



Item 9. Branch Officer Elections

Service Conditions Convener (Manual): Tam McKirdy and Walter Weir have agreed to job-share so no election is required

and Irene Stout have agreed to job-share so no election is required

Service Conditions Officers: Jim Quinn

Biographical details from candidates for contested posts are printed overleaf.

Item 10. Policy Motions

Amendments to motions received by the closing date



1. Council Review Procedures - Potential Libraries' Action

MOVED: Amanda Kerr (Services for Communities) SECONDED: Jill Marple (Services for Communities)

Begin third paragraph as follows:-

"We welcome management's recognition of our members' concerns and that purposeful negotiations are now ongoing to facilitate a mutually acceptable review outcome."

Delete last paragraph and replace with

"We call upon Branch Officers to negotiate a corporate protocol for the assignment and matching to posts affected by review processes".



4. The Next Pay Claim - Members' Involvement

MOVED: Marlyn Tweedie (Health & Social Care) SECONDED: Mary McCrea (Health & Social Care)

Add the following at the end:-

"This AGM supports a flat-rate pay increase. It therefore instructs the delegates to this year's Scottish Local

Government Conference to argue for a flat rate increase as a basis for future pay claims starting from 2010."



14.A Response to the Crisis

MOVED: John Stevenson (Children & Families) SECONDED: John Ross (Services for Communities)

Insert new para after fifth paragraph:-

"This branch rejects the attacks on the public sector by business leaders who are trying to divert the blame from their own excesses and mistakes.

The fact is that investment in public services is needed to boost the economy as well as to meet the increasing demand as people turn to those public services to help them cope with the recession."

Delete Point 3) and replace with:-

"3) Instructs the banks who have received public funding to adopt a socially responsible approach and avoid house

repossessions through mortgage breaks and other strategies."

Add new Point 5)

"5) Embark on real investment across the public services to boost the economy and build and maintain the infrastructure to speed up the recovery process."

Delete Point d) and replace with:-

d) Call on UNISON to work with the TUC and STUC to promote these policies and organise whatever demonstrations or events are required to support them.

BIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS FOR CONTESTED POSTS

NOTE: In accepting nomination for posts, candidates were asked to provide up to 250 words in biographical details. Where they have exceeded 250 words they have been cut at the 250 word mark to ensure fairness to all candidates. Below are the details - in alphabetical order of candidate - received by the closing date.

Education Officer

HUGH MACDONALD:

I have worked in the Council for 17 years all within the Housing Dept now Service for Communities . I was Resident caretaker then a Multi Storey Concierge then I worked as a temporary Block Manager for 20 months and now back as a Multi Storey concierge and have been a member of Unison since 1992

Prior to that I was with British Rail for 15 years and an active member of the N.U.R.

Edinburgh No 1 Branch where I was the branch chairman for two years in the eighties I was a member for 15 years.

I have been a shop steward for about ten years now and would now like an opportunity to assist all our members in the Education and training aspects as I feel it is very important for the future for us all hope you all have a good meeting.

DOT PATERSON:

I have been a UNISON member throughout my 22 years employment with the Council and am currently employed as a Home Care Coordinator in the Health and Social Care Department.

I initially became active in the union as a Health and Safety Rep, a role I took on to assist and support the staff I managed at the time. I enthusiastically undertook the related training opportunities which enabled me to best represent the interests of the members.

As the confidence of the members grew, in terms of their trust and faith in the union's ability to support and fairly represent their interests, my own confidence grew and I decided to become a Shop Steward and become more active within the Branch.

Again I was equally enthusiastic to take up the

available educational opportunities both through UNISON and the STUC. I think this was where my thirst for Lifelong Learning and personal development stems from.

I was fortunate and delighted to be nominated and elected the Branch Lifelong Learning Officer and have taken that responsibility very seriously which I hope was reflected in my annual report.

I would also hope my election to our Scottish Education and Lifelong Learning Committee also demonstrates my commitment to developing educational opportunities for our members and our Shop Stewards.

I hope you will support my nomination to enable me to continue to raise awareness, promote opportunities and to support members and stewards to further develop their potential.

SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA



Lifelong Learning Convener

ISHBEL FOSTER:

I have been employed by Edinburgh City Council since March 1993. I first became a Shop Steward in 2001 due to the changes in working conditions for Social work staff in Homes for Older People. Due to my inexperience at that time I was not very active, keeping my union activities to problems that arose solely in my work place.

In 2003 I stepped up my union activities and underwent training, which I am continuing with today, this has included Union reps stage 1, Employment Law, Learning Rep, Grievance and Disciplinary. I had started Union rep stage 2 but due to ill health did not complete this course, this I hope to rectify soon.

DOT PATERSON:

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I initially became active in the union as a Health and Safety Rep, a role I took on to assist and support the staff I managed at the time. I enthusiastically undertook the related training opportunities which enabled me to best represent the interests of the members.

As the confidence of the members grew, in terms of their trust and faith in the union's ability to support and fairly represent their interests, my own confidence grew and I decided to become a Shop Steward and become more active within the Branch.

Again I was equally enthusiastic to take up the

ERIC WEBSTER:

I would like to relate my experience to date in relation to my nomination for the Branch Officer Life Long Learning post.

I have worked in various Training & Development/ Human Resources posts since 1987, and joined the Council in 1990. I started work within Corporate Services as a Training Officer before latterly moving onto my current substantive post which has the rather lofty title of "Development Partner". My current post entails identifying, designing, delivering and evaluating Council-wide Development activities and identifying development interventions relating to council policy, legislation and external / government initiatives.

For the last two years I have been seconded into the Remuneration Team working on developing the new Job Evaluation Scheme, training employees to use the

I am at present representing 2 members at Disciplinary and representing other members at sickness hearings. I am involved in meetings with Management re the Working Time Directive, Future In-house Strategy, Closures of Homes for Older People and the reprovisioning of Staff within these Homes and the staff at Day Care services that are also undergoing reprovisioning.

I have been nominated by my Shop Stewards Committee to attend the Branch meetings, the DJCC and Service and Conditions meetings.

I enjoy learning to enable me to help members and wish to continue to do this.

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I was fortunate and delighted to be nominated and elected the Branch Lifelong Learning Officer and have taken that responsibility very seriously which I hope was reflected in my annual report.

I would also hope my election to our Scottish Education and Lifelong Learning Committee also demonstrates my commitment to developing educational opportunities for our members and our Shop Stewards.

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Scheme and trying to ensure that posts are assessed as fairly/accurately based on the information provided.

I have been a Steward for just over three years and would now like to utilise my knowledge and experience on behalf of Unison in relation to the Life Long Learning role.

I would like to build on the excellent work done to date in relation to Life Long Learning within the Branch. I believe that we need to actively strive to promote the recruitment of additional Union Learning Representatives as their appointment is vital to identifying the training requirements of both Stewards/ ordinary Unison members. My view is that additional Union Learning Representatives, working in a partnership arrangement with both Corporate and Departmental Training Officers, would ensure that the training needs of /

MINUTES of BRANCH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

held on 18 FEBRUARY 2008 in the ASSEMBLY ROOMS, GEORGE STREET, EDINBURGH

1. OPENING REMARKS/ INTRODUCTIONS

The meeting was chaired by the Branch Chairperson Duncan Smith.

At this point of the meeting the Branch Communications Officer advised the meeting that George Lee would not be seeking re-election to the position of Branch Secretary due to pressures at work. He thanked George for his efforts and commitment since the inception of the Branch in 1996 whilst also recognising his previous involvement in the partner union NUPE. On behalf of the Branch the Branch Communications Officer then made a formal presentation to George.

The presentation was accepted and George then spoke to the meeting regarding his past involvement and wishing the Branch all success in the future.

2. APPOINTMENT OF SCRUTINEERS

Four Scrutineers were appointed - Walter Weir (Services for Communities), Steve McDonald (Corporate Services), Gerry Corbett (Health & Social Care) Irene Heggie (Finance)

3. STANDING ORDERS

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

4. MINUTES OF BRANCH MEETING 2007

The minutes of the last Branch Annual General meeting of 19th February 2007 and the Special General Meeting of 17th July 2007 were AGREED as a correct record with no matters arising.

5. ANNUAL REPORT 2007

No questions were raised on the Annual Report.

6. FINANCIAL STATEMENT


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

7. SPECIAL REPORTS

The meeting received updates on the ongoing negotiations/discussions on the following matters:-

- Updated report on Single Status (John Mulgrew)
- Additional Report on Pension Scheme (John Ross)
- Equal Pay (John Ross)

8. ELECTION OF BRANCH OFFICERS

4  The undernoted were elected unopposed:

President: John Stevenson (Children & Families)

Chairperson: Duncan Smith (Services for Communities)

Vice-Chairperson Matthew Creighton (Associated Bodies), Rose Jackson (Health & Social Care)

Secretary: Agnes Petkevicius (Children & Families)

Assistant Secretary: Luke Henderson (Services for Communities)

Treasurer: Mike McCrossan (Services for Communities)

Service Conditions Co-ordinator: John Mulgrew (LVJB)

Service Conditions Convener (APT&C): John Ross (Services for Communities)

Service Conditions Convener (Craft): Walter Weir (Services for Communities)

Service Conditions Convener (Manual): Kevin Duguid (Finance)

Education Officer: Dot Paterson (Health & Social Care)

Equalities Officer: Irene Stout (Services for Communities)

Welfare Officer: (Job-Share)

Gillian Allan (LVJB)/Mike Smith (Finance)

International Officer: Matthew Creighton (Associated Bodies)

Recruitment/Membership Officer: Irene Heggie (Finance)

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

Young Members Officer: Chris Jeffrey (Corporate Services)

Health & Safety Officer: No nominations received.

Election required for the following Branch Officer post(s):

Service Conditions Officer:

The following nominees were elected:

- Tom Connolly (Children & Families)
- Agnes Petkevicius (Children & Families)
- Irene Stout (Services for Communities)
- Elaine Wishart (Corporate Services)

9. RULE CHANGES

No rule changes had been submitted.

10. POLICY MOTIONS**1. Branch Levy**

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

This meeting agrees the principle of establishing a branch levy for the purpose of supporting members who are involved in Industrial Action which may be increasingly likely due to a range of issues including budget cuts, single status, shared services etc.

We call upon Branch Officers to enter into discussions with appropriate Regional and National officials with a view to developing a framework which would then be the subject of a branch ballot to establish a local branch levy.

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

2. Organising to challenge the crisis in council jobs and services

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

This branch believes that there is an impending crisis for local government jobs and services and that the specific budget problems in Edinburgh are a forewarning of potential problems throughout Scotland.

The effects of this crisis will be felt by workers in local government but also by all UNISON members who depend on local services.

These problems arise from

1. A low treasury settlement for public services.
2. The real cost of PPP/PFI projects coming home to roost
3. Increases in need and in duties imposed by the Scottish Government not being matched by the necessary funding
4. Unrealistic efficiency targets increased by 25% by the Scottish Government
5. The freeze on council tax rises which removes the fundamental ability of councils to take funding decisions based on local need and local democracy and to respond to local circumstances
6. The huge shortfall (between £750 million and £1 billion) between what is currently spent on local services and what will be raised by abolishing the council tax and replacing it with a national tax for local government. While this not only presents a potential financial disaster for local services, the tax will also damage both local and Scottish Parliament democracy and accountability.
7. A distribution of business rates that does not reward local investment in infrastructure. UNISON Scotland fully supports the return of non-domestic rates to local authority control. The return of non-domestic rate setting would increase local democracy and the accountability of councils.
8. The continuing woeful gap between Scottish Government funding and the real cost to councils in providing services for children and vulnerable adults.
9. A failure to fund the real costs of Equal Pay and Single Status

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SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA

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10. An approach to Shared Services which is based on "cheapest is best" rather than genuinely improved services.

11. While we welcome the removal of some ring-fenced funding to allow more flexible local management of resources, this is undermined by the efficiency saving demands and the inability to set local taxation levels.

In Edinburgh the situation is exacerbated by the lack of 'payback' from business rates from the huge investment in Edinburgh in infrastructure and other projects to attract business and investment.

This branch believes UNISON requires to take a co-ordinated approach to meet these challenges at local and national level. This should involve:-

a) A Scotland-wide strategy that challenges these issues at parliamentary level, building on the work already done to get our public services message across to all political parties

b) Collating the experiences of branches and, wherever possible, co-ordinating action against cuts in jobs and services so that branches are not left isolated.

c) The development of a strategy that would seek to co-ordinate industrial action across branches if that becomes necessary.

d) The development of links at local and national level with user groups and community organisations

The terms of this motion to be adjusted as appropriate for submission to Scottish Local Government Conference.

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

3. Defending and Improving Public Services in Edinburgh

Proposed by Matthew Creighton (Associated Bodies), Paul Clarke (Services for Communities)

This branch anticipates considerable challenges in coming years arising from the policies being pursued by the new political administrations at Holyrood and at the City Council as well as those of the UK Treasury. These include:

1. Lack of funding for equal pay and single status
2. Excessively tight budget setting driven by inadequate funding for local government
3. Re-organisations implemented without sufficient forward funding
4. Rising requirements of statutory services
5. Freeze on Council Tax rises and the anticipated gap in funding for the proposed so-called Local Income Tax'

6. Flawed funding models (PFI, PPP)

7. Disconnect between infrastructure needs of the capital city and Business Rates being administered at Scottish level.

8. Dangers of externalisation in the Shared Services agenda 9. 2% efficiency savings target

We recognise that in order to defend and improve public services and the needs of those who provide them, we will have to argue through each of these issues in the public arena. In particular we recognise that with relatively new administrations and councillors/MSPs at Edinburgh and Scottish levels, we should devote more effort to systematic lobbying of our elected representatives.

We recognise that we will need to organise more joint campaigns with service users and public campaigns, and applaud the establishment of the Social Care Campaign; and the regular and effective use of media relations by the Branch.

We instruct the incoming Secretary and Branch Committee to prepare plans to systematically take UNISON's message to elected representatives in Edinburgh through the mobilisation of members, stewards and officers to lobby them on a case by case basis. This will involve training programmes, briefing materials, co-ordination and regular review.

We call on UNISON Labour Link to work with and within the Labour Party around defence of services and strategies for proper funding of public services delivered by public services.

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

Emergency Motion

A. Council Budget

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

This meeting supports the actions of Branch Officers in organising a demonstration in Parliament Square on Thursday 21st February at which time the Council will be deliberating its budget for the next three years.

We view the involvement of the Scottish Government through their insistence Grant levels must be underpinned by a freeze on Council Tax increases as removing local democratic accountability and the right of local politicians to determine the level of services.

This will impact on staffing levels with an increasing number of posts being lost and on services which are of fundamental importance to many of the most vulnerable in society.

We note the Branch Committee has already raised these concerns through UNISON's Scottish structures and instruct them to continue such a campaign.

In the short-term the Branch should make representations to the council meeting on 21st February 2008 to express our concerns and to reiterate the branch position that any single or collective Compulsory Redundancy situation would leave us no option other than to embark on a programme of Industrial Action.

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

4. Cuts to Home Care services for adults

Proposed by Mary McCrea (Health & Social Care), Marlyn Tweedie (Health & Social Care)

This AGM notes that in August '07, Edinburgh Council were forced to retreat from their threat of closing 22 schools after an inspiring and determined campaign. In September '07 a drastic cuts package in the Health and Social Care department has been implemented as a way of "balancing the books".

These cuts significantly attack the resources and services available to support the frail and disabled to remain in their own homes with dignity.

As council social care workers, who are committed to providing quality services, we condemn this attack on our services and jobs. It Means:

- Care at home restricted to those who meet critical criteria or hospital discharge. Once seen as not being critical, the service is withdrawn.
- Only one hot meal per day - frozen mean - 30 mins allocated.
- Increasing charges for services
- A new Care Home built by the department now run by a private company
- A general rundown of Home Care services and more going to private agencies.

Since these cuts have been implemented, staff are under even more pressure to provide a service which is rushed, leaving service users with less choice and a service that only maintains a basic level of care.

In December '07, in keeping with UNISON policy, a public campaign against these measures was initiated. This will continue until our department and the Council take our concerns seriously and rethink their budget policy.

We ask this AGM to

1. Support this campaign
2. Calls for an opposition to cuts and privatisation

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SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA

3. Encourage maximum involvement from UNISON members and members of the public.

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

5. 2008/2009 Pay Claim

Proposed by Ian Hood (Health & Social Care), Duncan Smith (Services for Communities)

1. This branch notes

1. The submission of the 2008-2009

Scottish local government pay claim for £1,000 or 5%, whichever is the greater.

2. The plans by Gordon Brown's government to cap public sector and in particular local government workers' pay rises to less than 2%.

3. That there is no shortage of money for bailing out Northern Rock (so far £50 billion - half the cost of the entire NHS).

2 The branch believes this our claim is reasonable given

1. That real inflation is at the level of 4 to 4.5% per year and

2. That annual pay settlements allow more flexibility for changing circumstances, particularly given the unsettled economy and the "credit crunch".

3. This pay claim is winnable if we win the membership to an active support for the claim.

3 This branch resolves to

1. Produce a regular series of bulletins and newsletter informing members of claim and the reasons for support.

2. Produce a new section of the Branch website with campaign information.

3. Regularly issue pay claim information by email to branch members and activists.

4. Organise a range of members meetings and support stewards to organise workplace meetings briefing members on the pay claim.

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

"Delete point 2.2 and renumber the remaining clauses."

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

Emergency Motion (C) Pay Offer 2008

Proposed by John Ross (Services for Communities) and Irene Stout (Services for Communities)

This meeting supports the decision of the

Scottish Local Government Committee to reject the derisory three year pay offer as tabled by the Employers at the Scottish Joint Council and note UNISON's rejection has been supported by all unions party to the claim.

The pay offer was framed round increases of 2.2% (2008/09), 2.3% (2009/2010) and 2.2% (2010/2011). We note this issue is on the agenda for the next meeting of the Scottish Joint Council.

If there is no movement in the offer at that time we call upon our negotiators to withdraw from further discussions and to immediately put in place the required processes for an Industrial Action ballot.

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

Emergency Motion (B) Revised Local Government Pension Scheme

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

This meeting recognises continuation of the Local Government Pension Scheme in its current format is not sustainable due to the increasing number number of recipients. We note a full ballot of Local Government employees will take place between 3rd March 2008 and 21st March on the terms of the revised scheme.

We congratulate our negotiators who, during a period when many schemes are changing with real detriment for contributors, have achieved real improvements with those principally being:-

- retention of the final salary element
- movement to 60ths rather than 80ths (i.e. full pension rights after 30 years rather than 40 years)
- pension benefits open to all partners and not limited solely to spouses
- more open access to ill-health pensions
- a graduated payment scheme which ensures members earning less than £24,000 (approx) will pay less than current levels, between £24,000 and £27,000 (approx) will pay the same as now with those earning more than £27,000 (approx) paying marginally more. This will benefit over 60% of staff with particular focus on the low-paid.
- Protection of Rule of 85 until 2020.

We call upon Branch Officers to support the negotiators' recommendation for acceptance of the revised scheme and to take measures

to ensure the widest opportunity for members to participate in the forthcoming ballot.

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

Emergency Motion (D) UNISON Subscriptions Banding

Proposed by Kevin Duguid (Finance) and Walter Weir (Services for Communities)

This Branch notes with concern that UNISON staff are acting outwith the terms of the Rule Book in relation to the calculation of subscription bands and any subsequent refunds of overpaid subs by including casual overtime payments.

National Rules have always applied the principle that only contractual enhancements should be included in the calculation of subs banding. Experience demonstrates members have been denied a refund of overpaid subs, this is wholly unacceptable and therefore this branch resolves to:

1. Press UNISON nationally for our members to be refunded their overpaid subs in full.

2. Take forward an appropriately worded motion to National Delegate Conference 2008 to ensure that this issue is clarified once and for all.

3. Issue letters to our affected members advising them of the Branch's position and intended action.

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

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

