



**UNISON: the public service union**  
Central Attic, County Hall  
West Street, Chichester  
West Sussex PO19 1RQ  
Tel: (01243) 777636  
Fax: (01243) 382195  
E-Mail: [office.unison@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:office.unison@westsussex.gov.uk)  
**Branch Secretary: Dan Sartin**

If calling ask for:

or email:

Your Ref:

Our Ref:

February 26<sup>th</sup> 2014

Dear member,

### **UNISON West Sussex – Branch Annual General Meeting**

I would like to invite you to the Branch's Annual General Meeting for 2014. This year we will be holding our AGM over three dates and venues, and I hope you will be able to make one of them.

**Monday 10<sup>th</sup> March, Conference Room 4, Centenary House, Worthing, BN13 2QB**  
**Monday 17<sup>th</sup> March, Goodwood Room, County Hall North, Horsham, RH12 1XH**  
**Monday 24<sup>th</sup> March, Council Chambers, County Hall, Chichester, PO19 1RQ**

**All meetings: 12.30-2.00pm**

2013/14 has been another challenging year, and 2014/15 does not look set to get any easier for public services. Our AGM is an opportunity to reflect back on the work of the Branch over the past year, and for Branch officers to report back to members on what we have done to make a positive difference to members, and what we plan to do in 2014/15 to defend members' interests.

We will have a sandwich buffet available. Please let us know which AGM you plan to attend by emailing [office.unison@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:office.unison@westsussex.gov.uk) or calling 01243 777636 as it will help us judge the catering order.

Enclosed with this AGM mailing are the following:

1. Agenda
2. Minutes of 2013 AGM
3. List of your Branch Officers and Workplace Reps for 2014/15
4. Honoraria payments
5. Branch Industrial Action Fund
6. The branch Annual Report for 2013/14.

Please note, if you are receiving this AGM pack by hard copy, this will be the last year we will be issuing AGM papers by post. Future AGM papers will be posted on our website at [www.unisonwestsussex.org.uk](http://www.unisonwestsussex.org.uk) To receive communications such as this from the Branch in future by email, please contact the Branch office using the details above with your email address, or add your email address to your own UNISON record by visiting <https://my.unison.org.uk/>

Yours sincerely

Dan Sartin  
Branch Secretary

**UNISON West Sussex**

**Annual General Meetings**

**10 March, Worthing**

**17 March, Horsham**

**24 March, Chichester**

**12.30-2.00pm**

**AGENDA**

1. Welcome from Branch Chair
2. Approval of the Minutes of the AGM held on 11, 12 and 13 March 2013, and matters arising (ENCLOSED)
3. Approval of Branch Officers and Workplace Representatives for 2014/15 (ENCLOSED)
4. Branch Finance and Accounts for 2013
  - 4.1. To approve the accounts (TO BE TABLED)
  - 4.2. To agree honoraria payments (ENCLOSED)
  - 4.3. To agree to move £7,500 to the Branch Industrial Action Fund (ENCLOSED)
5. Annual Report (ENCLOSED)
6. Question and Answer Session (Questions can be asked at the meeting, or if you prefer you can email/post them to us in advance.)
7. Presentation by Margaret Guest, UNISON Retired member and Chair of the *Don't Cut Us Out West Sussex* campaign ([www.dontcutusout.org.uk](http://www.dontcutusout.org.uk))
8. Question and Answer Session
9. Close of meeting.

**UNISON West Sussex**  
**Minutes of the Aggregate Annual General Meetings held on Monday 11<sup>th</sup>, Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> 2013**  
**in Horsham, Chichester and Worthing.**

**Present:** Graham Anderson (Branch Chair), Daniel Sartin (Branch Secretary), Jennie Barrett- Chichester (Branch Treasurer) and 80 members in total.

**In attendance:** Sarah McGreal (Regional Officer)

**1. Welcome**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced the Branch Officers and thanked Sarah McGreal for her attendance.

(Note: the meetings overall were quorate therefore all decisions were approved.)

**2. Minutes of the Aggregate Annual General Meeting (AGM) meetings held on 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> March 2012.**

The Chair noted that item 4.2 honoraria payments from the 2012 AGM had been approved.

**Resolved:** The minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> March was approved as correct record.

**3. Approval of Branch Officers and Representatives for 2012/2013**

All of those nominated were elected as they were uncontested but the vacancies for a Membership Officer and Life Long Learning Officer are still available. The Branch Chair noted some amendments to the list circulated; the position of Young Members Officer has been filled by Thomas Dewing, the International Officer position has been filled by David Hammond, the Retired Members Officer is now Elwyn Morgan and the Disability Equality Officer has been filled by Robert Hayes. Also, Alan Mclean and Karen Spicer have decided to stand down as reps, however Gill Marshman has been nominated for Karen's position.

**Resolved:** The nominations for Branch Officers and Workplace Representatives were approved.

**4. Branch Financial Report and Accounts for 2012**

**4.1** The Accounts were with the Auditor this week and would be signed off this week also. There was a £15,500 surplus. Spending in postage has notably decreased due to greater utilisation of email; Self Organised Groups have also had a lower expenditure as delegates were not sent to either Disability or LGBT conference in 2012. Some of the surplus will be used to fund the new position of Branch Negotiations Officer.

**Resolved:** The Accounts for 2012 were approved.

**4.2** Jennie Barrett was asked to leave the room temporarily. The AGM was asked to approve an honoraria payment to Jennie Barrett for the sum of £2988.00 in respect of the 2012 accounts work undertaken in her own time; Chris Earwaker for the sum of £200 and £100 to former Labour Link Officer Roy Noble. The Branch Chair noted that Chris Earwaker had put forward a proposal that rather than receiving an honoraria payment that she be given honorary life membership, and that this be considered at the next Branch Committee Meeting.

**Resolved:** The Honoraria payments were approved for Jennie Barrett and Roy Noble; the honoraria for Chris Earwaker was withdrawn in order that honorary life membership may be considered at the next Branch Committee meeting.

**5. Annual Report**

The Branch Secretary referred to the written report which had been sent to all attendees. He said that the Branch had noticed an increase in membership with 5152 members and 818 retired members. Going forward the Branch will be looking to utilise the retired membership as a campaigning group. The Branch Secretary highlighted the importance of recruitment, for the Branch to have a visibility in workplaces and improve membership density in teams. 2012 has proved to be a challenging year with the recent attack on facility time despite compelling evidence that this would be detrimental to the Council. Going forward with this reduction of time, the workload experienced in the office is increasing. The Branch is taking immediate action to counter the loss of facility time and has created a new position—a half-time Branch Negotiations Officer. The advert for the post is available with the AGM pack.

The key issues currently facing our membership are: pay, reorganisations, outsourcing and cuts and this will continue through 2013. The Branch supported many hundreds of members facing workplace re-organisations, redundancy situations, and TUPE transfers, as well as changes to grades, hours and location. These included: the Capita TUPE transfer in October; re-organisation and downgrading within Learning Disability Day Services; proposed changes to pay and rotas in mental health services; TUPE transfers caused by the creation of school Academies.

The Branch Secretary also noted that individual casework was increasing and the Branch has over 70 formal cases open at any one time; this is excluding advice which does not become a formal case, which the office provide daily to members. The current political climate in West Sussex and nationally is greatly impacting our members and the Branch is working as hard as ever to support those in need and protect and advance terms and conditions. The Secretary thanked all of the office staff for their hard work during a challenging year.

**Resolved:** To approve the annual report.

## **6. Presentations from UNISON workplace reps on current issues and campaigns**

Across the three AGM venues, attendees heard presentations from workplace representatives. At Horsham: Sarah Cawston, Wendy Wilson and Jeremy Webster, spoke on the issues which they deal with as a rep and the work they do for their colleagues. All noted how rewarding work as a representative is and the efforts which they make to improve the working conditions of our members.

The Chichester AGM was affected greatly by the snow and two of the key speakers, Keir Fuller and Ian Harvey were unable to attend. In their absence Simon Holder and Sarah McGreal gave their presentations. Sarah Burnett also presented.

The final meeting in Worthing heard presentations from: Karen Fisher, Sarah Maynard, Mervyn Sams and Keir Fuller.

The Branch Chair thanked the speakers for their very interesting presentations.

## **7. Question and Answer Session**

Barry Candy and other members at the AGMs raised questions over the cost of honorary life membership for Chris Earwaker. The Branch Secretary stated that there would be no cost for the Branch and that it will be discussed at the next Branch Committee. Jo Cooke asked how time consuming being a representative is. Sarah Burnett responded that although it does take some time, facility time is available for reps and that the Branch Office are very supportive.

## **8. Any Other Business**

Christine from Frizzells spoke at the Chichester meeting regarding current UNISON Plus Benefits available to members.

## UNISON West Sussex 2014/15

### Branch Officers

Position	Address	Telephone
Chair	Graham Anderson - Communications	033022 22408
Vice-Chair	Ian Harvey - Capita	01243 642330
Branch Secretary	Daniel Sartin- Adults' Services	033022 22262
Deputy B Secretary	Karen Daubney- Adults' Services	01243 777636
Treasurer	Jennie Barrett - Adults' Services	01243 777636
Welfare Officer	David O'Connor - CYPS, Bognor	01243 642446
Equalities, Disabled	Robert Hayes - Children's Services	01243 642459
Equalities, BME	Jules Wilson - Children's Services	01293 610718
Health and Safety	Clive Coleman - Democratic Services	033022 22527
Health and Safety	Chris Barrett - Transport Commissioning	01243 777516
Health and Safety	Karen Daubney - Adults' Services	01243 777636
Environmental	Julie Bolton - Strategic Planning	01243 756888
Communications	Mervyn Sams - Capita	01903 839022
Membership Officer	Stephen Bell - Nviro	07774 072143
Labour Link	Sarah Cawston - Children's Services	01903 839987
Young Members	Taome Gardner - Children's Services	01243 777636
International	David Hammond - Chichester College	01243 786321
Retired Members	Ruby Cox - Retired members	01243 777636
Pensions Champion	Mark Taylor - Communities & Infrastructure	01243 777636
Equalities, Women	<i>Vacant</i>	
Equalities, LGBT	<i>Vacant</i>	
Lifelong Learning	<i>Vacant</i>	
Education	<i>Vacant</i>	

### Workgroup Reps

WSCC Children's Services	Address	Telephone
David Vaughan	Cissbury Lodge, Durrington Lane	01903 700888
David O'Connor	Looked After Children team, Durban House	033022 27209
Jeremy Webster	CAP Children and Adults Services	01293 572541
Glenys Creese	Lyndhurst Children & Family Centre, Worthing	033022 28841
Keir Fuller	Occupational Therapy	01293 572551
Jules Wilson	Intensive Interventions Team	033022 28841
Alison Collins	LAC Younger, Centenary House, Worthing	07734 133116
Mike Behan	Referral & Assessment Team-North	01293 572404
Karen Johnston	Fostering Recruitment Team	01403 229577
Daniel Russell	CAMHS - Worthing The Children's Centre	01903 286754
Sarah Cawston	Careers Advice, Centenary House Durrington	07715 890165
Joanna Bish	Stepping Stones Children and Family centre	07710 494360
Wendy Jones	SEN Assessment Team	033022 25145
Paul Windsor	Integrated Support Team	033022 23764
WSCC Adults' Services		
Annie Flack	Glen Vue	01293 885156
Karen Daubney	The Rowans	01903 218022
Kate Wood	The Laurels	01903 859078
Carole Hillier	The Chestnuts	01243 841708

Cecilia Bisseuseur	Maidenbower Day Centre	01293 885156
Wendy Wilson	Older People Mental Health team, Crawley	07515 052331
Gary Matthews	Older People Mental Health team, Horsham	033022 24286
Diana Knight	Independent Living Team	033022 28292
Matt Fairclough	CTPLD Western	033022 28776
Annie Thorndike	CTPLD North	033022 28748
Mary Davies	Secure & Forensic, Chanctonbury Building	01293 582202
Lorna Cornett	Coastal Older Persons Mental Health Team	01903 843888
Nadia Weston	Coastal Enterprises	01903 239460
David Randall	Burnside Centre	01444 232786
Melanie Campbell	The Pines, Durrington	07985 224267
Darrin Green	Northern Prevention Assessment Team	033022 25622
<b>WSCC Other depts</b>		
Julie Bolton	Environment & Heritage, Northleigh	033022 26446
Clare Snoad	Record Office, Chichester	01243 753613
Chris Barrett	Parking Strategy Team, Northleigh, Chichester	01243 777256
Tim Stanton	Libraries, Archives & Registration Services	01293 651744
Tina Green	Findon Valley Library	01903 244300
Stuart Parrotte	Transport Coordination Group, Drayton Depot	01243 771787
Judith Taylor	Business Improvement	033022 23601
Graham Anderson	Communications and Marketing	033022 22408
Paula Herbert	Legal Services	033022 22719
Clive Coleman	Democratic Services	033022 22527
Vanessa Cummins	School Organisation & Development	033022 23046
Julia Osborn	Registrars, Register Office, Crawley	01243 642122
Jo Cooke	Volunteer Development Team	033022 23891
Neil Bridcut	FRS, Northgate, Chichester, PO19 1BD	033022 25067
Chris Scott	FRS, Northgate, Chichester, PO19 1BD	07760 315285
Robert Mcleod	Caretaking & Premises Support	03302 222829
Bill Johnson	Without Portfolio	01243 777636
<b>WSCC Schools</b>		
Heather Massey	Lyndhurst First School, Worthing	01903 235390
Val Olliver	West Park School, Worthing	01903 243099
Kenneth Mitchell	Chichester High School for Girls	01243 787014
Chris Armstead	St Anthony's School, Chichester	01243 785965
Gary Stepney	Glebe Primary School, Southwick	01273 592163
Marilyn Cox	Field Place First School, Worthing	01903 771981
Abnash Jessal	Oathall Community College, Haywards Heath	01444 414001
Theresa Wyatt	The Angmering School, Angmering	07966 246639
Tracey Clift	Heene CEP School, Worthing	01903 201386
Chris Digan	Holy Trinity Secondary School, Crawley	07912 536260
Nicky Cooksley	St Paul's Catholic College, Burgess Hill	01444 873898
Amanda Shortiss	Oakmeeds Community College, Burgess Hill	07825 076027
Karen Anssari	St Andrew's CE Boys' High School, Worthing	01903 237259
<b>Academies</b>		
Diane Paquette	Midhurst Rother College	01730 812451
Angela Elliott	Shoreham Academy	01273 274100
Lorraine Solti	The Regis School	01243 871010
Sue Chant	Littlehampton Academy	01903 711120
Debra Thompson	Littlehampton Academy	07884 254667
Gary Fletcher	Littlehampton Academy	01903 732996
Sara Redford	Sir Robert Woodard Academy	07935 245973
Samantha Arnold	Portfield Primary Academy,	01243 783939
Joanne Dicaprio	Broadfield East Infant School & Nursery	01293 406182

Debbie Gillies	Bewbush Primary School	01293 534897
Natasha Ellis	The Oaks Primary School	07722 938735
Barbara Black	Ormiston Six Villages Academy	01243 546800
<b>Higher Education</b>		
Chris Anderson	Bishop Otter Campus, Chichester University	01243 812176
Neil Bryant	Bishop Otter Campus, Chichester University	01243 816127
Felicity Taylor	Bishop Otter Campus, Chichester University	01243 816000
Tracy Vine	Bishop Otter Campus, Chichester University	01243 816351
Aileen Arthur	Bognor Regis Campus, Chichester University	01243 812045
<b>Further Education</b>		
Keith Faber	Central Sussex College	07865 046130
Harry Vine	Central Sussex College	01444 456281
Karen Fisher	Northbrook College	01903 273371
Brett Walford	Northbrook College	01903 724424
David Hammond	Chichester College	01243 786321
<b>Other Employers</b>		
Ian Harvey	Contact Centre Capita, Durban House	01243 642330
Abigail Holdsworth	Contact Centre Capita, Durban House	01243 642330
Mervyn Sams	Capita, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor, The Grange, Chichester	033022 27965
Kim Unwin	Capita, County Hall North, Horsham,	01403 229112
Jamie Thomas	Capita, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor, The Grange, Chichester	01243 724293
Stuart Robertson	Outreach 3 Way	01293 551627
Kenneth Godfrey	Stonepillow	01243 537934
Linda Wilson	Aspire Sussex	01243 872025
Karen Polie	Aspire Sussex	01403 732061
Anne Bone	South Downs National Park Authority	01243 788474
Ian McConnell	South Downs National Park Authority	01243 811533
Julie Hawkes	Essex Cares	01243 642427
Catherine Goldsmith	Grace Eyre Foundation	01903 839078
Stephen Bell	NViro	07774 072143

## **Agenda Item 4.2**

### **Honoraria Payments**

UNISON's procedures require Branches to approve honoraria payments at their AGMs. The payments are then made direct to the individuals concerned by Head Office, with deductions made for National Insurance and tax. The first step is for any payments to be discussed at a Branch Committee meeting and those approved are then submitted to the AGM for final approval.

Our Branch's practice over many years has been to agree a percentage of subscription income (currently 2.25%) which is included in the branch budget and allocated by the Branch Committee to those Officers and Reps who have made a significant contribution to branch activity in their own time. Last year payments were made to the Branch Treasurer Jennie Barrett (£2,988) and to Roy Noble (£100), the Branch's previous Labour Link Officer.

In the case of the Branch Treasurer it has been the practice to regularly pay an honorarium as this officer is not provided with facility time and has to complete the accounts and other associated work at evenings, weekends and lunchtimes. With a branch budget in the region of £150,000 this is a considerable workload.

### **Proposals for 2014**

In order to conform with the rules, the Branch Committee, having discussed the matter at their meeting on 15 January 2014, recommends to the AGM that the following honoraria be paid in recognition of extensive input to Branch activities in the individual's own time (in respect of the Branch Treasurer) and recognition payments for long service to one officer who stood down during 2013:

- Jennie Barrett, Branch Treasurer, a payment of £2,988.
- Heather Massey, former Senior Schools Officer, a payment of £250.

Dan Sartin  
Branch Secretary  
February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2014

### **Item 4.3**

#### **To agree to move £7,500 to the Branch Industrial Action Fund**

The Branch's members face extraordinary challenges in the workplace, not just due to the increasing pressures created by recruitment freezes and vacancy deletion. The very future of some services will be in doubt in the coming period, as the County Council faces up to the consequences of freezing Council Tax and making its own already severe financial position even worse. Alongside threats to services are threats to terms and conditions, which will inevitably arise if the County Council pushes ahead with its outsourcing and privatisation plans in the way it envisages. As well as impacting on current staff Terms and Conditions, the terms and conditions of 'new starters' are nearly always reduced, and the character of public services change as new profit-motivated firms move in

The Branch Committee agreed a 31-point Branch Strategy for 2014/15 at its Committee meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2014. One of these was:

*That the Branch fully supports any group of members wishing to take industrial action in defence of terms and conditions put under threat by privatisation.*

UNISON West Sussex, in common with other local government branches, holds its own Industrial Action Fund. We use it to provide hardship payments to Branch members who take industrial action. We have previously used a qualification formula for award of these hardship monies, which is that the member applying must earn less than the Government's low-pay threshold of £21,000 per annum full time equivalent in order to receive 50% of the loss of earnings. Our Branch Industrial Action Fund currently holds around £1,500.

The rules of the union enable Branches to move up to 5% of income from member subscriptions to a Branch Industrial Action Fund in any one year. The Branch Committee also agreed at its Committee meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2014 to move close to this maximum amount (£7,500) to its Fund in order to help meet the Branch's objective to support any group of members wishing to take industrial action in defence of terms and conditions.

Therefore, the following Resolution is put to this year's AGM:

*That this AGM approves the Branch Committee decision taken at its meeting of 15<sup>th</sup> January 2014 to move £7,500 to the Branch Industrial Action Fund.*

### **Membership**

Membership has made a welcome net gain. This is very good news considering the staff headcount of the major employer, West Sussex County Council (WSSC), has fallen as public sector cuts continue to bite. But increasing numbers of workers are prioritising union membership, and our density has increased as the headcount reduces. It should be noted that 60% of new joiners are joining online and choosing to pay their union subscriptions by direct debit, which is a marked change on previous years. The launch of the new Branch website should assist this trend.

Full members:	5,244 (net gain of 1.8%)
Unemployed members:	47
Retired members:	804
Total members:	6,095

Retired membership shows a small decrease. We have continued to recruit new retired members, but we also contacted all retired members by post this year and found that a number had sadly died and needed to be removed from our mailing list.

The Branch ran successful recruitment campaigns throughout the year, which helped to raise our profile with staff as well as to replace members inevitably lost due to retirement and staff leaving for new jobs. Reps play a big role in helping us to recruit new members and thanks go to all the Branch Reps for playing this vital role. Members can play their part too by making a special effort in 2014 to recruit at least one colleague as a new member in 2014.

### **Website ([www.unisonwestsussex.org.uk](http://www.unisonwestsussex.org.uk))**

The Branch completed work on its new website in 2013 and it launched early in 2014. We commissioned a local firm to do the work. The website was created using 'responsive design' so it looks great and is fully functional on smart phones and tablets, as well as PCs. The Branch Committee felt this was important to keep in touch with members, many of whom work away from office environments such as care workers. Members will find regular news updates, and information about the full range of member services and supports. This will be a handy reference point when trying to convince non-members of the benefits of joining. Thanks go to the Branch Communications Officer and a small team of Reps who assisted the project through to launch.

### **Reps**

We have around 100 workplace Reps and they continue to do a sterling job for the Branch recruiting new members, distributing information, supporting members with their issues or signposting them to the Branch office, and acting as a spokesperson within their workplace. Branch Officers also play a magnificent role either through their stewardship of the Branch or by developing and utilising expertise in particular areas. Thanks go to them for their hard work throughout 2013.

In 2013 we continued our new scheme for supporting the training of our Reps. 34 Reps undertook 59 training courses during 2013, ranging from 'Reorganisation & Redundancy' to 'Employment Law'.

## **Facility cut**

Branch Reps are increasingly important to the Branch and they are entitled to what is known in law as 'facility time' (paid time off from work) to undertake both *duties* and, where recognised by the employer, *activities* for the union. From April 2013, an ideological cut made by the Council's Cabinet to UNISON's *consolidated* facility time meant that we lost 30% of core branch officer hours dedicated to supporting our members. Sadly, we lost both Heather Massey (our Senior Schools Rep) and Simon Holder (our Deputy, whose hours were halved, before he left the Council for another job). Increasingly, our workplace Reps are using *unconsolidated* facility time to help the Branch plug the gap to support our members. Unconsolidated facility time is protected by law, and beyond the reach of ideologically-motivated local politicians who have sought to undermine our work, rather than do what is right for staff and the Council itself. In addition, the Branch has adapted to the 30% cut to Branch officer time through using specialist Negotiation Officer roles.

## **Collective work**

The Branch has been involved in a huge amount of 'collective' support work for members. Very few of the employers the Branch supports members within have escaped some form of reorganisation during 2013 – whether redundancy situations, TUPE transfers, or changes to terms and conditions. Our largest employer, the County Council, appears to reorganise itself continuously, often with scores of situations requiring our involvement at any one time. Significant reorganisations have included Adults' Services Redesign, Youth Service cuts, Aspire Sussex redundancies and the many schools which have reduced staffing levels. We have gone on to support individuals with particular issues arising from collective consultation on a number of occasions.

Capita has undertaken a large number of staff reorganisations in its first year of operation, some of which have resulted in compulsory redundancies. The branch has reported previously in *Branch Lines* our members' dissatisfaction with the way in which Capita went about consulting with them over organisational change. We sought support from the national UNISON officer and were able to resolve the situation by coming to a new agreement on how consultation would take place. Members continue to report dissatisfaction with Capita as an employer (and indeed, members employed by WSCC often voice frustration with the level of service now provided by Capita) and the Branch has plans to undertake work around these themes in 2014/15.

The Branch Committee has resolved to fully support any group of members who wish to prevent the privatisation of their service, whether by supporting the development of alternative business cases and in-house service improvement plans, or by action to prevent erosion of terms and conditions.

## **Individual work**

The Branch dealt with 223 formal cases during 2013 (an increase of 7% on 2012) where a Rep was assigned to assist the member. In addition to formal casework, in 2013 the Branch dealt with 261 requests for advice (an increase of 32%) which were resolved over the phone and did not lead to formal cases. That the increase in contacts with the office did not lead to larger increases in formal casework is due to the Branch's Casework Coordinator playing a more proactive gatekeeping role with new enquiries from members.

These increases in individual support to members show no sign of abating. That 484 members, over 9% of the Branch membership took formal and informal individual advice and support in 2013 is an incredible statistic and underscores the pressures there are in the

modern public service workplace. This figure excludes all 'once and done' enquiries, non-casework enquiries such as subscription queries, and all collective work undertaken on behalf of members. Many hundreds more members received support from the Branch through collective re-organisations which are not recorded in the 'individual support' statistics. How the Branch continues to meet these challenges whilst defending our members' interests and campaigning to protect public services will be the challenge for 2014/15. You can play your part by getting actively involved in the work of your branch.

We have started to publish the many 'thank you's' we receive from members in *Branch Lines*. UNISON does make a positive difference for many members in their hour of need. But sadly the employment law framework is ever-tightening due to hostile legislation from the current Government. In such a context it is not possible for unions to 'win them all', and this is as frustrating for union reps as it is for members.

### **Pay**

During 2013 the trade union side of the NJC bargaining machinery reluctantly accepted a 1% pay rise on behalf of members, after members voted in indicative ballots to accept the offer. Members will no doubt be asked again during 2014 what action they are prepared to take to defend their core pay and prevent its further erosion. A Local Government pay dispute has been formally raised by UNISON in response to the failure by the employers' side to make a timely offer. More information on this is available on our website.

Branch members at the University of Chichester have taken consecutive days' strike action in pursuit of a pay offer in excess of 1%. The employers have refused to negotiate further and since imposed a 1% award on staff. Unions involved are currently deciding on next steps. We commend our members and Reps at Chi Uni for the solid action they took.

The Branch has supported a pay claim for members in the Capita Contact Centre. In 2013 their claim was settled at 2.5%.

### **Campaigns**

The Branch made a number of interventions in the media during 2013. These ranged from news releases on the Youth Service cuts, which led to TV and Radio interviews, to press releases on the December 2013 Full Council meeting at which £141million service cuts were debated, again resulting in radio interviews and press coverage. The Branch Secretary has spoken in defence of jobs and services at WSCC Select Committees, in 2013 notably on Youth Services cuts and the Music Service mutualisation.

We have continued to support and work with community campaigns representing the public who bear the brunt of the cuts. We received an award from the UNISON South East region for 'Campaigning branch of the year 2013' in recognition of our work in raising the profile of the damage cuts are doing in West Sussex.

### **Branch organisation**

The Branch has been using a revised set of rules since its AGM of March 2011. These were due to be reviewed in August 2013, and the review was held between the Branch Secretary and our Regional Officer, Sarah McGreal. The rules were agreed to be fit for purpose, and the Branch has continued to operate within them and without issue since adoption in 2011. No changes are therefore proposed to be made to the Branch rules.

*Dan Sartin | Branch Secretary | 26<sup>th</sup> February 2014*