group calls on City of Edinburgh Branch to ensure year of the LGBT+ worker is not just a memory but a transformative year with a legacy of LGBT+ rights being at the centre of all Branch plans every year.

To ensure this legacy we call upon the AGM to:

- Continue to highlight the value of ensuring that LGBT+ workers' rights are included in aspects of all committees and meetings
- For the Branch to make Edinburgh Pride a centrepiece of recruitment efforts and ensure we have a recruitment stall
- To continue to provide resources available to facilitate LGBT+ members activities
- To provide the LGBT+ members group with an annual budget for LGBT+ members activities
- Encourage and support activism amongst LGBT+ members.

Tribute to Agnes Petkevicius, former branch secretary, shop steward and nursery nurse

Sadly, on the on Tuesday, October 29, 2024, Agnes Petkevicius our friend and former branch secretary passed away suddenly.

Many of you will have come across Agnes in her decades of service to UNISON and formerly NALGO as a staunch advocate for workers rights and what was fair and just.

Starting of life as a steward in the early years' education service in the council when she felt compelled to stand up for issues in her workplace when no one else would and quickly became involved in the wider branch where her talents, tenacity, knowledge, compassion saw her take on roles such as service conditions officer, service conditions co-ordinator and branch secretary .

In reality Agnes was, for many years, the strong matriarch of the branch and mentored and supported many stewards and branch officers over the years helping them to be the best they could be.

She led and was involved in many successful and prominent campaigns across the years including the 'Nursery Nurse Strike' of 2004, where she was a leading figure in an inspiring, innovative and successful prolonged strike in Edinburgh which encapsulated all that was good about workers organising around an issue that mattered deeply to them.

From sit down protests, to singing outside the First Ministers House to strong willed negotiating,

she really did have it all and laid the marker down on how the branch, with Agnes heavily involved, would approach other prominent campaigns and issues such as 'Single Status' and the threat of mass Privatisation in the brilliant 'Our City's Not For Sale' campaign that successfully saw off the mass sale of council services to private Companies.



Agnes Petkevicius

Notwithstanding all of Agnes leadership qualities in those branch-wide campaigns she dealt with hundreds of individual members issues over the years with empathy, strength and determination that was deeply appreciated by them.

But Agnes was so much more than all of the above and was the most generous of people with her time, energy and empathy for friends and family, a fantastic storyteller with an unrivalled sense of humour who I was privileged to remain friends with.

She was the glue that held her wider family together through the good times and the bad and a devoted wife to Joseph, much loved mum to Cal, a loving sister, aunt and friend to many, who will be sorely missed.

Kevin Duguid

Members' benefits

As well as...

- Individual representation on work related issues
- Collective representation through negotiations on pay and conditions
- Legal services if needed at work – and at home for you and your family
- A system that gives you a vote on elections and on negotiations
- our own welfare charity There For You

...UNISON Living is here to help you get the most from your own time too



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

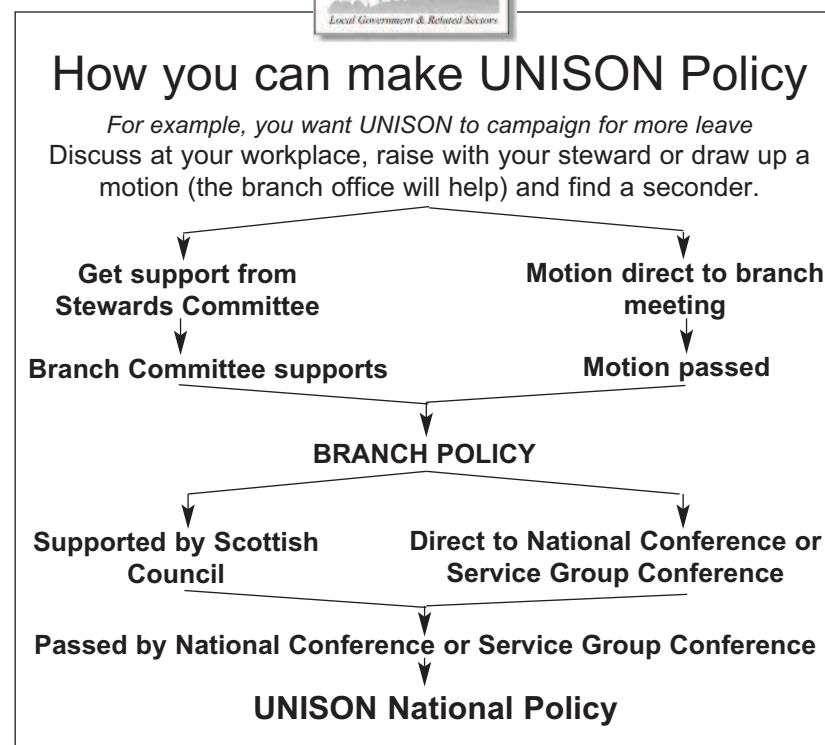
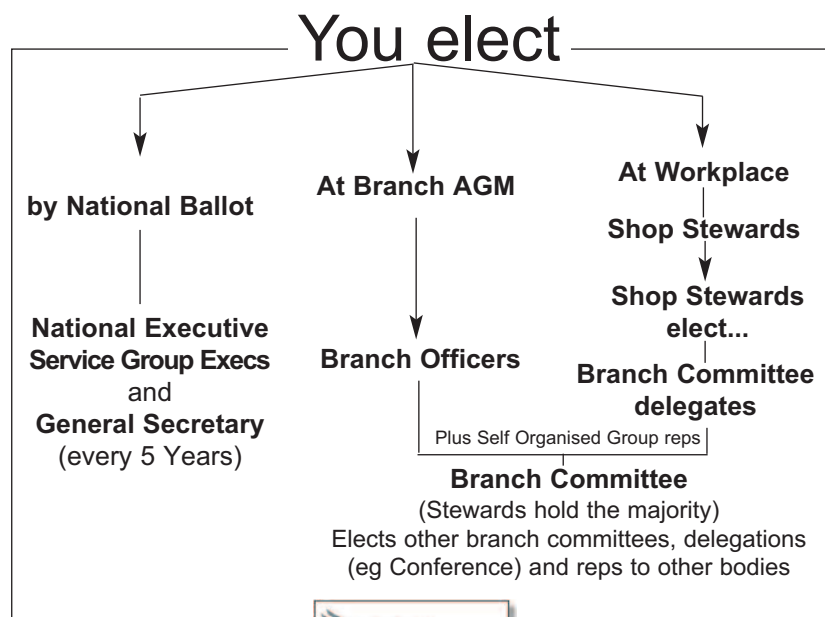
For structurally disadvantaged groups, eg Women's Group, Young Members, Black Members, Disabled Members, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Members.

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.





Three simple ways to join UNISON today



Join online at
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

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.



www.unison-edinburgh.org.uk

 @unisonedin  @unisonedin