#

#  WIRRAL UNISON

#  ANNUAL REPORT

**To be presented at the Annual General Meeting of the Branch on**

**Thursday 1 March 2018 in Birkenhead Town Hall**

**at 12.15 pm**

**and**

**Wednesday 7 March 2018 in the Civic Hall,**

**Wallasey Town Hall**

**at 4.00 pm**

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**I**

**BRANCH SECRETARY’S REPORT**

**1. GENERAL**

The public sector is still suffering from the continued attack on the services our members provide. Budgets are stretched by this political ideology that does not look after the many, it looks after the few.

This year we have seen a dramatic shift in public opinion, not only in the services provided, but in the political landscape with results at the general election. The main stream media believed the majority would be 150+ for the Conservatives, but with Jeremy Corbyn and his manifesto things changed and they will be changed. It was great to see so many attend his biggest rally at West Kirby. Many members helped in securing Wirral remained ‘red’ with four returning Labour MPs. We now have representation on all four CLPs and our voice is most definitely heard. We have had motions passed for the benefit of OUR members and OUR services and long may that continue. With BREXIT talks causing infighting and this government hanging on to power, with the help of DUP, we all must be ready should an election be called again.

We have also re-affiliated to the Wirral Trades Council and send delegates on a regular basis to meetings. Alongside this we have members involved, and I have spoken at ‘Wirral Needs’ meetings. These links are vital in order to articulate members concerns with other local campaigns.

Until we have a change in government we will continue to face challenging times. We need to continue to develop more effective working practices that maintain and increase our presence in the workplace, at local level, at regional level and also nationally. We will continue to be open, honest and accountable as we strive to become even more efficient. There will be some difficult discussions and decisions that will need to be made; we may well need to move away from how things have been done historically to tackle the issues we face. To do this and protect our members we need a determined, educated and united team going forward.

Nationally UNISON scored a major victory when fees for Employment Tribunals were ruled unlawful. Hopefully now we will see more cases being taken on by our legal team in Manchester for the benefit of our members.

This branch will continue to protect jobs and defend terms & conditions across all areas. These have been fought for, negotiated and protected by those who have gone before us, these need protecting and are a fundamental aim of the branch.

We now hold two AGM’s and have the potential to hold some Branch Committee meetings outside standard office hours. This is to enable more engagement which makes us more transparent.

**Wirral Council**

The council still has ideas on delivering services differently. The budget presented by The Labour Group did not have any radical changes to our services. We still have live agenda items around Alternate Deliver Models. I will continue to follow the branches view, and my own personal view, that every effort is made by the authority to explore all avenues so that services remain in house with proper governance, accountability and transparency. This has been the basis behind the latest motion sent to all four Labour CLPs.

This was clear with our continued objection to the BWB proposals around Leisure, Libraries, Culture and Parks. I challenged the assumptions, figures and conclusions in that report, be that in the local media or at a full cabinet meeting. The fact that this was not pursued showed that collectively we can challenge, object and change opinion by factual presenting alternatives.

There are currently some continuous issues and assumptions around income generation, be that with The Wirral Growth Company or Hoylake Golf Resort. I have been clear that communication is a key element and that all parties should be consulted on proposal and full engagement and transparency is vital.

I have made strong representations to the Leader and management on the issues of pay and unpaid leave. I spoke at full council when our motion passed unanimously on a fully funded pay rise for staff. Despite the struggle to gain a fully funded pay rise, hopefully all have voted to reject the current offer; we did resolve the local NJC pay issue. The announcement from The Leader at Budget Cabinet to restore pay to NJC levels sees council staff receive the 1% we gave up in 2013. We had found ourselves behind ALL authorities in the North West and this is a significant victory for our branch.

**Magenta Living**

Proposals to change the essential car usage have met strong opposition from members and management have taken this on board. Management have worked with myself and our stewards in this area to protect the current Car Allowance Scheme for existing staff.

Magenta continues to face struggles with budgets and attacks on social housing from this government and we do not underestimate the task we face.

Our team is willing to work alongside management in these difficult times, but proposals need to be fair for our members.

**Wirral Evolutions**

There are ongoing concerns about the accountability, governance and transparency of the company. There has been major upheaval in the management at The Grange for one reason or another. These issues have been raised with the authority, who is the 100% shareholder, with the company itself and also with The Leader of the council who is currently a board member. Meetings have now been scheduled with management and our colleagues at Unite. Members at Wirral Evolutions and at the branch will be kept up to date with developments. We do need to recruit further stewards in this area and would encourage anybody who is interested to contact he branch office.

**Bam Nuttall**

The Wirral Highways contract will be brought back in house later this year. Despite having a good working relationship with management at Bam Nuttall this is great news for our members. Talks with start shortly on the TUPE transfer of staff. We are seeing more and more services coming back in house across neighbouring authorities and this further backs our argument to keep services in house.

**2. STANDING COMMITTEES**

The following Standing Committee has met during the course of the year:-

 Health and Safety Nick Bower (Secretary)

**3. ANNUAL CONFERENCE/SERVICE GROUP CONFERENCE**

The Branch was represented at Annual Conference in Brighton by the following delegates:-

Paddy Cleary, Nick Bower, Steve Bennett, Angie Redgrift, Gill Whitfield, Jillian Griffiths-Green, Rebecca Call, Hannah Plimley, Jane Edwards

**4. REPRESENTATION ON OTHER COMMITTEES**

During the past year the Branch has been represented by the following members on Committees:-

**North West Regional Council**

Paddy Cleary, Steve Bennett, Dave Jones, Phil Hamilton, Dave Hardcastle, Nick Bower, Sue Kellett, Angie Redgrift, Gill Whitfield, Rebecca Call, Sarah Kinsella

**North West Regional Local Government Committee**

Paddy Cleary, Steve Bennett, Nick Bower, Rebecca Call, Dave Jones ®

**North West Regional Committee**

Rebecca Call and Nick Bower

**Regional Health and Safety Committee**

Nick Bower

**Pensions Board**

Paul Wiggins

**Pensions Committee**

Paddy Cleary

**Womens Seat**

Rebecca Call

**Welfare**

Gill Whitfield

**Publicity**

Angie Redgrift

**International Relations Committee**

Rebecca Call

**Learning and Organising Committee**

Dave Hardcastle

**5. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I would like to thank Sue Mathie, who finally retired this year, for all her hard work and dedication. Another long term steward is also retiring from Magenta Living and I would like to thank Ian Murray for all he has done for members in that company and the support he has given me. I hope they both have a long and happy retirement.

I would also like to put on record my thanks to those Branch Officers who lost out in this year’s branch elections, with particular thanks to Angie Redgrift who I have worked closely with for a number of years. We also have a couple of people who have resigned their positions for various reasons and I would like to also commend them for their hard work on behalf of members. The branch has lost a lot of experience but members should be assured that they will still receive excellent representation from the new branch officer team.

I would also like to thank Branch Officers, Stewards, Representatives and members for their continued support, advice and help during the year. My thanks also need to go to the Branch office staff, Maureen and Jayne for the work they do and finally, to Tony Caffery our Regional Officer.

**PADDY CLEARY - BRANCH SECRETARY**

**II**

**BRANCH OFFICER REPORTS**

**6. REBECCA CALL**

I can’t believe how quickly this year has gone. It seems like only yesterday that I took up the position of Chair and here I am a year later re-elected unopposed. At times this has been one of the hardest and most challenging years of my life but I have absolutely loved it and am really grateful to have the opportunity to continue to represent you.

My aim for this year was to get more people involved in our Branch so this year I have organised delegations to Disabled Members, Community, LGBT and Women’s Conference’s in addition to Local Government and National Conference. I attended Local Government and National Conference In June in Brighton and spoke on a variety of motions that I documented on Facebook. Communication has also been an aim for me! I attended LGBT Conference in November also in Brighton (quite a different experience being there in the cold weather!). This was the first time I attended this Conference and I spoke about using a + sign at the end of LGBT to make it more inclusive. This motion was passed so hopefully we should see that soon. I also attended Women’s Conference in Liverpool in February which is always a really emotional conference and this year had one of the best turn outs with many delegates saying how great they thought Liverpool was!

This year I also organised a couple of events. The Radical Walk, a history of locations of historical Trade Union interest in Liverpool in July and a stall at the Diversity Festival in Birkenhead Park to reach out to the community about the services that UNISON offers. I also marched with our Branch at Liverpool Pride and marched again In London in July to say no to austerity. I attended an Adult Learner Event at Liverpool Museum to speak to potential members and attended the North West Regional Policy Seminar in Blackpool. I was also very lucky to hear Jeremy Corbyn speak in West Kirby to thousands about Labour’s manifesto and to proudly wave the UNISON flag.

I have been doing some training this year too as I am a firm believer in learning new things and refreshing your skills. I attended Branch Officer Training in April when I first started as Chair. I would recommend all Branch Officer’s to attend this; it’s free of charge and really interesting looking into all the different roles. I also went on a Mental Health Awareness Course and Sexual Harassment in the workplace both of which were organised by Rhian Pennington, Education Co-Ordinator. I also started my Employment Law Diploma in October and I am loving it. It’s a 30 week course that really goes in depth into Employment Law and how to apply it as a Trade Unionist. It’s quite intensive and there are assignments each term but it’s just so fascinating and so helpful.

I am the Branch Officer that oversees all the independents. These are Care Homes, Nurseries, Rehabilitation Centres, Citizens Advice, and Charities that has UNISON members in. It’s been quite a learning curve and so very different to representing members within the Council. These independent providers tend to have very strict policies, all of which are unique to their own setting, that very often are not in employees favour. Some of the companies seem to think they are above the law and I have had some quite heated meetings and on more than one occasion been thrown out of a building simply because the management didn’t appreciate a Trade Union perspective! I have had to deal with a lot of disciplinaries and dismissals within this area and it’s always emotional and inevitably complicated. However it’s an area I love working in as I feel these members are so vulnerable working in small organisations, often without a workplace steward to speak to so I feel it’s vital that I help these members have a voice and give them support and guidance and sometimes just an ear to listen.

The other area I have been responsible for is All Age Disability which are currently in scope to be TUPE’d to the Cheshire West Partnership under the NHS. It’s been a very stressful time for the members in this area but there have been some wins. The date for transfer was supposed to be April 2018 but through negotiation this has now been pushed back to July 2018. We have also got an agreement from CWP that for the first year it will be a year of sustainability where no dramatic changes will take place. There has been much upset within Children With Disabilities as the team were told that the Safeguarding function of their roles was to be kept in-house which the team were very concerned about. After much discussion and negotiation this has now been decided against which is a huge win for the team. Negotiations will continue right up to the last minute!

My aims for the next year are to organise more social events and to complete my Employment Law Diploma as well as continuing to represent you, my members.

If my honorarium is agreed by AGM then I shall be donating it to UNISON’s There For You Campaign.

**REBECCA CALL – BRANCH CHAIR**

**7. STEVE BENNETT**

Every year seems more challenging than the last and 2017 was no exception. There have been several departmental restructures, and also savings packages announced by the council that had to be dealt with.

**Schools** have been very challenging in the fact that there have been government cuts to budgets which have impacted on our schools and our support staff. Unison has been campaigning against school cuts and is working with other unions in schools to protect our members jobs and terms and conditions. We are also involved with a number of schools that intend to become multi academy trusts making sure that our members are looked after throughout this process.

I am also involved with job evaluation claims from some special schools that do not get the same pay scale other special schools get, although they are on the same job description. Along with this we have had the announcement that Kingsway Academy is closing and all the issue of possible redundancy and redeployment of staff.

There has been an increase in the number of schools that now have fully trained stewards who now have regular contact with the Branch which is of great benefit to our members in schools. I would also like to say a special thank you to Gill Harris who has given me lots of support during this year. If anyone would like to become a steward or is just interested in what it entails please do not hesitate to contact me.

**Childrens’ Department**

This year I was given the responsibility to be the branch officer for children’s services. Children’s is always a challenging department to the pressure of the work our members do within that department, this year more so after Ofsted gave the department a damming report and then we had the departure of the cabinet member and the Director of Education. Unison made it clear that the fault lay within structures, the failure to be able to recruit and retain staff, but that front line staff were doing their best to hold this service together. Despite this it was having an effect of low morale and staff absence due to stress. There has been a new social workers progression program which is hoped will improve recruitment and retention. Another issue is a restructure in Specialist Services which I am involved in and has not yet been signed off along with a Targeted Services restructure.

**Labour Link**

I am pleased to announce that we now have Unison members on the Executive Committee of all Wirral CLPS and we also have Unison members in positions such as Chair or Secretary of some Branch Labour Wards. Unison have put motions against council outsourcing to these meetings which is good news as labour link is now in a very strong place and at this point I have decided to step down from my position as labour link officer and to leave it in the very capable hands of Phil Hamilton who I’m sure will take it from strength to strength.

**STEVE BENNETT – VICE-CHAIR**

**8. ANGIE REDGRIFT**

This has been a very busy year for me as Branch Negotiator and Branch Treasurer.

I have been dealing with the Transaction Centre, Autism Together and Targeted Services, Integrated Commissioning Hub along with many other departments.

So far this year I have been heavily involved in many consultations within the Authority such as Payments Out, Trading Standards, Transaction Centre, Floral Pavilion Targeted Services and Safe Guarding along with a Consultation at Autism Together. Ensuring members were kept informed in all areas.

I have also represented many members in personal cases. I have also been dealing with Job Evaluations in many areas of the Council.

Also this year I have been dealing with Welfare Issues for members alongside the Welfare Branch Officer helping members in desperate times and we have had many successes in this area.

**ANGIE REDGRIFT – BRANCH NEGOTIATOR/BRANCH TREASURER**

**9. GILL WHITFIELD**

It has been another very busy year, with members from across the branch needing advice and support.

I attended the 2 day Welfare training course at Unison HQ, in May. This was really beneficial, not only in getting to know much more about the role, but it enabled me to network with other Welfare Officers from around the country. The ‘There for You’ Team were really helpful, with advice on how best to apply for financial help for members.

In June I attended National Conference in Brighton, attending the Welfare AGM while I was there. This was a really interesting conference, covering so many varied topics, with some very powerful speeches.

In September, I attended a 1 day ‘Introduction to Benefits’ course, at Unison HQ, a full on day crammed with information. This has given me a basic overview of the very complicated benefits system.

At times this year, there have been so many members needing help and advice, that I have asked Angie Redgrift, the Branch Negotiator for assistance. Angie has stepped in and been a brilliant help. Some of our members are really struggling, and Unison’s ‘There for You’ charity have been able to offer considerable financial assistance and advice. They’ve also helped members with the winter fuel and school uniform grants.

A definite aim this year is to raise funds for the charity, our members really benefit from it.

In my role as steward for Wirral Library Service, I have been involved in the consultation for possible outsourcing. Yet another battle for the library service! With staff spread over 24 sites, it’s a challenge, but Jane Edwards and I have been supporting members and raising issues about staffing, leave and volunteers, to name a few.

I have been given the opportunity to serve the members once again as the Welfare Officer for 2018. I look forward to supporting members through what will no doubt be another challenging year.

**GILL WHITFIELD – WELFARE OFFICER**

**10. PAUL WIGGINS**

During 2017 the Section held, as arranged in previous years, bi-monthly meetings. The Section numbers nearly 800 retired members and has a small number of dedicated members who regularly attend these meetings.

This last year we had presentations from both the Branch Welfare and Women’s Officers, which were well received and a number of speakers are to be arranged for 2018.

The Section has raised a number of issues with Branch, specifically over communication, recruitment and retention. Hopefully the communication element has recently been solved and the Branch Committee agreed that, in order to ensure recruitment of retired members, a supply of retired membership details, as well as supportive documentation, will be issued to Branch Stewards.

The motion written via the Section on “Dignity in Social Care, People before Profit” was accepted as a motion by NW Region Retired Members Committee, discussed and agreed at the National Retired Members Conference in October 2017.This motion was subsequently chosen as one of the two motions the Retired Members Conference can forward to the 2018 National Delegate Conference for debate. The Section Secretary has been recently been elected to serve again on the North West Retired Members Committee and will be the Regional Committees Representative to the 2018 National Delegate Conference, where hopefully he will be allowed to move this motion.

Nationally the number of Local Government Pension bodies who are on Defined Benefits Schemes has fallen dramatically over the last few years from 6,000+ Schemes to only around 700. Many of those bodies who have left are now using a Defined Contributions Schemes which give the pension scheme members much reduced pensions and benefits.

Therefore it is essential that we campaign to keep our existing Scheme in place, as well as retain and recruit more new members to join this Scheme.

**PAUL WIGGINS - RETIRED MEMBERS SECRETARY**

**11. DAVE HARDCASTLE**

This year has seen a massive increase in learning activities within our Branch, including retired members. Much of this is down to cooperation from all concerned in organizing and preparing venues. Well over 100 members took up some sort of beneficial learning over the past 12 months or so. A big thank you to Tom Jenkins from Region who helped me enormously, especially in dealing with National in coaxing them to pay for and organize expensive regional mailshots to members to advertise some of UNISON’s flagship courses. Tom is leaving this month and I just hope his replacement is half as good. Those courses offered and taken up by members were:

Sign Language                             at St. Johns Primary

Confidence and Wellbeing          at Leasowe Adult Learning

Confidence and Wellbeing          at Branch Office

Confidence and Wellbeing          at Foxfield School

Windows 10                                at Branch Office

Power to be You                         at Branch Office

Your Skills Your Future               at Branch Office

Women's Lives                            12 weeks at Branch Office + Weekend Residential

Return to Learn                            12 weeks at Branch + Weekend Residential

My other activities as a Branch Officer have been to attend all regional LAOS committees as well as accepting an invitation to attend the National Forum. I have taken my place on Regional Council seriously and attended on all occasions. In February I attended the National ULR event in London and was more than pleased to accept a certificate of recognition from Margaret McKee, our President. I achieved a L2 IAG award which will help me when dealing with members.

For the forthcoming year I would like to concentrate on pushing Functional Skills in the Branch. I know I keep banging on about this **BUT** there are still a massive amount of people who do not have the necessary basic skills to live or work well in this country. Unionlearn have now developed an app that can be loaded onto your phone and used instantly to access basic skills. I hope to use this in the immediate future. I will also keep offering UNISON courses to members over the next year.

**DAVE HARDCASTLE – LIFELONG LEARNING CO-ORDINATOR**

**12. NICK BOWER**

This year has been another busy year both locally and nationally for Health & Safety issues.

**Nationally**

There is still great concern that a Tory government will use Brexit as an opportunity to deregulate European backed legislation that safe guards Employee Rights, including H&S. Unison and the TUC continues to lobby and monitor on the forthcoming “Great Repeal Bill”, which will be used to transpose EU legislation into British Law after Brexit. The TUC has published a report detailing these concerns and this can be viewed through the following link: <https://www.tuc.org.uk/sites/default/files/Protecting%20health%20and%20safety%20after%20Brexit%20pdf_0.pdf>

During 2017 and the early part of 2018 UNISON has continued to update and release information on work related H&S issues such as Slips, Trips and Falls, Lone Working and Risk Assessments. These can be viewed by following this link: <https://www.unison.org.uk/get-help/knowledge/health-and-safety/>

Last year I became the North West Regional H&S Rep and now sit on UNISON’s National H&S Committee.

**Regionally**

I have continued in the Role of Vice Chair of the North West H&S Committee as well as representing Branch on Regional Local Government Service Group and Regional Committee.

**Hazards Conference 2017**

The end of July saw Adele Oldrid and Dave Calland represent Branch at the annual Hazards Conference at Keele University. Both Adele and Dave wrote excellent reports on their conference experience, which I included in one of my monthly reports in 2017.

I was asked to by the organisers to facilitate two workshops for the conference on the subject of Workplace Inspections. This was the first time flying solo as a workshop facilitator and I am happy to say I got very good feedback from both of my workshops.

**Awareness Campaigns**

During 2017 we ran two awareness campaigns on Prostrate and Ovarian Cancer.

The Health & Safety Committee discussed and then asked Branch to arrange training on Mental Health Awareness. This saw Bob Kelly, our Regional Education Officer, deliver an excellent awareness course to interested activists.

**Locally**

I have been advising members on a wide range of issues.

The main focus this year has again been Asbestos. This issue was originally raised by concerned members at Woodchurch Leisure Centre. Asbestos in poor condition had been found in the plant room, where previously a survey had failed to recognise the presence. We raised members concerns at the highest level to ensure that the asbestos was dealt with appropriately. After our intervention the council decided to remove the asbestos from the plant room, effectively removing the hazard. Members were concerned that because the asbestos had never been identified they had been exposed to it. We sort advice from Thompsons Solicitors and they sent forms so members could register their potential exposure in case of the need to claim in the future.

This incident led us to take the Council to task on its system for managing asbestos as we felt that the incident showed the system was flawed. When we eventually met with officers over this issue, we were able to show that there were flaws in its system and it was failing to comply effectively with legislation that covers asbestos. The outcome was the Council agreed to resurvey several buildings to audit the effectiveness of previous surveys. Officers also committed to reforming the Corporate H&S Committee, though this is yet to happen and we will be pressing for this to happen as soon as possible.

The HSE also started investigating the Council over its management of asbestos and myself and Sue Mathie met with the inspector and discussed our concerns over Wirral Council’s management of asbestos. I received an interim briefing from the HSE Inspector before Christmas, she informed me that she shared our concerns after her inspection. She had also asked the Council to resurvey several buildings to audit their previous surveys. We are awaiting the results of these surveys, I am however aware that at least one building that was resurveyed was found to have asbestos that had previously not been identified. I have contacted the HSE Inspector and asked for a further update and I am also taking advice from our National H&S team and I will provide further updates as more information becomes available.

If anyone is interested in becoming a H&S Rep then please contact me via email or through Branch and I will be able to guide you on this rewarding role.

**NICK BOWER – HEALTH AND SAFETY SECRETARY**

**13. PHIL HAMILTON**

**National Demonstration**

Well attended National Demonstration in London with members from our Branch turning out**.**

**International Seminar**

Discussions on Swaziland, Global supply chains, Palestine 50 years on, Colombia, Qatar and Solidarity with the people of Turkey.

**Mayday International Festival Manchester Mechanics Institute**

Latin America. Reform and Reaction (I chaired this session. Discussions with Pablo Navarrete Independent film maker from Alborada).

**Durham Miners Gala**

The Big Meeting (The largest one so far) Branch sent a delegation of five. We met up with other regional branches and leadership. We also met with members of our local Labour party and MP’s once again having the privilege to meet and listen to Jeremy Corbyn and Angela Rayner.

Pedal to Progress charity ride Prague to Berlin in support of the Morning Star.

A self-funded trip to Berlin to welcome the riders from our region who pedalled over 1,000klm to raise funds for the Morning Star.

**Le Humanite, Paris**

A self-funded trip. Each year, the French newspaper L'Humanité organizes a socialist trade union supporting festival, Fête de l'Huma in Paris for a weekend full of debates, exhibitions and concerts. I attended this with comrades from across North West region. I’d encourage any member to attend this incredible event.

**National Demonstration Manchester**

Marching outside the Tory Party Conference, Anti Austerity march. Well attended and a great turn out by branch.



**ACTSA Fundraiser**

A fundraising dinner for vulnerable people in South Africa. Region sponsored a table at the event

**Latin American Seminar**

With countries across Latin America facing a resurgent right and the threat of intervention from Trump, this year’s Latin America Conference was one of the most important yet

Another busy year in my role at branch this year.

I’ve represented members at branch, played an important role in the proposed changes to the edge of care service (supported by the branch leadership), attended all steward, Branch, some regional committee meetings. I’ve recruited new members organised workplaces, attended development days, training events, trades council meetings and the Labour Party (I’m now on Birkenhead CLP and a TULO officer on the Birkenhead Labour Party Executive).

Stood shoulder to shoulder with comrades from other trade unions on picket lines and turned out against the fascists trying to march and spread their hatred in our communities, Involved in getting aid to refugee’s fleeing persecution and to those who’ve ended up settling in our area. Much of this time has been over weekends and evenings.

At every opportunity I’ve supported and raised the issues of our members and will continue to do so in the next year.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to represent our branch.

**PHIL HAMILTON – INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS OFFICER**

**14. RHIAN PENNINGTON**

Undertook a Skills Scan of Reps and Branch Officers.

Attended the Further Education Conference in April 2017.

Coordinated Wirral UNISON supporting UNISON North West LGBT Group at PRIDE on 29th July 2017.

Ran a Report Writing Session for Reps and Members on 24th October 2017.

I attended the Tory Pay Up Now demonstration on 1st October 2017.

Attended UNISON Leadership School 10- 12 November 2017.

Held a UNISON Open Day on 7th February 2018.

Produced AGM leaflet in February 2018 to be distributed to all members.

Attended Branch meetings.

I have kept members, reps and branch officers up to date on Union Education via emails throughout the year.

**RHIAN PENNINGTON – EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR**

**III**

**DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS**

**15. WIRRAL METROPOLITAN COLLEGE**

This has been an interesting year for us.

Our Principal has been off sick for almost 12 months and the Deputy Principal has been in charge. It has a year of preparing for the upcoming Ofsted inspection. Thankfully it is successfully behind us now and we have returned to normal, whatever that is in FE.

The year has meant some detailed casework for the reps at the College. We have tackled the usual sickness, grievance and disciplinary issues. We have had full branch and regional support for a member who had some complicated issues to resolve. Our reps have been involved in helping several staff find their way through some life changes too.

The next year, however, looks as though it will be a major challenge. We have not had a pay rise since 2014. Our members have had enough. The branch secretary Paddy Cleary is currently working on submitting a pay claim on behalf of Unison members in order to close the gap. So far management is telling us it is unaffordable. We will continue to press them for the rise in the next few months.

The College went through the JE process in 2008. Since then there has not been a full review of the pay and grading structure. We have identified several issues which need to be resolved and the opening meeting with management takes place on 28/2/18.

This should be a challenge for us as we tackle all the policies that relate to payment of members. We have so far had advice from the regional and branch offices and hope to achieve a fairer pay and grading structure this year. As the harmonised pay structure affects all staff, Unison hope to work closely with UCU to resolve the complex questions for all College staff. The Branch Secretary will lead the negotiations with us.

**WIRRAL METROPOLITAN COLLEGE STEWARDS**

**IV**

**MINUTES OF GENERAL MEETINGS**

**16. MINUTES OF TWENTIETH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON**

**WEDNESDAY, 1 MARCH 2017 IN THE CIVIC HALL, WALLASEY TOWN HALL AT 12.15 PM AND BRANCH OFFICE, 5 SANDFORD STREET, BIRKENHEAD AT 4.30 PM**

**17. MINUTES OF NINETEENTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 24 FEBRUARY 2016 IN THE CIVIC HALL, WALLASEY TOWN HALL AT 12.15 PM AND 4748, HAMILTON SQUARE AT 5.15 PM** (There are no minutes as the meeting was inquorate).

**18. MINUTES OF EIGHTEENTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 11 MARCH 2015 FROM 12.15 PM IN THE CIVIC HALL, WALLASEY TOWN HALL** (There are no minutes as the meeting was inquorate).

**19. MINUTES OF SEVENTEENTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 12 MARCH 2014 FROM 12.15 PM – 1.15 PM IN THE CIVIC HALL, WALLASEY TOWN HALL**

**PRESENT:** Sue Kellett - Chairperson

 Phil Goodwin - Secretary

 Paddy Cleary - Branch Treasurer

 and 125 members who signed the attendance sheets

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Tony Caffery, Regional Officer

* SUE KELLET IN THE CHAIR –
1. **CHAIRPERSON’S OPENING REMARKS**

The Chairperson welcomed everyone to the meeting. She asked that a minutes silence be observed for Bob Crow, NUT Leader who died yesterday and for those members who have passed away during the last twelve months. The Chairperson asked for an Emergency Motion to be accepted for debate – this was **AGREED.** She then introduced the guest speaker.

1. **GUEST SPEAKER – GLEN WILLIAMS, CHAIR LOCAL**

**GOVERNMENT SERVICE GROUP EXECUTIVE AND VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE NORTH WEST REGION**

Glen paid tribute to Joe Taylor and Diane Kelly who were a

 tremendous asset to the Branch over the years and wished them

good luck in their retirement. These are difficult times for the Branch regionally and nationally. It’s a myth that not getting a pay rise will save jobs and your diluted terms and conditions are no different from the rest of the country. We need to begin to get angry. We are 18% worse off in our pay than in 2010. Our Region continues to take the lead, we have to fight back and get local councillors to get involved.

Join the March and Rally in Liverpool – “Fair Funding for Public Services” on Saturday 15 March 2014 assembling at the Pier Head at 10 am.

Thanks for the invite and I wish the branch every success for the challenges ahead.

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Nissa Coull, Alison Jones, Nicky Long, Sandy Thomas,

Eileen Bennett.

**4.0 TO RECEIVE THE TREASURER`S FINANCIAL STATEMENT AND ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 DECEMBER 2013**

Having andswered questions from members it was duly **PROPOSED** and **SECONDED**

“That the Financial Statement for 2012 be accepted including the honoraria payments.”

On being put to the vote was **CARRIED with 1 AGAINST AND 15 ABSTENTIONS.**

**5.0 TO RECEIVE THE ANNUAL REPORT**

Having answered questions from members it was duly **PROPOSED** and **SECONDED**

“That the Annual Report be accepted and that the minutes of the AGM dated 13 March 2013 be agreed”.

On being put to the vote was **CARRIED**.

1. **TO ELECT THE FOLLOWING OFFICERS FOR THE ENSUING**

**YEAR** (nominated by Branch Committee and not opposed):-

Branch Chair - Sue Kellett

 Branch Vice-Chairperson - Steve Bennett

 Branch Negotiator - Brenda Hall

 Branch Treasurer - Paddy Cleary

 Communications Officer - Sheila Henry

 Education Co-ordinator - Ian Upton

 Health and Safety Officer - Nick Bower

 Membership Services Officer- Ian Ward

 Sports and Social Officer - Steve Randles

 International Relations Officer – Rebecca Call

 Branch Auditors (2) - Les Kelly/Paul Byrne

**7.0 TO ELECT THE FOLLOWING BRANCH OFFICER POSTS**

In line with Branch Rule 14(h) a postal ballot was held.

Tony Caffery Returning Officer confirmed the result of the ballot as follows:-

The following nominations were received:

**(1) BRANCH SECRETARY**

 Phil Goodwin 420 votes

 David Jones 316 votes

 **Phil Goodwin was therefore elected as Branch Secretary.**

**(2) ASSISTANT BRANCH SECRETARY**

Mathew Behan 273

 Sue Mathie 456

**Sue Mathie was therefore elected as Assistant Branch Secretary.**

**(3) EQUALITIES OFFICER**

Mandy Gorman 436

 Gill Parry 287

 **Mandy Gorman was therefore elected as Equalities Officer.**

1. **WELFARE OFFICER**

Lisa Founds 299

Angela Redgrift 425

**Angela Redgrift was therefore elected as Welfare Officer.**

1. **WOMENS OFFICER**

Danielle Kerr 283

Adele Oldrid 432

**Adele Oldrid was therefore elected as Womens Officer.**

1. **YOUNG MEMBERS OFFICER**

Lois Founds 285

Hannah Plimley 443

**Hannah Plimley was therefore elected as Young Members Officer.**

**8.0 RATIFICATION OF WORKPLACE STEWARDS**

 **FAMILIES & WELLBEING (1)**

 Michael Connor, Phil Hamilton, David Hardcastle, Glynn Morgan,

 Lisa McShane, Adele Oldrid, Gill Parry, Sandy Thomas.

 **FAMILIES & WELLBEING (2)**

Jane Barclay,Peter Ferguson,Daniel Hitchell**,** David Jones,

 Lisa Lilliott, Susan Mathie,Matthew Moores, Karen Noonan,

 Stephen Randles, Judith Townend.

 **REGENERATION & ENVIRONMENT**

 Mathew Behan, Rebecca Call, Lisa Founds, Carl Fryer, Jon Hardwick,

 Paul Sinclair, Mark Traynor, Nick Bower, Brenda White, Ian White.

 **TRANSFORMATION & RESOURCES**

 John Atherton, Michelle Bartley, Stephanie Caldwell, Patrick Cleary,

 Mark Delap, David Griffiths, Sarah Kennedy, Hannah Plimley,

 Angela Redgrift, Ian Upton, Karl Wakeham, Ian Ward, Gill Whitfield,

 Carl Williams.

 **SCHOOLS**

 Stephen Cotgrave, Nissa Coull, Susan Draper, Gill Harris,

 Barrie Hibbert, Lyn Kelly, Elizabeth Waring.

 **WIRRAL MET COLLEGE**

 David Brooks, Stephen Easdown, Barbara Sculthorpe, Dianne Kelly.

 **BIRKENHEAD 6TH FORM COLLEGE**

 Margaret Hulse.

 **BAM NUTTALL**

 Christopher Clare.

 **MAGENTA LIVING**

 Sean Evans**,** Sheila Taylor.

 **WIRRAL AUTISTIC SOCIETY**

 Stephen Feeney, Alison Jones, Thomas Kelly, Joseph McGowan,

 Stephen Price, Catherine Titherington.

 Anyone still wanting to be a steward see me at the end of the meeting

 or contact the Branch Office.

**9.0 MOTIONS**

 **9.1 EMERGENCY MOTION – FUTURE COUNCIL PROPOSALS**

 This AGM notes with concern the proposals entitled “Future Council”

 due to be decided upon at the Cabinet meeting of Wirral Council on

 the 13 March 2014. This was previously presented to Council

 employees under the Budget Option ‘Transforming Wirral Council’. As

 previously detailed in the Wirral UNISON newsletter of 1 November

 2013, “It proposes to re-evaluate, redesign and restructure the whole

 organisation. It will remodel the Council from top to bottom. The

 primary objective of this option is a reduction in our workforce.”

 This AGM notes after receiving a report commissioned from the

 consultants Ernst Young, the Council proposes to:

* Conduct a series of service reviews that will decide the services it will continue to directly provide, the services it will commission via shared or third party provider, and the services it will no longer continue to provide or support.
* Undertake a Job Evaluation exercise of all Council employees using the Hay method. That this will place all employees into a job family framework with a series of pay ranges in each of the job families. It will set a new payline for all Council employees.
* Optimise spans of control for management roles by setting defined Team Leader to employee ratios and Manager to Team Leader ratio. This will reduce the numbers of supervisors, Team Leaders and Managers within the Council workforce.
* Rationalise Business Support which will reduce the workforce in this area.

This AGM believes that these proposals

* will cause a major reduction in the Council workforce
* have the potential to cut members pay by the Job Evaluation exercise and the new payline
* are “provider neutral” in that they do not express any preference for in-house services and that this has the potential to lead to large scale commissioning of services from external providers
* are based on a timetable for implementation that is not realistic if proper negotiation and consultation with the trade unions is to take place
* escalate the already high levels of stress and worry in the workforce

This AGM therefore instructs the Branch Officers:

1. to demand that a proper framework for trade union consultation, engagement and negotiation be established covering all aspects of the Future Council project including an adequate timescale for such discussion.
2. to seek assurances from the political leadership of the Council regarding the provider neutral focus of the Ernst Young proposals and to consistently make the case for in-house services
3. to initiate a programme of communication and consultation with all affected members to include regular stewards meetings, membership meetings, newsletters and branch website updates
4. to reconvene a General Meeting of all affected members to report back on the progress of negotiations at an appropriate time, but no later than 31 July, to enable members to determine the appropriate course of action prior to any final decision by the council on the future of individual services and/or the setting of a payline.

 **PROPOSED BY PHIL GOODWIN (BRANCH SECRETARY)**

 **SECONDED BY NICK BOWER (HEALTH & SAFETY OFFICER)**

On being put to the vote was **CARRIED.**

 **9.2 NATIONAL PAY DEALS**

“That this AGM notes that following negotiations with the Council, and a vote of its membership, Wirral Unison agreed to defer the nationally agreed pay rise for 2013/14. This was deferred pending the identification of mutually agreed cuts of £1million that could be delivered by 31 March 2014. This exercise was to be conducted in association with APSE.

This AGM notes that, to date, no relevant savings have been identified and agreed with the Council. Under the terms of the agreement, if the savings were not agreed and implemented by 31 March 2014 the pay rise will be lost. This follows a national pay freeze of three years, meaning the Wirral employees have face a four year pay freeze. It is also noted that Local Government Pay is the lowest in the public sector – from the top to the bottom of the pay rise.

This AGM notes that Unison’s national Conference in 2013 re-affirmed its commitment to national pay bargaining and recognised the dangers of local pay bargaining.

This AGM therefore agrees that Wirral Unison will oppose and actively campaign against any attempt to defer or refuse to implement and future nationally agreed pay rise.”

**PROPOSED BY DAVID JONES (DASS)**

**SECONDED BY GILL PARRY (CYPD)**

On being put to the vote was **CARRIED.**

**9.3 AMENDMENT TO BRANCH CONSTITUTION, RULES AND STANDING ORDERS**

In accordance with the UNISON Code of Good Branch Practice the following amendments be made to Wirral UNISON’s Constitution, Rules and Standing Orders:

**OLD** 3. CHANGES TO RULE

Branch rules must be agreed by two thirds of members present and voting at a quorate branch meeting. Branch rules must be approved in accordance with UNISON’s procedures. Any changes to branch rules must be agreed and approved in the same way.

**NEW** 3. CHANGES TO RULE

Branch rules must be agreed by two thirds of members present and voting at a quorate branch meeting. Branch rules must be approved in accordance with UNISON’s procedures. Any changes to branch rules must be approved by the Annual General Meeting and then by the Regional Office

**OLD** 5. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aims of the branch shall be to achieve the aims and targets set annually through the branch assessment.

**NEW** 5. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aims of the branch shall be to support and pursue the aims and objectives contained in the UNISON Rule Book and the objectives agreed by UNISON’s National Executive Committee annually and to achieve the aims and targets set annually through the branch assessment.

**OLD** 13. QUORUM

 The quorum shall be:

 (1) The Branch AGM: 125 members.

 (2) The Branch Committee: 25 members.

 **NEW** 13. QUORUM

 The quorum shall be:

 (1) The Branch AGM: 100 members

 (2) The Branch Committee: 22 members.

**OLD** 14. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

 The following officers of the branch shall be elected at the AGM:-

 (a) Branch Chair

 Branch Vice-Chair

 Branch Secretary

 Assistant Branch Secretary

 Branch Treasurer

 Branch Negotiators

 Communications Officer

 Education Co-ordinator

 Welfare Officer

 Equalities Officer

 Women’s Officer

 Health & Safety Officer

 Membership Services Officer

##  Sports and Social Officer

 International Relations Officer

 Young Members Officer

 Branch Auditors (2)”

 **NEW** 14. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

 The following officers of the branch shall be elected at the AGM:-

 (a) Branch Chair

 Branch Vice-Chair

 Branch Secretary

 Assistant Branch Secretary

 Branch Treasurer

 Branch Negotiator

 Communications Officer

 Education Co-ordinator

 Welfare Officer

 Equalities Officer

 Women’s Officer

 Health & Safety Officer

 Membership Services Officer

##  Sports and Social Officer

 International Relations Officer

 Young Members Officer

 Lifelong Learning Co-ordinator

 Branch Auditors (2)”.

**PROPOSED AND SECONDED BY BRANCH COMMITTEE**

On being put to the vote was **CARRIED.**

**10.0 PRIZE DRAW**

 £10 in high street vouchers was won by Sandra Whittaker (Magenta

 Living

 £25 cash was won by Judith Townend (DASS)

 £25 cash was won by Sheila Henry (Universal & Infrastructre)

 £50 cash was won by Carol Mussa (DASS)

 There being no more business the meeting closed at 1.40 pm.