UNISON west sussex

AGM Booklet

25, 26 and 27 March 2020

UNISON: ***the public service union***
Central Attic, County Hall
West Street, Chichester
West Sussex PO19 1RQ
Tel: 01243 777636
E-Mail: office.unison@westsussex.gov.uk
Web: unisonwestsussex.org.uk
Branch Secretary: Dan Sartin

If calling ask for: *or email:* *Your Ref:* *Our Ref:*

February 2020

Dear branch member,

UNISON West Sussex – Annual General Meeting

I would like to invite you to the Branch's Annual General Meeting for 2020. We will be holding our AGM over three separate meetings this year, and I hope you will be able to make one of them.

1.00-2.00pm

Wednesday 25 March	Cowdray room, County Hall North, Horsham, RH12 1XH
Thursday 26 March	Conference room 4, Centenary House, Worthing, BN13 2QB

4.30-9.00pm

Friday 27 March	Martlets restaurant, County Hall, Chichester, PO19 1RQ

A **quiz and curry night** immediately follows the shortened AGM format event in Chichester, with free dinner and wine available on the table. Additionally, if you prefer to bring your own beer, wine or soft drinks you are welcome to do so. The Chichester event is advance-ticketed only, so to book your tickets please visit our website at http://unisonwestsussex.org.uk/news/branch-agms-2020/

Enclosed with this AGM mailing are the following:

1. Agenda Page 2
2. Minutes of 2019 AGM Page 3
3. List of Branch Officers and Workplace Reps for 2020-21 Page 5
4. Honoraria payments Page 8
5. West Sussex branch action plan Page 9
6. Proposed branch rule changes Page 11
7. The branch Annual Report for 2019 Page 28

I look forward to seeing you at our AGM.

Yours sincerely

Dan Sartin
Branch Secretary

UNISON West Sussex

2020 Annual General Meeting

	1.00-2.00pm
Wednesday 25 March	Cowdray room, County Hall North, Horsham
Thursday 26 March	Conference room 4, Centenary House, Worthing
	4.30-9.00pm
Friday 27 March	Martlets Restaurant, County Hall, Chichester

AGENDA

1. Welcome from branch chair.

2. To approve the minutes of the AGM held on 27,28 and 29 March 2019 (ENCLOSED).

3. To approve branch officers and workplace representatives for 2020-21 (ENCLOSED).

4. Branch finance and accounts 2019:
   4.1 To approve the accounts (TO BE TABLED);
   4.2 To agree honoraria payments (ENCLOSED).

5. To approve amendments to branch rules (ENCLOSED).

6. To approve the branch 'Organising Framework' action plan (ENCLOSED).

7. To approve the branch annual report (ENCLOSED) and receive any questions from members.

8. Close of meeting.

UNISON West Sussex

Minutes of the aggregate Annual General Meetings held on March 27th, 28th and 29th 2019 at Worthing, Horsham and Chichester

Present: Ian Harvey (Chair), Sarah Etherington (Vice Chair), Dan Sartin (Branch Secretary), Karen Daubney (Deputy Branch Secretary), Jennie Barrett (Branch Treasurer) and 75 other members.

In attendance: Caroline Fife (Regional Organiser, UNISON South East), Victoria Bowman (Branch Administrator - minutes).

1. Welcome from Branch Chair

The Branch Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. To approve the Minutes of the aggregate Annual General Meetings held 20, 21, 22 and 23 March 2018

Resolved: The minutes of the AGMs 20, 21, 22 and 23 March 2018 were approved unanimously as a correct record with no matters arising.

3. To approve Branch Officers and Workplace Representatives for 2019-20

The Chair presented the nominations for Branch Officers and Workplace Representatives for 2019-20.

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

4. Branch Finance and Accounts 2018:

4.1 To approve the accounts

The Branch Treasurer reported on the Branch Finance and Accounts for 2018. The accounts were audited and submitted and received by UNISON Head Office for the 15th March 2019 deadline.

At the end of the year the branch had a £25k surplus, increasing the general reserves to £80k. This surplus is more than what the branch had budgeted for in 2018 due to the additional top up funding received as well as careful monitoring of all expenditure areas.

JB reported that the branch committee have agreed a budget for 2019 that will see the branch continue to spend a significant amount of the reserves to meet the increasing demand of supporting and communicating with its members. This should however again be offset to a certain degree by 'top up' process introduced as part of the conference decision regarding activity based budget and funding in June 2016, although this process is subject to potential change due to a motion to review the funding arrangements being taken to the National Delegate Conference in June this year.

Resolved: The accounts for 2018 were unanimously approved.

4.2 To agree honoraria payments

The Branch Secretary moved the AGM to support 2 honoraria payments and spoke of the significant contributions made by each of the individuals.

Resolved: Honoraria payments were approved with one abstention for:

- Jennie Barrett, Branch Treasurer, £3,910
- Wendy Jones, former Branch steward for SENAT Team, £100

5. To approve the branch Annual Report and receive any questions from members

The Branch Secretary presented the annual report, highlighting key areas and particular developments, challenges and achievements for the branch during 2018.

A member referred to the WSCC staff conferences and staff groups and asked why UNISON wasn't invited as the biggest and most representative staff group. The Branch Secretary urged members to raise this with the Chief Executive as the branch was of the opinion that UNISON should have been included, but did not receive an adequate response despite numerous requests over a four-month period. The Branch Secretary highlighted the presence at various staff groups of Branch Equalities Officers, who are now working together as a group to produce a branch Equalities newsletter, due to be circulated in April. Regional Organiser, Caroline Fife, stressed the importance of membership density, pointing out that the more members there are, the more representative of staff UNISON is and the greater the strength in terms of collective bargaining.

A member asked if there was any evidence of 'softening' from the WSCC Chief Executive recently. The Branch Secretary reported that this does not appear to be the case, as demonstrated by the council's recent approach to relations with the branch, whereby consultation is often only happening when legally required. It was noted that these are challenging times, not improved by the impact at local level of national government's austerity agenda and legislative approach.

Resolved: the branch Annual Report was unanimously approved.

6. Close of meeting

The Chair thanked branch officers and staff for their hard work throughout the year in support of members.

The meeting was drawn to a close.

UNISON West Sussex 2020-21

Branch Officers

Position/Officer	Name and Employer/ Service	Telephone
Chair	Ian Harvey, Capita	01243 777636
Vice Chair	Sarah Etherington, WSCC People Services	01903 839987
Branch Secretary	Daniel Sartin, WSCC People Services	01243 777636
Deputy Branch Secretary	Karen Daubney, WSCC People Services	01243 777636
Treasurer	Jennie Barrett, WSCC Resource Services	01243 777636
Communications	**Vacant**	
Education Co-ordinator	Briony Stilliard, Aspire Sussex	01243 850710
Environmental	Julie Bolton, WSCC Place Services	033022 26446
Equality, Black members	Anusree Biswas-Sasidharan, WSCC People Services	033022 25391
Equality, Disabled members	**Vacant**	
Equality, LGBT members	Paul Woodcock, WSCC Public Health	033022 28701
Equality, Women's Officer	Carla Hardy, WSCC Resource Services	033022 22002
Health and Safety	Carla Hardy, WSCC Resource Services	033022 22002
Health and Safety	Karen Daubney, WSCC People Services	01243 777636
International	Chris Hughes, WSCC People Services	01903 779739
Labour Link	Daniel Sartin, WSCC People Services	01243 777636
Lifelong Learning Co-ordinator	Briony Stilliard, Aspire Sussex	01243 850710
Membership	**Vacant**	
Pensions	Judith Taylor, Retired member	01243 777636
Retired Members Secretary	Jennie Gudgeon, Margaret Guest (job-share)	01243 777636
Welfare	Stuart Gibbons, WSCC People Services	033022 26218
Young Members	Chloe Pascovitch, WSCC People Services	033022 22372

Branch Reps

WSCC Children's Services		
Rachel Donoughue	SENAT Post & Pre-16, Durban House	033022 25604
Karen Hayes	Child & Family Intervention Service, Bognor Regis	01243 642917
Michaela Homewood	Horsham Youth Hub	07764 447362
Callum Jenner	Child Disability Team, Centenary House	033022 28771
Karen Johnston	Fostering Recruitment Team, County Hall North	01403 229577
Vicky Joyce	Child Disability Team, Durban House	03302 228554
Paula Knott	Bewbush Children & Family Centre, Crawley	01293 651760
Debbie Lawes	Fostering Team, Durban House	033022 25494
Chloe Pascovitch	Contact, Assessment & Intervention Team, Crawley	033022 22372
Louie Perren	Child Disability Team, County Hall North	03302222635
Sara Pink	Lancing Children & Family Centre, Lancing	01903 276896
Vera Ray	FSP North (Horsham)	0330 222 7522
Jacqueline Richards	Boundstone Nursery School, Lancing	01903 276850
Sherree Valliere	Fostering Team, Durban House	033022 27873
Cheryl Wiggs	Fostering North Team 1, County Hall North	033022 23730
Sally Wrenwood	Horsham Children & Family Centre, Horsham	03302 228291

WSCC Adults' Services		
Rachael Bradley	Stanhope Lodge, Worthing	01903 264560
Karen Daubney	The Rowans, Worthing	01903 218022
Annie Flack	Crawley Assessment & Treatment Service	01293 652300
Paul Gibson	Proactive Care, Horsham Hospital	01403 227000
Alex Grindley	Stanhope Lodge, Worthing	033022 26787
Laura Hard	Regaining Independence Team, County Hall North	033022 22376
Tamsyn Hicks	Independent Living Service, The Grange	033022 28303
Daryl Hitchings	DOLs Team, Centenary House	07775 632097
Chris Hughes	Oak Community Project, Rustington	01903 779739
Marina Humphrey	The Pines Day Centre, Worthing	01903 691001
Joe Lyndhurst	Bognor Community Team, Durban House	033022 25837
Helen Miles	Adult Operations, County Hall North	033022 22049
David Randall	Burnside Centre, Burgess Hill	01444 232786
Gerard Robson	Worthing Community Team, Centenary House	033022 22665
Andrew Theodoridi	CTPLD, Durban House	033022 28773
Samuel Theodoridi	Stanhope Lodge, Worthing	01903 264560
Annie Thorndike	CTPLD North, County Hall North	033022 28748
Wendy Wilson	Older People Mental Health, Crawley Library	033022 28156
WSCC Other		
Steven Bicknell	Highways & Transport	033022 23859
Julie Bolton	Environment and Heritage, Northleigh	033022 26446
Jo Cooke	Partnerships & Communities Team, County Hall	033022 23891
David Dutton	Trading Standards, County Hall North	033022 24010
Sarah Etherington	Education & Skills, Centenary House	033022 27170
Carla Hardy	Facilities Management, County Hall North	033022 22002
Paula Herbert	Legal Services, County Hall	033022 22719
Robert Mcleod	Caretaking and Premises Support	03302 222829
Lyndsay Pink	Fire & Rescue Service, Bognor Fire Station	033022 25005
Clare Snoad	Collections Team, West Sussex Record Office	033022 24597
Tim Stanton	Library Services, Crawley Library	01293 651744
Paul Woodcock	Public Health, The Grange	033022 28701
WSCC Schools		
Chris Armstead	St Anthony's School, Chichester	01243 785965
Patricia Barrett	Kingslea Primary School, Horsham	01403 254282
Sam Burge	St Wilfrid's Catholic School, Crawley	01293 421421
Clare Christian	West Sussex Alternative Provision College (Lancing)	01903 270460
Tracey Clift	Heene CE Primary School, Worthing	01903 201386
Marilyn Cox	Field Place Infant School, Worthing	01444 873898
Michelle Craen	Holbrook Primary School, Horsham	01403 272500
Carole Doherty	Turners Hill Primary School, Crawley	01342 715412
Emma Farley	Bourne Community College, Southbourne	01243 375691
Karen Foster	The Angmering School, Angmering	01903 772351
Stella Hamilton	Manor Green College, Crawley	01293 520351
Jane Hartley	Thomas A Becket Junior School, Worthing	01903 202268
Tracy Howard	Millais School, Horsham	01403 254932

Keith Manville	Oak Grove College, Worthing	01903 209771
Simon Pettiford	The Angmering School, Angmering	01903 772351
Tracey Sheehan	Boxgrove Primary School, Chichester	01243 773309
Amanda Shortiss	Manor Green College, Crawley	01293 520351
Clare Smith	Bishop Tufnell CE Primary School, Bognor Regis	01243 582400
Academies		
Abid Ahmad	Thomas Bennett Community College, Crawley	01293 526255
Sue Chant	The Littlehampton Academy, Littlehampton	01903 711120
Jill Cox	Sir Robert Woodard Academy, Lancing	01903 767434
Francesca Cuell	Littlegreen Academy, Compton	02392 631259
Angela Elliott	Shoreham Academy, Shoreham-by-Sea	01273 274100
Debbie Gillies	The Bewbush Academy, Crawley	01293 534897
Gyillmard Horsfield	Bishop Luffa School, Chichester	01243 787741
Nikki Mayhead	River Beach Primary School, Littlehampton	01903 725500
Diane Paquette	Midhurst Rother College, Midhurst	01730 812451
David Potter	Bohunt School, Worthing	01903 601361
Paul Smith	Warden Park Academy, Haywards Heath	01444 440274
Lorraine Solti	The Regis School, Bognor Regis	01243 871010
Further Education		
Alan Cooper	Chichester College Group, Chichester Campus	01243 786321
Jane Crowley	The College of Richard Collyer, Horsham	01403 210822
Jim Darley	Chichester College Group, Chichester Campus	01243 786321
Karen Fisher	Greater Brighton Metropolitan College, Broadwater	01903 273456
Rosie Jones	Greater Brighton Metropolitan College, Durrington	01903 273060
Joanna Tarleton	Worthing College, Worthing	01903 275755
Higher Education		
Chris Anderson	University of Chichester, Bishop Otter Campus	01243 816000
Neil Bryant	University of Chichester, Bishop Otter Campus	01243 816000
Tracy May	University of Chichester, Bognor Regis Campus	01243 816000
Other Employers		
Mimi Brodie	Capita, The Grange	0330 222 2321
Sabrina Burrows	South Downs National Park Authority	01730 814810
Adam Duncombe	South Downs National Park Authority	01730 814810
Joe Farrell	Grace Eyre Foundation	01273 201900
Tim Halpin	Grace Eyre Foundation	01273 201900
Ian Harvey	Capita	01243 642330
Abigail Holdsworth	Capita, Durban House	01243 642330
Karen Polie	Aspire Sussex	01243 850710
Keith Riley	Ofsted	01243 777636
Lester Speed	Farney Close School	01444 881811
Denise Stephens	Capita, Durban House	033022 24512
Briony Stilliard	Aspire Sussex	01243 850710
Jack Trevelyan	South Downs National Park Authority	01703 814810
Chris Walsh	Outcomes First Group	01903 716619

Honoraria payments

UNISON's rules 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 the Branch Committee meeting in January and those approved are then submitted to the AGM in March for final approval.

The Branch's practice has been to agree a maximum percentage of the branch's budget which is allocated by the Branch Committee to those Officers and Reps who have made a significant contribution to branch activity. The set ceiling amount of 2.25% is in the Branch rules which were agreed in 2011. This amount was not changed when the rules were amended in other respects in March 2017.

Due to the branch budget increasing because of additional funding for branches being agreed at National Delegate Conference 2019, the maximum permissible sum for honoraria in 2020 is £5,200.

In the case of the Branch Treasurer it has been the practice to regularly pay an honorarium as this officer is not a paid member of Branch staff, cannot use the Branch's consolidated facility time from WSCC, and is not permitted lay rep facility time for the work involved, which is substantial. Therefore, all the associated work must be completed in the Treasurer's own time.

Other honoraria are more token sums to acknowledge particular efforts made by departing reps who have contributed to good outcomes for the branch. Last year payments were made to the Branch Treasurer (£3,910) and Wendy Jones (£100).

The AGM is asked to consider honoraria for 2020 and the following, which is less than the total permissible amount of expenditure.

- Jennie Barrett, Branch Treasurer
  Proposed at £3,988.
- Diana Knight, former branch steward, committee and JCC member.
  Proposed at £250.
- Chloe Pascovitch, current branch steward and committee member.
  Proposed at £150 for loss of pay through attending national conference.
- Catherine Goldsmith, former branch steward and JCC member.
  Proposed at £150.

Dan Sartin
Branch Secretary
11th February 2020, on behalf of the branch committee which met on 8th January 2020 to agree these recommendations to the AGM.

Action plan

West Sussex (L) (9312)

Requirements

Recruitment and retention

Targets, objectives and other information

Hold 4 weeks of recruitment events within the year to recruit new members and raise the profile of UNISON to retain existing members

Assigned to

Branch Secretary

To be completed by

31 Dec 2020

Status

Open

Increase the number of stewards and health and safety reps

Targets, objectives and other information

Branch to actively use strategies with regional support to recruit more reps in all employers.

Assigned to

Branch Secretary

To be completed by

31 Dec 2020

Status

Open

Training, development and mentoring of stewards and health and safety

Targets, objectives and other information

Branch to continue the programme to check progress of reps to ensure they have skills to fulfill roles effectively to represent members in the workplace. Branch to organise branch based training event. Branch to obtain regional resource to recruit and train more stewards to deal with casework and collective negotiations.

Assigned to

Branch Secretary

To be completed by
31 Dec 2020

Status
Open

Communication and Engagement

Branch newsletter

Targets, objectives and other information
Branch will produce 3 newsletters in January, May and September These will be paper copy distributed to workplaces across the county. The newsletter will contain a pullout application form which has proved a successful recruitment tool.

Assigned to
Branch Secretary

To be completed by
31 Dec 2018

Status
Open

Recruitment and Retention
No Action Plans have been created for this section.

Activist Development
No Action Plans have been created for this section.

Individual Representation
No Action Plans have been created for this section.

Collective Bargaining and Campaigning
No Action Plans have been created for this section.

Tools
No Action Plans have been created for this section.

UNISON WEST SUSSEX

BRANCH RULES AND ASSOCIATED SCHEDULES

1. NAME

The name of the Branch shall be 'West Sussex County Branch of UNISON' (short title: UNISON West Sussex).

2. INTERPRETATION OF RULES

These rules and associated schedules shall be interpreted in accordance with National Rules, decisions of Annual Conference and the NEC and the Guide to Good Branch Practice.

3. ANTI-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

The Branch shall seek to ensure that discriminatory acts are not committed against any persons by the Branch, its members or officers, on grounds such as race, gender, sexuality, gender identity, disability, age, creed or social class.

4. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

a) To organise within the Branch all those employed, directly or indirectly, within those areas of employment which provide services to the public whether in the public, private or voluntary sectors of the economy.

b) To improve and protect the pay and conditions of members and promote their interests.

c) To promote fair representation and opportunities for all members to participate in the activities of the union.

d) To establish good relations between members and their employers and to secure the settlement of disputes arising from members' employment.

e) To participate in local joint negotiating activities.

f) To promote and safeguard the rights of members to have an adequate opportunity to participate in the initiation and development of policy making.

g) To encourage maximum democratic debate, while at all times acting within the rules and agreed policy.

h) To form such workgroup and sectional groupings as may be considered necessary in the interests of the members of the Branch.

i) To promote and develop educational opportunities.

j) To support members by the provision of welfare support and benefits.

k) To promote health and safety at work.

l) To promote and develop membership services (UNISON Plus).

m) To support the Retired Members Section of the Branch.

In pursuing these objectives the aims of the branch should accord with the aims and values of UNISON set out in the national Rule Book.

5. ELIGIBILITY FOR MEMBERSHIP

Eligibility for membership shall be in accordance with the rules of the union.

6. BECOMING A MEMBER

Every person wishing to become a member of the Branch shall complete and sign a membership application form and return it to the Branch Secretary or to the appropriate National or Regional Office as may from time to time be determined. Alternatively, prospective members may join on-line via the UNISON website www.unison.org.uk. An application for membership takes effect from the date upon which a completed form is received by the Branch or at a regional/national level.

If the Branch declines to accept an application the procedures as laid down in National Rules will be followed. Such a decision will be explained to the individual in writing together with details of appeal rights.

All members shall observe the Rules of the Union and shall be afforded such rights and benefits from membership as prescribed in National Rules.

The NEC may terminate an individual's membership in accordance with the National Rules.

7. SUBSCRIPTIONS

It is an obligation of the member to ensure that her/his subscription is paid to the Branch/Union on the date on which it is due. Payment will usually be by check-off arrangements made through the employer or by direct debit. Members will be notified of the appropriate subscription on joining and of any changes prescribed by the National Delegate Conference.

8. ARREARS OF SUBSCRIPTIONS

In accordance with National Rules, any person owing more than three months' subscriptions shall cease to be a member of the Branch unless the National Executive Council or Branch Committee decides otherwise.

9. CONDUCT OF MEMBERS

Disciplinary action may be taken by the Branch against any member who does not follow the rules of the union.

10. BRANCH COMMITTEE

The Branch shall establish a Branch Committee, which shall meet six times a year. Its purpose shall be to undertake the functions identified in Schedule B.

The Branch Committee shall comprise the Officers shown in Schedule A, Workgroup Representatives and a representative of each Self-Organised Group.

The Retired Members Section shall elect from amongst its membership a Retired Members Secretary, and this person or an accredited substitute, shall be a member of the Branch Committee.

The Branch Committee will be of a size large enough to enable adequate representation but not so large as to be unwieldy. The Committee will not normally exceed 40 members. The quorum of the Branch Committee shall be one third of its membership.

As an aim every workgroup will have an identified and accredited representative responsible for recruitment, communication and liaison. Every member will be within an identified workgroup and will have the opportunity to be represented on the Branch Committee (and Section Group where appropriate) and be able to stand for election.

11. INTERMEDIATE STRUCTURES - SECTION GROUPS and STAFF SIDE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Section Groups will be formed by the Branch Committee upon a recommendation from the Branch Secretary or following a request from members where the size of the membership group and/or the complexity of the organisation and/or the employer makes this desirable. The composition of the Section Group will reflect the make-up of the membership.

Section Groups will meet for the purposes of conducting business specific to the membership of the Section. They will be able to elect one or more senior reps from amongst their Section Group. The Branch Office Secretariat will support each group.

The Branch Committee shall establish a Staff Side Executive Committee comprising the Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Branch Secretary, Deputy Branch Secretary and up to five additional members. Additional members may be co-opted from time to time for specific purposes.

The Staff Side Executive Committee shall provide the staff side membership of the WSCC ~~Staff Joint Committee~~Chief Executive's Department Joint Consultative Committee and shall undertake the tasks listed in schedule B. It shall normally meet in the months when the Branch Committee does not meet.

The Staff Side Executive Committee shall be empowered to take decisions virtually by email when a meeting of the Staff Side Executive Committee or the Branch Committee is not scheduled within good time for such decisions to be efficient. Virtual decision-making will include but not be limited to:

- Branch welfare fund decisions
- Submission of motions or amendments to motion to any national or regional conference of UNISON
- Industrial action hardship fund request decisions
- Withdrawal of representational support

Quoracy for virtual decisions is one third of the membership of the Staff Side

Executive Committee.

Any decisions with financial implications will include the Branch Treasurer as a voting member of Staff Side Executive Committee.

12. ATTENDANCE AT BRANCH COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Unless the Branch Committee otherwise decide, members of the Branch shall be permitted to attend meetings of the Committee but shall not have the right to take part in any discussions or to vote. From time to time at Branch Committee meetings it may be necessary to discuss confidential matters relating to employer negotiations and if a majority of Branch Committee members so decide that an agenda item should be restricted in this way, any members present will be asked to leave the meeting for the duration of that agenda item. Branch Officers are expected to attend Branch Committee meetings on a regular basis.

13. EXPENSES OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND DELEGATES AND PAYMENT OF HONORARIA

Expenses of committee members and delegates to other approved conferences/meetings will be paid in accordance with a schedule agreed by the Branch Committee. The Committee may also establish on an annual basis a scheme of financial recognition for officers and others. The purpose of such a scheme being to provide some financial recognition to those undertaking extensive duties on behalf of the Branch. The totality of the monies involved shall not exceed 2.25% of gross subscription income payable to the Branch. Any recommendations for payment of honoraria must comply with UNISON's national procedures and rules.

14. ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

The financial year shall run from 1 January to 31 December.

The administrative year will run from the conclusion of the last aggregate annual meeting.

The Branch Treasurer shall keep a bank and/or building society accounts(s) in the name of the Branch. The Branch shall make an audited return of branch income, expenditure, assets and liabilities as prescribed by the NEC and in accordance with national rules.

The Branch Secretary shall keep records and management information to enable the Branch to function effectively.

15. MEDIA COMMUNICATIONS

Only the Branch Secretary and Deputy Branch Secretary shall make communications with the media of behalf of the Branch.

16. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

There shall be an annual general meeting open to all branch members at least once a year. This annual meeting may take the form of a series of aggregate meetings, to be determined by the Branch Committee. This meeting will take place no later than 31 March in any year.

All members shall receive at least two weeks notice of aggregate meetings and shall be entitled to speak and vote at only one aggregate meeting. Branch Officers shall be entitled to vote at only one aggregate meeting, but shall have the right to speak at all aggregate meetings. The overall quorum for the combined meetings shall be 60. All decisions shall be reached by a simple majority of the combined votes at all aggregate meetings. Decisions reached following aggregate meetings will be made available to all members within two weeks of the last meeting.

The agenda for the annual general meeting will include:

a) Confirmation of election of Branch Officers and Workgroup Representatives for the coming year, including any job share arrangements. These officers will take office immediately following the final aggregate meeting.

b) Annual report from the Branch Committee.

c) Statement of account for the preceding financial year, including approval of any proposed honoraria payments (see para 13).

17. SPECIAL BRANCH MEETINGS

Special meetings may be held when called by the Branch Committee, or by requisition of 5% of the membership. The issues for consideration must be specified when the meeting is called for. Special meetings are subject to the same procedures as the annual branch meetings. Members will be informed of the subject(s) for discussion when notified of the meeting arrangements.

18. RULES FOR THE GOOD OPERATION OF THE BRANCH

Unless explicitly covered by these rules, the conduct of the Branch shall be in accordance with the National Rules and Code of Good Branch Practice.

19. AMENDMENT TO THESE RULES

These rules may be amended at a quorate General Meeting or Aggregate General Meeting of the Branch, subject to there being a 2/3rds majority of those present voting in favour of the proposed alterations. Amendments to Associated Schedules may be made by the Branch Committee at a quorate meeting subject to the proposed changes being approved by at least 2/3rds of those present and voting.

20. SCHEDULES ASSOCIATED WITH THESE RULES

- Schedule A — Branch Officers and procedures for nomination and election.
- Schedule B — Branch Committee: composition, nomination/election arrangements, functions and procedures.

- Schedule C — Roles and Responsibilities of Branch Officers.
- Schedule D — Functions of Stewards, Health and Safety Representatives, Learning Representatives and Workplace Contacts.

21. These Rules and Associated Schedules were approved by a quorate meeting of the Branch Committee held on 20th July 2016 and subsequently approved, as necessary, by a quorate meeting of the Branch held on 31st March 2017.

SCHEDULE A

BRANCH OFFICERS – RULE 10

1. BRANCH OFFICERS

The following officers shall be elected annually:

Branch Chairperson
Branch Vice Chairperson
Branch Secretary
Deputy Branch Secretary
Branch Treasurer
Equalities Officer(s) ~~-~~(~~3~~4)
Health and Safety Officer(s) (2)
Education Coordinator
Lifelong Learning Coordinator
Membership Officer
Young Members Officer
Welfare Officer
Communications Officer
International Officer
Environmental Officer
~~APF (~~Labour Link~~)~~ Officer
Pensions Officer
Convenors (4)

If there is more than one candidate for a post (other than ~~Equalities and~~ Health and Safety Officers) a postal ballot of members will be held in advance of the annual aggregate branch meetings. Two members, subject to the arrangement being approved by the Branch Committee, may share each Branch Officer or Section Group post.

2. PROCEDURES FOR NOMINATION/ELECTION

All members of the Branch shall receive notification of the forthcoming elections no less than eight weeks before the annual branch meetings. The Branch Secretary shall receive nominations no later than five weeks before the first Aggregate Annual Branch Meeting to allow any necessary elections to be conducted before the meetings. Any member of the Branch who has been a member for at least 13 weeks may be nominated for election to any of the Branch Offices.

There are two possible nomination routes. These are via the Branch Committee or directly from the membership. Branch Committee nominations will be done at the January meeting with individual nomination forms being sent to the Branch Secretary in advance of the meeting. Where necessary the Branch Committee will hold a secret ballot at that meeting, with the nominee gaining the most votes receiving the Committee's nomination. Following that Branch Committee meeting all members will be notified of the Branch Committee's nominations and further nominations will be sought for any and all of the posts. All members seeking nomination directly from the membership must give a brief (maximum 100 words) explanation of why they wish to be elected, and all members supporting the nomination must give a brief (between 50 and 75 words) statement as to why they think the candidate would be suitable for the position. The completed nomination paper and supporting nomination statements must be received by the Branch Secretary no later than five weeks before the AGMs and a copy will be forwarded to the Regional Office.

Candidates for election may provide, for circulation with the ballot papers, an election address not exceeding 750 words in total. This must be provided to the Elections Officer at least four weeks before the first annual aggregate meeting. Guidance on acceptable content for the election address will be issued to all candidates. Photographs will not be permitted to be included in election addresses. Candidates must not use UNISON or Branch resources to support their election campaign.

The Elections Officer will normally be the Branch Secretary, but in instances where that position is subject to an election the Branch Chairperson will act as Elections Officer with assistance from the Regional Office. If the Branch Chairperson's position is subject to ballot, the Branch Secretary will oversee the process with assistance from the Regional Office.

The Elections Officer will ensure that the candidates are notified of the deadline for receipt of their election address and will issue voting papers, covering letter and election addresses (where provided) to all members, either by post or via email. The closing date for receipt of completed voting papers will be one week prior to the first aggregate general meeting.

Ballot papers will normally be counted in the Branch Office by the Branch Office staff, overseen by the Branch Chairperson and Branch Secretary. Where the Branch Secretary or Branch Chairperson posts are contested the Regional Office will undertake the count.

Candidates for election will be invited to attend the count, but attendance is not a requirement. The result of the election will be reported to the AGM and the elected candidate(s) will take office immediately after the last aggregate general meeting.

Section Group Officers will be elected from and by members of the relevant Section Group. At least five members of the Section Group must support any nomination of a member of at least 13 weeks standing. Candidates for election may provide, for circulation with the ballot papers, an election address not exceeding 450 words in total.

3. FUNCTIONS OF BRANCH OFFICERS

The functions of the Branch Officers are detailed in Schedule C.

4. **RETIRED MEMBERS SECRETARY**

The retired members in the Branch shall have the right to elect a Retired Members' Secretary. Such an election shall take place annually, by and from the retired members in the Branch, and shall be reported to the annual branch meetings.

SCHEDULE B

BRANCH COMMITTEE - RULE 10

1. **COMPOSITION**

The Branch Committee shall comprise those officers shown in Schedule A, Representatives from workgroups, Section Group Officers (if appointed), together with a representative from each Self-Organised Group.

2. **NOMINATION/ELECTION PROCEDURES**

Representatives will be elected annually for each workgroup or workplace by the members in that workplace or workgroup. Elections will take place in the month preceding the annual general meetings, and will be ratified at those meetings. Any member within a workgroup who has been a member for at least 13 weeks will be able to stand for election on an individual or job-share basis; every nomination to be supported by at least two members also from the workgroup/workplace. In the event of a contest, all members within the defined workgroup/workplace shall be entitled to take part in a vote, which shall be administered by the Branch Secretary. The vote shall be conducted in the form of a secret postal ballot. Candidates may provide an election address of not more than 200 words for circulation with ballot papers.

In the event of a steward resigning prior to the annual election, the Branch Committee shall be empowered to hold a by-election, on the same basis as above.

3. **BASIS OF REPRESENTATION IN WORKPLACES/WORKGROUPS**

The number of Representative posts per workgroup will be calculated, based on the December membership figures and will be based on one rep per up to 30 members, a further rep for 31 to 60 members and so on.

4. **SECTION GROUPS**

Where a Directorate or workgroup is particularly large, or for other reasons, arrangements may be made for a Section Group to be established. Each Section Group shall elect from amongst its membership those who shall serve on the Branch Committee. In accordance with the provisions contained within Schedule A Section Groups may establish a number of officer posts.

5. **SELF ORGANISED GROUPS**

Where the Branch Committee has approved the formation of Self-Organised Groups, each group shall be entitled to elect one representative to serve on the Branch Committee.

6. FUNCTIONS OF THE BRANCH COMMITTEE

The functions of the Branch Committee shall be:

- To approve the Branch Development Plan, along with actions to implement same in accordance with the objects of the Union and the Branch.
- To approve an annual budget and amendments thereto.
- To approve a scheme of financial recognition as contained in rule 13.
- To form Section Groups as appropriate, delegating appropriate matters for consideration.
- To form Self-Organised groups as appropriate, in accordance with National Rules.
- To receive reports and recommendations from Officers, Section Groups, Self-Organised Groups and tasked working groups.
- To consider motions proposed by members of the Committee.
- To appoint a Staff Side Executive Committee, which shall, in conjunction with the Branch Secretary, exercise negotiating, representational and policy-making functions subject to overall direction from and accountability to the Branch Committee (Rule 11).
- To nominate candidates for the annual election of officers.
- To make nominations to bodies external to the Branch
- To elect delegates to Annual Conference, Group Meetings and other conferences.
- To fill casual vacancies not otherwise provided for by these Rules.
- To make donations to bodies to which the Branch is affiliated or which accord with the objects set out in the rules; notice of possible such intent, including the extent of financial commitment, having been included within the agenda for the meeting. In the event of an urgent request for a donation the Secretary, Chairperson and Treasurer will make a decision and this will be reported to the next Branch Committee and/or Staff Side Executive Committee meeting.
- To oversee the efficient and effective conduct of Branch activities.
- To appoint auditors or make other arrangements in accordance with any national guide to good financial practice.

7. PROCEDURES FOR BRANCH COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Meetings of the Branch Committee shall be conducted in accordance with established UNISON good practice. The quorum for meetings of the Branch Committee shall be one third of the membership of the committee.

Representatives, Branch Officers and representatives of self-organised groups will have the right to speak and vote at meetings of the Branch Committee, (job-shared positions having only one vote).

Members of the Committee have the right to vote on any issue or matter other than those that concern the pay and conditions of members of the union in the employment of another employer or are specifically within the remit of a self organised or other constitutionally recognised group. Consideration of such matters is for the appropriate Group, Officers and the affected membership. The Retired Members representative shall not vote on any matter concerning the pay and conditions of work of members in employment.

An appropriate regional officer shall be encouraged to attend meetings of the Branch Committee and shall have the right to speak, but not to vote.

8. VOTING

Voting on motions shall normally be by show of hands, unless a secret ballot is requested by at least a third of the members at the meeting. Voting for officers and delegates will normally be by secret ballot.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The item 'any other business' will appear on the Agenda of each meeting of the Branch Committee. Matters to be raised under this item shall normally be notified to the Branch Secretary prior to the commencement of the meeting and the Chairperson shall seek the Committee's agreement to admit the matter(s) to the agenda.

10. FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS AND EXPECTATION OF ATTENDANCE

The Branch Committee shall meet not less than five times a year. All members of the committee are expected to attend on a regular basis and a record of attendance will be published as part of the Committee's annual report to the membership.

11. VENUES FOR MEETINGS

Meetings will be held at various venues around the county and a schedule of meetings for the forthcoming year, together with venues, will be published following the annual general meetings.

12. INFORMATION TO MEMBERS

Each member of the Branch Committee will normally receive minutes and agenda papers at least five working days prior to the meeting in question. Unless otherwise indicated on the committee agenda paper, prior to the meeting all members of the committee should consult their members on items for discussion. Subsequent to the meeting members of the committee should notify their

members of the outcomes of debates. The minutes and agendas will be stored in a member only access area of the Branch website and minutes (or a link to them) will be circulated to members of the committee within three weeks of the relevant meeting.

13. **CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S DEPARTMENT JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE~~STAFF JOINT COMMITTEE~~**

Nominated members of the Staff Side of the West Sussex County Council Chief Executive's Department Joint Consultative Committee~~Staff Joint Committee~~ must at all times be elected members of the Branch Committee or Officers of the Branch, employed by the County Council.

SCHEDULE C

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF BRANCH OFFICERS

Guidance is also available in UNISON's Code of Good Branch Practice.

1. BRANCH CHAIRPERSON

- To preside at all meetings of the Branch and Branch Committee.
- To agree the agenda for meetings with the Secretary.
- To ensure that business is properly conducted.
- To advise, (in conjunction with the Branch Secretary), Branch Officers and the Branch Committee in respect of matters relating to procedure and interpretation of rules.
- To act, as necessary, in the capacity of Grievance Officer for the Branch employed staff.
- To exercise responsibility as a signatory to the Branch banking/investment arrangements.
- To represent the Branch at appropriate meetings with County Councillors and/or employers representatives.
- To participate in negotiations between the Branch and employers as appropriate.
- To be a member of the Staff Side Executive Committee and Staff Side of the WSCC Chief Executive's Department Joint Consultative Committee ~~Staff Joint Committee~~ (if employed by WSCC).

2. BRANCH VICE CHAIRPERSON

- To deputise for the Chairperson in respect of any of that Officer's tasks.
- To be a member of the Staff Side Executive Committee and Staff Side of the WSCC Chief Executive's Department Joint Consultative Committee ~~Staff Joint Committee~~ (if employed by WSCC).

3. BRANCH SECRETARY

- To guide the Branch's development through the preparation and implementation of a branch organisation and development plan.
- To ensure the representation of members within the branch in accordance with national guidance, including completion of appropriate paperwork.

- To provide strategic leadership on implementing campaigning and lobbying activity on Branch and wider UNISON objectives, working in liaison with the Deputy Secretary.
- To convene and attend all meetings of the Branch and Branch Committee.
- To arrange for the minutes of meetings to be kept in a proper manner.
- To arrange for Branch records to be kept in a proper manner.
- To ensure the Branch, speedily and accurately, processes applications for membership and maintains records in accordance with UNISON systems.
- To ensure regular communication with the members of the Branch.
- To ensure that members and stewards are aware, and take advantage of, educational and training opportunities within UNISON.
- To communicate with the Union's regional and head offices on behalf of the Branch.
- To approve communications to be distributed and/or circulated on behalf of the Branch.
- To ensure that the Branch is aware of opportunities to participate in the activities of the wider Union.
- To support and encourage the stewards in the Branch on an individual and collective basis.
- To negotiate on behalf of the Branch with employers representatives
- To keep under review representational arrangements for the Branch.
- To be a member of the Staff Side Executive Committee and of the Chief Executive's Department Joint Consultative Committee ~~Staff Joint Committee~~ (if employed by WSCC).
- To be responsible, in conjunction with the Deputy Branch Secretary, for communications with the media on behalf of the Branch
- To manage the activities, staff and resources of the Branch Office.
- To exercise delegated responsibilities for the Secretariat budget centre, including the approval, in conjunction with the Chairperson and Treasurer of changes in the staffing establishment, subject to the normal processes of negotiation and consultation with staff and their representatives.
- To exercise responsibilities as a signatory to the Branch Banking/Investment arrangements.
- To approve (in conjunction with the Welfare Officer and Treasurer) urgent applications for Welfare Assistance from the Alphabet Pool Fund.
- To ensure that the tasks associated with any vacant officer positions are undertaken.

4. DEPUTY BRANCH SECRETARY

- To deputise for the Branch Secretary in her/his absence
- To communicate (in conjunction with the Branch Secretary) with the media, on behalf of the Branch.
- To lead under the guidance of the Branch Secretary campaigning and lobbying in support of Branch and wider UNISON objectives
- To prepare press releases and campaigning documents for approval by the Branch Secretary.
- To take the lead in negotiations in particular service areas/employers as agreed with the Branch Secretary
- To take the lead in the Branch Office on recruitment and advise and support the Membership Officer.
- To be a member of the Staff Side Executive Committee and of the Chief Executive's Department Joint Consultative Committee ~~Staff Joint Committee~~ (if a WSCC employee)

5. BRANCH TREASURER

- To conduct the financial affairs of the Branch.
- To keep accounts in accordance with the rules.
- To provide reports on the financial position of the Branch to the Branch Committee.
- To provide a detailed financial report for the Annual Branch Meetings.
- To advise the Branch Officers and Branch Committee in respect of matters relating to financial management and appropriate expenditure.
- To prepare, and periodically revise, (in conjunction with the Branch Secretary), an annual budget.
- To authorise the payment of expenses in accordance with a scheme approved by the Branch Committee.
- To submit accounts for audit in accordance with arrangements approved by the Branch Committee and to ensure that all annual and other returns are made in accordance with national provisions.
- To exercise responsibilities as a signatory to the Branch Banking/Investment arrangements.
- To consider, in conjunction with the Welfare Officer and Branch Secretary, applications for welfare assistance from the Alphabet Pool Fund.

6. EQUALITIES OFFICERS

- To be the identified and well publicised point of contact in the branch for equality issues, as
  - Black members officer
  - LGBT+ members officer
  - Disabled members officer
  - Women's officer.
- To collect and share information on equalities issues, including information from the regional and national self-organised groups.
- To make sure other Branch Officers and the Branch Committee consider the equalities dimension of everything they do.
- To advise and support Branch Officers and the Branch Committee in respect of matters relating to equality and diversity.
- To encourage and support the development of branch self-organised groups on behalf of the Branch Committee.
- To develop and promote equalities related training opportunities for members and activists.
- To undertake individual representation as appropriate.
- To participate in WSCC staff groups where appropriate.

7. HEALTH AND SAFETY OFFICERS

- To advise the Branch Committee on health and safety issues arising within the Branch and to recommend policies and priorities.
- To promote and encourage the activities of safety representatives.
- To increase the awareness of members, safety representatives and Branch Officers on Health and Safety issues.
- To conduct, as appropriate, workplace inspections and risk assessments.
- To co-ordinate the activity of health and safety representatives and to organise regular meetings of health and safety representative to exchange information and consider priorities.

- To be closely involved in all negotiations with the employers on matters related to health and safety and be a member of appropriate health and safety joint consultative committees.
- To maintain contact with the region and regional service groups, e.g. via the regional health and safety committee.

8. EDUCATION COORDINATOR

The duties of this role will normally be overseen by the Branch Secretary with support from the Branch Office staff.

- To ensure that members and stewards are aware, and able to take advantage of, educational and training opportunities within UNISON.
- To co-ordinate education and training activities.
- To participate in the provision of appropriate training courses.
- To report on Education and training issues to Branch Meetings.

9. LIFELONG LEARNING COORDINATOR

- To promote and encourage lifelong learning activities and initiatives within the Branch.
- To work with colleagues to recruit new learning representatives.
- To co-ordinate the activity of lifelong learning representatives.
- To be closely involved in negotiating around learning with employers.
- To report on lifelong learning issues to Branch Meetings.

10. MEMBERSHIP OFFICER

In conjunction with Branch Office team:

- To map the Branch membership in order to identify membership density, joiners and leavers rates, location of members and non-members and steward coverage
- To work with other identified Branch reps and the regional office to develop and implement the Recruitment objectives of the Branch organisation and development plan
- To make recommendations to the branch committee on recruitment activities, targets, resources, budgets, etc
- To plan, organise, and where appropriate, implement recruitment activities to assist in meeting the Branch target for increase in membership
- To review reps' training opportunities on Recruitment, and encourage new and existing reps to attend training courses as appropriate e.g. Recruitment Techniques workshop
- To consider opportunities arising from Recruitment events to convert lay members to active reps' roles, supporting the Branch target of increasing the number of actively involved reps.
- To give regular updates to Branch Committee Meetings on Recruitment
- To use the website to promote Recruitment activities as appropriate

11. YOUNG MEMBERS OFFICER

Branch Young Members Officer must be under 27 years of age for the whole of their term of office.

- To help recruit new members and encourage existing young members to become active in the Branch.
- To make sure issues of concern to young workers are raised by the Branch.
- To act as a focal point for all young workers in the workplaces.
- To encourage involvement in UNISON young members campaigns.
- To build Branch young members organisation and to ensure there are potential new young members' officers in the future.

12. WELFARE OFFICER

- To ensure that Branch Officers, stewards and workplace reps have regular up-to-date information about UNISON Welfare and the range of services.
- To ensure that members seeking welfare assistance receive a prompt, supportive and effective response.
- To liaise and co-ordinate with regional and national levels to ensure that UNISON Welfare support is provided effectively.
- To undertake training and seek advice from UNISON Welfare where necessary.
- To develop and implement local welfare activity.
- To undertake casework in support of members in need.
- To consider, in conjunction with the Branch Secretary and Branch Treasurer, applications for welfare assistance from the Alphabet Pool Fund.

13. COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

The duties of this role will normally be overseen by the Branch Secretary with support from the Branch Office staff.

- To edit the Branch Newsletter and other similar publications.
- To undertake and coordinate appropriate publicity activities.
- To lead on the development of electronic communication with members.
- To ensure that Branch communications are in accessible formats.
- To communicate with the media on behalf of the Branch.
- To arrange Branch participation in employer induction sessions and other similar activities.

14. INTERNATIONAL OFFICER

- To co-ordinate the Branch work on international relations
- To ensure that Branch members are informed of national policy on international matters
- To encourage members to be aware of the importance of international solidarity issues within the context of the overall work of the union.

15. ENVIRONMENTAL OFFICER

- To co-ordinate the Branch work on environmental matters
- To ensure that Branch members are informed of national and local policy on environmental issues
- To encourage the appointment of environmental reps within workplaces.

16. APF (LABOUR LINK) OFFICER

The Labour Link Officer is elected and accountable to the Labour Link section within the Branch and must be an individual member of the Labour Party.

- To develop the role of the UNISON labour link within the Branch
- To circulate information to Labour Link members in the Branch and convene meetings of members as necessary
- To attend the Branch Committee and agree appropriate means of promoting UNISON policy in the party
- To liaise with the Labour Link regional political officer.

17. **PENSIONS OFFICER**

The Pensions Officer position may be held by a full branch member or a retired branch member who must be either a member, deferred member or retired member of the West Sussex Local Government Pension Scheme.

- To represent the interest of members in relation to the provision of high quality and affordable occupational pension schemes.
- To represent scheme members' interests and views on the West Sussex Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) Pension Panel.
- To ensure that members are informed about their occupational pension scheme and local and national policy with regard to pensions, occupational and state-provided.

18. **CONVENORS (4)**

To play a leading role in relation to organisation, representation, negotiation and bargaining within each of the four key staffing sections of the county council, the branch's main employer, in conjunction with the Branch Secretary and Deputy Branch Secretary. Convenor positions may only be held by members in employment at WSCC. Convenor roles will require attendance at relevant departmental joint consultative committees.

- WSCC Children's Services
- WSCC Adults' Services
- WSCC Other departments
- WSCC Schools

SCHEDULE D

Representational Functions

Tasks of Workgroup Representatives (Stewards)

- To be the first and main point of contact for members with the union.
- To recruit new members
- To work with members to establish an organised workplace
- To support and advise members on workplace issues
- To act as a spokesperson for the members they represent and for the Branch
- To represent members with the employer when trained and as appropriate
- To represent members within the Branch Committee.
- To be answerable to members within the workplace/workgroup.

Tasks of Workplace Contacts

- To be a point of contact between members and the Branch

- To recruit new members
- To keep notice boards up to date
- To distribute information sent by the Branch for members

Tasks of Health and Safety Representatives

- To undertake periodic workplace safety inspections, reporting findings to management for action.
- To investigate and report on workplace accidents.
- To support members who raise concerns about matters of health and safety at work.
- To negotiate/consult with local managers about health and safety issues.
- To ensure that members are aware of the need for the reporting of accidents and incidents and to assist where necessary.
- To ensure that members are aware of the legal and other services available through UNISON.
- To participate, where appropriate, in Joint Health and Safety Committees/Working Groups.
- To refer, as appropriate, members concerns to the Section Group/Branch Committee or Branch Office.

Tasks of Learning Representatives

- To support and encourage new and potential learners.
- To promote learning opportunities both within the Branch and with employers
- Assist in the identification of learning needs within the Branch
- To encourage learners through example and experience

Review Date for Rules: August ~~2020~~2023

UNISON West Sussex

Annual Report of the Branch Committee for 2019

Membership

Membership made a net gain in 2019 of 123 members (+2.3%).

Full members:	5,563
Unemployed members:	11
Retired members:	636
Total members:	6,210

The chart below shows our membership levels over the past eight years. Over the whole period the branch has gained 411 members, or +8.0%.

2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
5,152	5,244	5,348	5,336	5,324	5,332	5,440	5,563
+3.0%	+1.8%	+2.0%	-0.2%	-0.2%	+0.2%	+2.0%	+2.3%

In the south east region as a whole during 2019, net membership increased by 1.7%. However, it has dropped in the south east region by around 20% over the same eight-year period.

This tells us that the West Sussex branch is doing well and bucking this regional trend. We are pleased to have made a net gain in membership in 2019, retaining the influx of WSCC managers' membership received in 2018 due to the mishandling of their local pay arrangements, and indeed building on this across all grades.

We held three bespoke recruitment weeks with events at major offices during 2019, in July, October and November.

The more members we have, the more we can achieve for you. Please encourage non-members to join us.

Communications

Our website unisonwestsussex.org.uk is a major driver for branch communications, receiving 33,674 visits during 2019. The branch has issued regular email communications to members, usually weekly.

The branch has continued to prioritise funding for three issues of our newsletter *Branch Lines*. Electronic copies are archived on our website. *Branch Lines* has helped us to recruit as we include a membership form within every issue and received 50 back to the office from this route in 2019. *Branch Lines* continues to help us to highlight, and thereby apply pressure and amend, poor employer practice.

Reps

We have 99 workplace reps and they continue to do a great job for the branch recruiting new members, distributing information, supporting members or signposting them to the branch office, and acting as a spokesperson within their workplace. This number is an increase on the 94 and 87 reps reported to the 2019 and 2018 AGMs.

20 new reps joined the branch in 2019, compared to 26 in 2018.

46 of our reps undertook training during 2019, across 9 different types of course ranging from employment law to disability discrimination. This was an increase on 27 reps trained in 2018.

The branch also arranged two bespoke training courses during 2019 (up from one in 2018), only attended by West Sussex branch reps and hosted in Chichester. These were two-day courses for disciplinary and grievance representation, and for sickness absence representation; and were attended by 18 and 16 branch reps respectively.

If you would like to get more involved in your trade union, talk to a branch officer or rep at an AGM or visit our website.

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 2019.

Collective work, negotiations and reorganisations

UNISON continues to work hard to support members during collective processes e.g. service restructures, and through its regular negotiations with employers. The figures below show the huge breadth of collective work undertaken for branch members last year.

Year	2018	2019
JCC negotiations (ongoing)	17	17
Pay claims	10	15
Terms & conditions	22	13
TUPE transfers	15	10
Restructures – non-schools	54	53
School restructures	35	29
Total formal collective cases	**153**	**137**

Our main employer, West Sussex County Council

2019 will be remembered in West Sussex for a long time. To recap: the Chief Executive, Nathan Elvery, was said to be 'away from duties' though the Local Government Chronicle reported he had been suspended. He left WSCC by 'mutual consent' in December 2019. The Leader of the Council, Louise Goldsmith, resigned also, as did the Director of HR, Heather Daley.

This will mean three changes of leadership absolutely critical for staff and UNISON in 2020. Cllr Paul Marshall has been elected Leader of WSCC. UNISON had our first meeting with him in January 2020. And Becky Shaw has been appointed Chief Executive of both WSCC and East Sussex County Council. We look forward very much to working in close partnership with Becky Shaw. The Director of HR position will need to be recruited to – another key appointment.

Problems at WSCC do go back a long way. The previous Leader followed all the ideological innovations of the coalition government – with disastrous consequences. Council services were mutualised, outsourced, and cut. Council tax was frozen, which

undermined the tax base. The council under Louise Goldsmith's leadership championed academisation and the little-lamented 'Big Society'. Trade union facility time was cut.

But it was in the last two to three years that the slide was really felt by staff to have accelerated. UNISON was publicly taken to task by the former Chief Exec because we objected to the expansion of the 'Culture Board' and Staff Groups without involvement of UNISON or robust terms of reference. 'Lanyardgate' followed and was an object lesson in how not to communicate with staff, as a Library Assistant was upbraided on a public forum for challenging a decision to purchase lanyards.

Controversy came thick and fast: on parking, on increments, on performance-related pay for managers, on retention payments, on executive turnover, on the staff appeals panel, on the chief executive's £47,500 relocation payment for a property he did not relocate to. A staff survey highlighted an organisational culture where staff were fearful to speak up. The trade unions were marginalised and excluded from some of the key decisions we would expect involvement in. Then 2019 saw dire statutory inspection reports of both Children's Services and Fire & Rescue. Services desperately needed improvement and felt to staff like they were at breaking point.

If this was not enough, bullying was a major problem. It was mostly identified at senior levels within the organisation. UNISON has dealt with seven grievances for very senior staff. These are only the cases we have supported. Some very senior staff do not join unions, and we are aware of several other cases of alleged bullying where UNISON was not involved. UNISON did support our members. We did advise cabinet members and the executive leadership what was going on, but action was not taken.

So we told the public and the press by speaking out at two public select committee meetings. The first of these was in July 2019.

The children's commissioner's report following the Ofsted inspection was delayed, but was finally published just before Christmas. This also confirmed what staff and UNISON knew.

UNISON is looking forward to a better future for staff, and normalised industrial relations as part of that. UNISON wishes to acknowledge the large contribution Lee Harris made in 2019 to steadying the ship whilst the previous Chief Executive was 'away from duties'. Lee stepped up as Acting Chief Executive and into a very challenging situation, probably none worse in local government.

Important decisions were taken in 2019 in regard to increments and the single 'formal action policy': both unwelcome innovations of the previous regime were cancelled. The groundwork was also done in 2019 for what we anticipate will be significant positive progress on local pay, and for meaningful work to be carried out with UNISON involvement to address organisational culture including the bullying problem.

UNISON will work with Becky Shaw on these matters, and continue the positive relations with Lee Harris and others, in 2020.

Individual casework and advice

The Branch dealt with 235 formal cases during 2019 where a rep or caseworker was assigned to represent a member in an individual case. Those cases break down thus:

Disciplinary	70	30%
Grievance	52	22%
Sickness	103	44%
Capability	10	4%

At time of writing there are 98 open cases the branch is managing, an unprecedentedly high number.

Formal casework figures:

2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
209	223	235	231	250	267	200	235
+31%	+7%	+5%	-2%	+8%	+7%	-25%	+18%

In addition to formal casework, in 2019 the Branch dealt with 573 requests for advice which were resolved over the phone and did not lead to formal cases.

Informal advice figures:

2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
198	261	228	235	298	598	595	573
Unknown	+32%	-13%	+3%	+27%	+101%	-1%	-4%

808 members, 14.5% of the Branch membership, required formal or informal individual advice and support during 2019.

The figures above exclude 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, even though we are often helping to resolve very individual concerns.

The branch continues to receive regular positive feedback from our West Sussex members after both individual and collective support and we publish this in an anonymised form on our website's what our members say about us page. This feedback is a continuing source of pride for branch officers and reps, as it demonstrates the positive impact our work has for our members.

Pay and pensions

The Branch has supported many local pay claims for members in 2019 in a number of employers where we are recognised for collective bargaining: in the Capita Contact Centre; Aspire; Grace Eyre Foundation; and so on.

The 2019-20 NJC pay award was agreed during 2018 and was implemented for April 2019. This provided for significant pay rises for staff up to the middle of Grade 8 with 2% awarded after Grade 8.

Local pay was settled for managers in 2019 at 2%, after the debacle of the 2018 process. This 2% had no performance strings attached to it. The branch is on the cusp of agreeing formal collective bargaining rights for these staff (a group of 450, who are mostly managers) and anticipate that the 2020 local pay process will be conducted under a collective bargaining process.

Judith Taylor, branch pensions champion continues to do great work on the West Sussex Pensions Panel, representing the interests of all LGPS members (working, retired and deferred LGPS members) across over 150 West Sussex employers admitted to the scheme. The Pensions Advisory Board which holds the Panel to account now has three LGPS member reps and all of these are UNISON members: Tim Stretton, Rebecca Caney, and Chris Scanes. Thanks go to all of them for fulfilling this vital role, looking after what is a substantial amount of members' deferred wages.

The wider union

The branch continued to engage in the regional tier of our union and a number of branch officers were successfully elected to various regional committees. The branch also continued to exert influence on the union's national agenda. The West Sussex branch drafted a motion on branch funding, in conjunction with the NEC, which became Motion 126 which was then passed at national delegate conference 2019.

Motion 126 has provided a funding settlement for the whole union which branches accept as an improvement on the current funding position of at least five per cent (so long as reserves do not exceed agreed thresholds), for at least the next two years. A two-year review of the whole union will now be conducted in an effort to identify further resources for branches. 24 lay UNISON representatives sit on this review body and one of these is the UNISON West Sussex Branch Secretary.

In 2019, the Branch Secretary Dan Sartin was successful in gaining re-election to the NEC of the union. He was joined there by Abi Holdsworth, West Sussex branch rep for Capita members in the Durban House Bognor Contact Centre, who was successful at her first attempt at election. This means that two of the three NEC spaces for the south east region are currently held by West Sussex county branch members.

Dan Sartin
Branch Secretary
On behalf of the branch committee, 11th February 2020

unisonwestsussex.org.uk