



**UNISON: the public service union**  
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**Branch Secretary:** Dan Sartin

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If calling ask for:

or email:

Your Ref:

Our Ref:

March 2<sup>nd</sup> 2016

Dear member,

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

I would like to invite you to the Branch's Annual General Meeting for 2016. We will be holding our AGM over three separate meetings, and I hope you will be able to make one of them.

**Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> March, Conference Room 4, Centenary House, Worthing, BN13 2QB**  
**Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> March, Main Conference Room, County Hall North, Horsham, RH12 1XH**  
**Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> March, Committee Room 3, County Hall, Chichester, PO19 1RQ**

Our guest speaker this year, at all three AGM meetings after the business has been moved, is Peter Scott-Presland, author of 'Amiable Warriors: the official history of the Campaign for Homosexual Equality'. Peter is an entertaining speaker. We hope members will be interested to hear about the development of the LGBT rights movement in the UK from the 1950s to the present day.

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 2015 AGM
3. List of your Branch Officers and Workplace Reps for 2016/17
4. Honoraria payments
5. The branch Annual Report for 2015/16.

I look forward to seeing you.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Dan Sartin'.

Dan Sartin  
Branch Secretary

**UNISON West Sussex**

**Annual General Meetings**

**29 March, Worthing  
30 March, Horsham  
31 March, Chichester**

**12.30-2.00pm**

**AGENDA**

1. Welcome from Branch Chair.
2. Approval of the Minutes of the AGM held on 19, 23 and 24 March 2015, and matters arising (ENCLOSED).
3. Approval of Branch Officers and Workplace Representatives for 2016/17 (ENCLOSED).
4. Branch Finance and Accounts for 2015:
  - 4.1 To approve the accounts (TO BE TABLED);
  - 4.2 To agree honoraria payments (ENCLOSED).
5. Annual Report (ENCLOSED).
6. Question and Answer Session (Questions can be asked at the meeting, or can be emailed/posted in advance).
7. Presentation by Peter Scott-Presland, author of *Amiable Warriors, the official history of the Campaign for Homosexual Equality*
8. Question and Answer Session.
9. Close of meeting.

## **UNISON West Sussex**

### **Minutes of the Aggregate Annual General Meetings held on 19<sup>th</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> March at Worthing, Horsham and Chichester.**

**Present:** Ian Harvey (Branch Chair), Daniel Sartin (Branch Secretary), Karen Daubney (Deputy Branch Secretary) and 71 members in total.

**In attendance:** Steve Brazier (Regional Manager) Worthing, Sarah McGreal (Regional Officer) Horsham & Chichester, Jennie Barrett (Treasurer) Chichester, Andy Holt (Speaker), James Ellis (Branch Officer) Chichester, Margaret Guest Chichester and Cathy Leng & Thomas French (Minutes)

**Apologies:** Jennie Barrett (Treasurer) Worthing & Horsham

#### **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 10<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> March 2014**

There were no matters arising.

**Resolved:** The minutes of the AGMs 10, 17 and 24 March 2014 were approved unanimously as a correct record.

#### **3. Approval of Branch Officers and Workplace Representatives for 2015**

It was noted that there were currently vacancies for Equalities' Reps for Women and LGBT and that anyone who was interested in these positions should contact the Branch Secretary.

**Resolved:** Nominations for Branch Officers and Representatives were approved unanimously.

#### **4.1 Branch Finance and Accounts for 2014**

The finance report was presented and members were advised that at the end of the year the Branch had a small surplus but that in 2015 there would be an anticipated deficit out-turn of £25k in order to maintain levels of support. There would be changes in reps' subsistence expenses in order to comply with the NEC decision regarding HMRC policy.

**Resolved:** The accounts for 2014 were approved unanimously.

#### **4.2 To agree honoraria payments**

The AGM was asked to approve an honoraria payment to Jennie Barrett in the sum of £3,054 in recognition of the work she does in her own time. Also, recognition payments of £150 to workplace reps Keir Fuller and Jeremy Webster.

**Resolved:** Honoraria payments were approved for Jennie Barrett, Keir Fuller and Jeremy Webster.

## **5 Annual Report**

The Branch Secretary / Deputy Branch Secretary presented the annual report. Members were thanked for everything that was being done to encourage new membership which had increased by 2% over the year.

## **6 Question and answer session**

The Branch Secretary was asked how he saw the Branch being able to represent members because of the large number of outsourced employers.

Dan Sartin agreed that this was a problem as the new workforce comes in on lower terms and doesn't tend to join UNISON which affects the union's collective strength. He said many people don't understand they are able to join and that there was a major challenge for communications and a need to maintain the density of reps.

A question was asked if there were any plans to engage with private providers in the care sector.

Dan Sartin advised that the market was now very difficult but that we would pick up what we could and gave Worthing MIND as an example. He also advised that UNISON was involved with WSCC in looking at the provision of domiciliary care.

Members asked about the postponement of the second strike day when West Sussex members had voted for industrial action and what the Branch could do in future rounds of pay talks.

Dan Sartin advised that he was to attend a special Local Government conference on 24<sup>th</sup> March and that there was a motion which seeks to reopen pay negotiations for 2015/16. There are also Pay and Reward proposals due to be put forward by WSCC regarding, with which UNISON is involved and will be consulted.

A member thanked the Branch Secretary for the work he had undertaken over the year, particularly during the strike. He was asked if the rise in membership could be identified across services.

Dan advised that this could not be done. He went on to say that, despite the increase in numbers, there had been a reduction in the number of members from higher income brackets and that it continued to be a challenge to keep membership static in the light of cuts and changes.

A member asked whether there had been any further news on the WSCC Highways Hub.

**Action:** James Ellis said he would chase WSCC for a response.

A member asked about WSCC funding for Personal Development Plans and why this was not more widely publicised to staff.

**Action:** Julie Bolton agreed to find out more about this and share it with the Branch.

**Resolved:** The annual report was approved unanimously.

## **7 Presentation by Andy Holt on the Branch's project to examine the West Sussex Capita contract.**

Andy Holt gave a presentation summarising the results of the recent survey and looking particularly at the impact of the Capita contract on Capita customers and employees. He had also done face to face interviews and had looked at other models of providing public services. He reported that he still needed to analyse the qualitative data and had requested further performance monitoring data.

## **8 Question and answer session**

The Branch Chair thanked Andy for an interesting and informative presentation.

A member asked if he had looked into the financial savings.

Andy advised that care needed to be taken due to the commercial sensitivity of data but that he had requested financial data.

Members referred to the recent Capita Road Shows attended by senior officers from Head Office.

Andy pointed out that there were some common themes coming out of these, alongside Capita's own survey and the UNISION survey and there was a need to scrutinise the role of the commissioners in future as well as looking at what Capita could do to address issues.

A member asked about the balance between positive and negative comments in the survey as it looked as if there had been an even mix of opinions.

Andy said it was mainly negative but the presentation aimed to present a balance of opinion to give members something to consider before the report is published.

A member asked about if the research can be further expanded on or found online.

Andy said that the report can be displayed in different ways, but will be published in full later. All members would have access to it.

A member commented that HR is being replaced with self-service advice systems on The Point and staff are wasting a lot of time getting support.

Andy agreed that a lot more time is spent finding out basic information and even senior staff have reported a hard time getting support.

Chris Barrett said he was pleased to see both Capita and WSCC cooperating with the research, but asked why UNISON was paying for the research, when a global company like Capita and WSCC are not.

Andy said it was decided that UNISON would do this research, to provide a higher level of scrutiny of Capita. Andy said Trade Unions should be doing these forms of research to be able to have a bigger role in influencing local government contracting.

Sarah McGreal said that National Officers of UNISON who work with Capita will use this report and it will be shared with other UNISON branches to support potential Capita contracts.

- 9 The Branch Chair thanked Dan Sartin for his work as Branch Secretary and Dan also acknowledged the work done by the Branch Office Staff.

The meeting was drawn to a close.

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## UNISON West Sussex 2016/17

### Branch Officers

| Position/Officer        | Name and Service                              | Telephone    |
|-------------------------|---|--------------|
| Chair                   | Ian Harvey, Capita                            | 01243 642330 |
| Vice Chair              | Sarah Cawston, Children's Services            | 01903 839987 |
| Branch Secretary        | Daniel Sartin, UNISON Office                  | 01243 777636 |
| Deputy Branch Secretary | Karen Daubney, UNISON Office                  | 01243 777636 |
| Treasurer               | Jennie Barrett, Adults' Services              | 01243 777636 |
| Welfare                 | David O'Connor, Children's Services           | 01243 642446 |
| Equalities, Women       | <b>Vacant</b>                                 |              |
| Equalities, LGBT        | Paul Windsor, Children's Services             | 033022 23764 |
| Equalities, Disabled    | Robert Hayes, Children's Services             | 01243 642459 |
| Equalities, BME         | Jules Wilson, Youth Offending Team            | 01293 610718 |
| Health and Safety       | Clive Coleman, Democratic Services            | 033022 22527 |
| Health and Safety       | Chris Barrett, Infrastructure                 | 01243 777516 |
| Health and Safety       | Karen Daubney, UNISON Office                  | 01243 777636 |
| Lifelong Learning       | Mervyn Sams, Office Services                  | 033022 27965 |
| Education               | Mervyn Sams, Office Services                  | 033022 27965 |
| Environment             | Julie Bolton, Strategic Planning              | 01243 756888 |
| Communications          | <b>Vacant</b>                                 |              |
| Membership              | <b>Vacant</b>                                 |              |
| Labour Link             | Sarah Cawston, Children's Services            | 01903 839987 |
| Young Members           | Laura Child, Thomas Bennett Community College | 01293 526255 |
| International           | David Hammond, Chichester College             | 01243 786321 |
| Retired Members         | Ruby Cox                                      | 01243 777636 |

### Workplace Reps

| WSCC Children's Services | Workplace                                       | Telephone    |
|--------------------------|---|--------------|
| Heather Andersson        | Littlehampton Children and Family Centre        | 01903 276840 |
| Mike Behan               | Referral & Assessment Team, Crawley Library     | 01293 572404 |
| Joanna Bish              | Stepping Stones Children and Family Centre      | 07710 494360 |
| Sarah Cawston            | SEN Team, Centenary House                       | 01903 839987 |
| Alison Collins           | Children's Services, Centenary House            | 01903 270129 |
| Glenys Creese            | Horsham Nursery School Children & Family Centre | 033022 28841 |
| Karen Daubney            | The Rowans, Worthing                            | 01903 218022 |
| Karen Hayes              | Child & Family Intervention Service             | 01243 642917 |
| Karen Johnston           | Fostering Recruitment Team, County Hall North   | 01403 229577 |
| Wendy Jones              | SEN Assessment Team, County Hall                | 033022 25145 |
| David O'Connor           | Special Guardianships, County Hall North        | 033022 27209 |
| Sean O'Donnell           | Parkfield Children & Family Centre              | 01903 270412 |

|                              |  |              |
|------------------------------|--|--------------|
| Sadie Phillips               | Children & Young Disability Services Cissbury Lodge        | 01243 642424 |
| Sara Pink                    | Boundstone Nursery School, Children and Family Centre      | 01903 276850 |
| Paul Windsor                 | Children's Safeguarding Unit, County Hall North            | 033022 23764 |
| <b>WSCC Adult's Services</b> |  |              |
| Lorna Cornett                | Coastal Older Persons Mental Health, Worthing              | 01903 239460 |
| Mary Davies                  | Swandean Hospital  | 01903 843000 |
| Matt Fairclough              | CTPLD Western, Durban House                                | 033022 28776 |
| Annie Flack                  | Glen Vue, East Grinstead                                   | 01293 885156 |
| Robert Hayes                 | CDT South West, Durban House                               | 033022 42459 |
| Diana Knight                 | Independent Living Team, East Row                          | 03302 228292 |
| Penny Marks-Billson          | Occupational Therapy, Worthing                             | 033022 28087 |
| David Randall                | Burnside Centre, Burgess Hill                              | 01444 232786 |
| Miranda Shute                | New Tyne Resource Centre                                   | 01903 277414 |
| Annie Thorndike              | CTPLD North, County Hall North                             | 033022 28748 |
| Nadia Weston                 | Coastal Enterprises, Worthing                              | 01903 239460 |
| Wendy Wilson                 | Older Person's Mental Health, Crawley Library              | 07515 052331 |
| <b>WSCC Other</b>            |  |              |
| Chris Barrett                | Parking Strategy Team, Northleigh                          | 01243 777256 |
| Julie Bolton                 | Environment & Heritage, Northleigh                         | 033022 26446 |
| Clive Coleman                | Legal and Democratic Services, County Hall                 | 033022 22527 |
| Jo Cooke                     | Parish and Town Councils and Local Governance, County Hall | 033022 23891 |
| Vanessa Cummins              | School Organisation & Development, County Hall             | 033022 23046 |
| Tina Green                   | Goring Library   | 01903 244300 |
| Paula Herbert                | Legal Services, County Hall                                | 033022 22719 |
| Robert Mcleod                | Caretaking & Premises Support                              | 03302 222829 |
| Julia Osborn                 | Regulatory Services, Crawley Register Office               | 01243 642122 |
| Stuart Parrotte              | Transport, Drayton Depot                                   | 01243 771787 |
| Clare Snoad                  | Records Management, Chichester Record Office               | 01243 753613 |
| Tim Stanton                  | Crawley Library  | 01293 651744 |
| Judith Taylor                | Public Health, County Hall                                 | 033022 23601 |
| <b>WSCC Schools</b>          |  |              |
| Karen Anssari                | St Andrew's CE Boys' High School                           | 01903 237259 |
| Chris Armstead               | St Anthony's School  | 01243 785965 |
| Samantha Arnold              | Felpham Community College                                  | 01243 785965 |
| Patricia Barrett             | Kingslea Primary School                                    | 01403 254282 |
| Tracey Clift                 | Heene CEP School   | 01903 201386 |
| Marilyn Cox                  | Field Place First School                                   | 01444 873898 |
| Chris Digan                  | Holy Trinity Secondary School                              | 01293 423690 |
| Carole Doherty               | Turners Hill Primary                                       | 01342 71660  |
| Stella Hamilton              | Manor Green College  | 01293 520351 |
| Laura Langan                 | Oak Grove College  | 01903 209771 |

|                          |   |              |
|--------------------------|---|--------------|
| Heather Massey           | Lyndhurst First School                  | 01903 235390 |
| Keith Manville           | Oak Grove College                       | 01903 209771 |
| Polly McDonald           | Oathall Community College               | 01444 417945 |
| Nicholas O'Connor        | St Philip Howard Catholic High School   | 01243 552055 |
| Becky Roberts            | Manor Green College                     | 01293 520351 |
| Debbie Roberts           | East Preston Infant School              | 01903 773177 |
| Gary Stepney             | Glebe Primary School                    | 01273 592163 |
| Peter Thompson           | The Forest School                       | 01403 261086 |
| Clare Weare              | Palatine Primary School                 | 01903 242835 |
| <b>Academies</b>         |   |              |
| Sue Chant                | The Littlehampton Academy               | 01903 711120 |
| Laura Child              | Thomas Bennett Community College        | 01293 526255 |
| Joanne Dicaprio          | Broadfield East Infant School & Nursery | 01293 406182 |
| Angela Elliott           | Shoreham Academy                        | 01273 274100 |
| Gary Fletcher            | The Littlehampton Academy               | 01903 711120 |
| Debbie Gillies           | Bewbush Primary School                  | 01293 527473 |
| Gyilmard Horsfield       | Bishop Luffa School                     | 01243 787741 |
| Kenneth Mitchell         | Chichester High School for Girls        | 01243 787691 |
| Diane Paquette           | Midhurst Rother College                 | 01730 812451 |
| Jaqueline Parkinson      | Worthing High School                    | 01903 237864 |
| Mandy Power              | Portfield Primary Academy               | 01243 783939 |
| Paul Smith               | Warden Park School                      | 01444440274  |
| Lorraine Solti           | The Regis School                        | 01243 871010 |
| Sue Sykes-Little         | The Academy Selsey                      | 01243 602558 |
| Amanda Tattersall        | The Globe Primary Academy               | 01903 854970 |
| Debra Thompson           | The Littlehampton Academy               | 01903 711120 |
| <b>Further Education</b> |   |              |
| Jane Crowley             | The College of Richard Collyer          | 01403 210822 |
| Keith Faber              | Central Sussex College                  | 084515 50043 |
| Karen Fisher             | Northbrook College                      | 08451 556060 |
| David Hammond            | Chichester College                      | 01243 786321 |
| Hazel Paine              | Worthing College                        | 01903 275755 |
| <b>Higher Education</b>  |   |              |
| Chris Anderson           | University of Chichester                | 01243 816000 |
| Neil Bryant              | University of Chichester                | 01243 816000 |
| Felicity Taylor          | University of Chichester                | 01243 816000 |
| Tracy Vine               | University of Chichester                | 01243 816000 |
| <b>Other Employers</b>   |   |              |
| Anne Bone                | South Downs National Park Authority     | 030030 31053 |
| Graeme Brookes-Butt      | Capita, County Hall North               | 01403 229524 |
| Andrew Carr              | The Disabilities Trust                  | 01444 483883 |
| Matthew Dowse            | South Downs National Park Authority     | 01730 814810 |
| Kenneth Godfrey          | Stonepillow                             | 01293 551627 |

|                     |                                     |              |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------|
| Catherine Goldsmith | Grace Eyre Foundation               | 01273 201900 |
| Ian Harvey          | Capita, Durban House                | 01243 642330 |
| Abigail Holdsworth  | Capita, Durban House                | 01243 642330 |
| Catherine Hughes    | Aspire Sussex                       | 01243 871010 |
| Neil Man            | Affinity Sutton                     | 01788 810080 |
| Ian McConnell       | South Downs National Park Authority | 030030 31053 |
| Karen Polie         | Aspire Sussex                       | 01243 850710 |
| Mervyn Sams         | Capita, County Hall Chichester      | 033022 27965 |
| Linzi Stancomb      | Capita, Centenary House             | 033022 28308 |
| Denies Stephens     | Capita, Durban House                | 01243 850710 |
| Briony Stilliard    | Aspire Sussex                       | 01243 850711 |
| Richard Stange      | Grace Eyre                          | 07838227068  |
| Kim Unwin           | Capita, East Surrey Hospital        | 033022 29112 |

## **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 (£3,054) and to Keir Fuller and Jeremy Webster (both £150).

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 £180,000 this is a considerable workload.

### **Proposals for 2016**

In order to conform with the rules, the Branch Committee, having discussed the matter at its meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2016, 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 their outstanding contribution to three Workplace Reps who have either left the Branch due retirement or who have stepped down from the role:

- Jennie Barrett, Branch Treasurer, a payment of £3,085.
- Harry Vine, Workplace rep at Central Sussex College, a payment of £100
- Linda Wilson, Workplace rep at Aspire Ltd, a payment of £100
- Debbie Sanders-Fox, Workplace rep at Fordwater School, a payment of £100

Dan Sartin  
Branch Secretary  
March 2<sup>nd</sup> 2016

## **UNISON West Sussex**

### **Annual Report of the Branch Committee**

**Item 5**

#### **Membership**

Membership has made a slight fall of 0.2%. This is unfortunate, but largely to be expected as we have seen cuts continue to bite in our main employer, WSCC, and particularly in Further Education colleges as the Government's 24% funding cut in 2015/16 to colleges has hit both students and our members' jobs alike.

|                     |       |
|---------------------|-------|
| Full members:       | 5,336 |
| Unemployed members: | 11    |
| Retired members:    | 627   |
| Total members:      | 5,974 |

| <b>2012</b> | <b>2013</b> | <b>2014</b> | <b>2015</b> |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| 5,152       | 5,244       | 5,348       | 5,336       |
| +3.0%       | +1.8%       | +2.0%       | -0.2%       |

UNISON West Sussex remains the largest branch of any trade union in the county. But the Branch Committee has not rested on its laurels and agreed a recruitment strategy in November 2015 which includes a number of new initiatives.

The more members we have, the more we can achieve for you. Please encourage non-members to [join us](#).

The Branch has increased its recruitment of retired members by improving contact with members as they retire. In 2015 we secured a module on the WSCC 'preparing for retirement' course which should increase our visibility to retiring members from 2016.

#### **Reps**

We have [over one hundred 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. 19 new Reps joined the Branch in 2015.

[Branch Officers](#) also play an important role either through their stewardship of the Branch or by developing and utilising their expertise in particular areas. Thanks go to them for their hard work throughout 2015.

33 Reps undertook 40 [training courses](#) during 2015, ranging from 'Reorganisation & Redundancy' to 'Developing Representations skills'.

If you could be a Rep for your workplace, [contact the Branch office](#) to find out more.

#### **Collective work**

As ever, UNISON works hard behind the scenes to secure the best outcome for members prior to formal consultations and in discussions on terms and conditions. Consultation machinery and processes differ by employer, but to give an example,

UNISON Branch Officers and Reps are involved in fourteen regular and ongoing forums to represent your views within West Sussex County Council.

Many employers within the branch have similar though less extensive negotiation machineries, and these are proliferating due to the increase of active academy chains within the county. To keep up with this demand to support our members in this regard, we need reps to come forward from within those employers.

The Branch is involved in specific redesign projects and pre-consultation meetings, giving us an opportunity to shape proposals where this is possible. When there are specific proposals for reorganisation, the Branch is involved in supporting its members from the outset during those formal consultations. The Branch has been involved in a huge number of service redesigns, redundancy situations, location changes, grade changes, TUPE transfers, and other changes to terms and conditions during 2015, impacting on many hundreds of members. At any one time we have around 25 collective negotiations underway.

### **Individual work**

The Branch dealt with 231 formal cases during 2015 where a Rep or Caseworker was assigned to represent a member in an individual case.

Formal casework figures:

| <b>2012</b> | <b>2013</b> | <b>2014</b> | <b>2015</b> |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| 209         | 223         | 235         | 231         |
| +30.6%      | +6.7%       | +5.4%       | +1.7%       |

In addition to formal casework, in 2015 the Branch dealt with 235 requests for advice which were resolved over the phone and did not lead to formal cases.

Informal advice figures:

| <b>2012</b> | <b>2013</b> | <b>2014</b> | <b>2015</b> |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| 198         | 261         | 228         | 235         |
| Unknown     | +31.8%      | -12.6%      | +3.1%       |

That 466 members, 8.7% of the Branch membership, required formal or informal individual advice and support in 2015 shows the pressures there are in the modern public service workplace. This figure excludes other non-casework 'once and done' enquiries (e.g. about membership or subscriptions), pieces of advice dispensed direct by Branch Officers and staff when members contact them directly, 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.

The Branch also had 42 active personal injury claims for members during 2015. We have used Branch Lines [and our website](#) to keep members aware of the value of the UNISON personal injury service, and in 2015 many tens of thousands of pounds were won for West Sussex members who had accidents inside or outside the workplace, and members' partners when outside the workplace.

## **Pay**

Pay has continued to stagnate across most public service employers, and the experience has been no different in West Sussex. The NJC pay settlement of 2.2% (for two years) was implemented across our main employer from January 2015, and it is only now in 2016 that there is new hope that pay restraint can be challenged. Similarly, Autumn 2015 saw a rejection of the pay offer by members in Further Education for the first time since 2002. Associated strike action is now taking place this year.

The Branch has supported local pay claims for members in 2015 in a number of employers where we are 'recognised' for collective bargaining: in the Capita Contact Centre; Aspire; Grace Eyre Foundation; South Downs National Park Authority; Accredited Mental Health Professionals, and so on.

## **Campaigns**

2015 saw the major part of the passage of the Trade Union Bill through Parliament. It is currently in the House of Lords. If passed in its intended form, it will have many undesirable impacts on trade unions and how we can organise and support members in the workplace. The Branch Secretary [met and lobbied two West Sussex MPs](#) to outline our objections to the Bill.

The Branch made a number of interventions in the local media during 2015. These included a number of [regional TV and radio appearances](#), and coverage in the local press.

The Branch has continued to actively support a number of local campaigns.

## **Capita research**

The branch's 2014 bid for £16,500 from the South East Regional (funding) Pool to pay for a high-quality, independent research project to look into the Capita service which WSCC has contracted for ten years was conducted in 2015. This project proved to be a worthwhile investment on every level.

The research was conducted with the aim of improving the experience of our members who use Capita services plus those who work for Capita. Since the publication of [the research](#) in July, the branch has been involved in promoting the results with West Sussex decision-makers and using them to negotiate a large number of improvements to the contract. The proof of the effectiveness of these should start to become visible from April 2016, when the 'Contract Reset' takes effect.

We are continuing to actively negotiate for our members on an ongoing basis in several forums, and have a new opportunity to feed information through to the governance board for the contract (which also now includes an opposition councillor, at our request). If we see limited or no improvement, the Branch Committee will decide during 2016 what additional steps it wishes to take.

Pleasingly, the research gained [national attention from media and academia](#), for its contribution to the developing evidence base on outsourcing and its impacts.

## **Communications**

Our Branch website [unisonwestsussex.org.uk](http://unisonwestsussex.org.uk) continues to be a major driver for branch communications, receiving over 20,000 visits during 2015. The branch has continued to issue regular email communications to members, usually weekly.

The Branch was successful in securing continued regional funding for our newsletter 'Branch Lines'. Electronic copies are archived [on our website](#). Feedback from members continues to be very positive (members were surveyed about Branch Lines during 2015, to inform our successful bid). Branch Lines has undoubtedly helped the branch to recruit as we now include a membership form within every issue. Branch Lines has also helped us to highlight and thereby apply pressure and amend poor employer practice.

## **Education**

During 2015 the Branch Education Officer, in conjunction with the UNISON Branch at Chichester District Council, laid on a number of [education 'taster' courses](#). These included sessions on handling stress, money management and so on. Tutors were provided by the TUC and sessions were free of charge to members. These events proved a success and the branch is in the process of running a follow-up survey to establish members' learning preferences.

## **The wider union**

The Branch continued to engage in the regional South East tier of our union and a number of Branch Officers were successful when seeking election to various Regional Committees. The Branch also continued in 2015 to exert influence on the national agenda. The 2015 Local Government Conference in Glasgow was notable as our branch amendment to the Service Group Executive motion on facility time was passed unanimously. The Branch managed to get an amendment to a motion on the allocation of the union's funding between national, regional and branch tiers onto the agenda at National Delegate Conference. This was an achievement in itself though unfortunately Conference ran out of time to discuss it. The Branch hopes that the debate will be had at the 2016 Conference and will be doing what it can to ensure a democratic debate is able to happen.

2015 saw a General Secretary election. The election has proven notable for two things. It saw the participation of members fall to a record low turnout of 9.8%. It also saw allegations of serious electoral malpractice within the union, which have been widely reported in *The Guardian* and *Private Eye*. These allegations have been referred to the Trade Union Certification Officer, and are currently subject to internal investigation by UNISON.

**Dan Sartin**

**Branch Secretary**

**29<sup>th</sup> February 2016**