

UNISON West Sussex

Draft Minutes of the Aggregate Annual General Meetings held on Monday 10th, 17th and 24th March 2014 in Worthing, Horsham and Chichester.

Present: Graham Anderson (Branch Chair), Ian Harvey (Deputy Chair), Daniel Sartin (Branch Secretary) and 94 members in total.

In attendance: Sarah McGreal (Regional Officer), Steve Brazier (Regional Manager) [Worthing only], James Smith (Regional Officer) [Chichester Only], Margaret Guest (Guest Speaker).

Apologies: Heather Massey, Malcolm Spiers.

1. Welcome

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced the Regional Officers and guest speaker.

2. Minutes of the Aggregate Annual General Meetings held on 11th, 12th and 13th March 2013

Resolved: The minutes of the AGMs held on 11th, 12th and 13th March were approved as a correct record.

3. Approval of Branch Officers and Representatives for 2013/14

It was noted that there were current vacancies for the positions of Equalities (Women), Equalities (LGBT), Lifelong Learning and Education. Any interested members should contact the Branch Secretary, Branch Chair or Office.

Resolved: Nominations for Branch Officers and Representatives were approved.

4. Branch Finance and Accounts for 2013

4.1 The Branch Secretary presented the Treasurer's report and it was noted that at the end of the year there was a surplus of income over expenditure of just over £12K, due to a vacancy gap – the Membership Administrator could not be replaced due to the rollout of the new national UNISON database. This increased the amount held in Reserves but it would be spent down over the next two years with planned expenditure on Branch staff in order to maintain support for individual members and during the many collective reorganisations anticipated in the coming three years.

Resolved: the accounts for 2013 were approved.

4.2 The AGM was asked to approve an honoraria payment to Jennie Barrett for the sum of £2988 in recognition of the work she does in her own time. Also a sum of £250 to Heather Massey in recognition of the hard work she did prior to the removal of the Senior Schools' Representative facility time by WSCC.

Resolved: Honoraria payments were approved for Jennie Barrett and Heather Massey.

4.3 The AGM was asked to approve the move of £7,500 to the Branch Industrial Action Fund as it was anticipated that there would be an increased need for this to support individuals taking action in support of pay claims, and if members decided on industrial action as a result of outsourcing and changes to terms and conditions.

4.4 A member asked if the funding was unused if it could be reallocated. The Branch Secretary said this can be done at future AGMs.

Resolved: It was agreed to move £7,500 to the Branch Industrial Action Fund.

5. Annual Report

The Branch Secretary referred to the written report which had been sent to all attendees.

Membership has increased by 1.8%, despite reductions in employers' staffing due to public sector cuts, and the impact of outsourcing. The Branch Secretary emphasised that it was essential to keep recruitment high and he asked all present to encourage non-members to join and that he would be happy to attend any team meetings to explain the benefits of UNISON membership.

It was noted that there had been a 30% cut to consolidated facility time made by WSCC. The number of Workplace Representatives had increased. The Branch Secretary asked for anyone interested in becoming a rep to let him know as there is always a need for more workers to fulfil this role, particularly at the present time.

The Branch Secretary showed the AGM the new website which had been launched in February.

He reported that there had been a considerable amount of Collective work undertaken by the Branch in 2013, such as supporting staff through the restructuring of Youth Services and Adults' Services, as well as continuing to support a large number of individual cases, both formal and informal. The Branch had been involved in a number of media campaigns, and had won an award in recognition of this work.

The Branch Secretary reported that that there was very likely to be a ballot on NJC pay this year and Steve Brazier confirmed that the Employers' side had not yet made any offer.

The Branch Chair endorsed the Branch Secretary's thanks to Workplace Representatives and Branch staff for the work they had undertaken during 2013.

Resolved: to approve the Annual Report.

6. Question and Answer Session

A question was raised about facility time and the Branch Secretary explained the difference between *Consolidated* and *Unconsolidated* time.

A member wished to know how the industrial action hardship fund worked in practice. The Branch Secretary explained the process and confirmed that this would be advertised to members in advance of any industrial action, if use of the fund was approved by the Branch Committee. If the Branch's funds run out, or indeed at any time, we can make a request to the South East Region's Industrial Action Hardship fund. This was done during the West Sussex Contact Centre SERCO strike.

A member wished to thank Mervyn Sams for all his hard work as a Capita Rep.

7. Presentation by Margaret Guest, UNISON Retired member and Chair of the *Don't Cut Us Out West Sussex* campaign.

Margaret Guest explained the organisation's role which campaigns on behalf of vulnerable people, including for the jobs of those providing services, and the impact of continuing cuts on services.

The Branch Chair thanked Margaret for an informative and thought provoking talk.

After questions from members the meeting was drawn to a close.