



AGM Booklet

27, 28 and 29 March 2023



UNISON: the public service union
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Branch Secretary: Dan Sartin

02 March 2023

Dear branch member,

UNISON West Sussex – Annual General Meeting

I would like to invite you to the UNISON West Sussex branch Annual General Meeting for 2023.

Monday 27 March	12.00-1.00pm	MS Teams
Tuesday 28 March	4.00-5.00pm	Zoom
Wednesday 29 March	1.00-2.00pm	MS Teams

We are holding our AGM over three separate meetings and I hope you will be able to make one of them. All meetings will be held virtually via the Teams or Zoom virtual meeting platform. You can attend by: PC/Laptop; Tablet; Smartphone; Landline telephone.

We will be holding a raffle at **each** of the three AGM meetings with the same great prizes at each event:

- **3 x prizes of £50 Amazon or One4All shopping vouchers, at each event**

To register for your Teams or Zoom link and Electronic Raffle ticket we are using Eventbrite. Please register here: <https://unisonwestsussex.eventbrite.co.uk/>

It will only take two minutes. To win a raffle prize you will need to be present at the AGM you have registered for. Electronic ticket numbers generated by Eventbrite will be put in the draw. Only one prize can be won per member. The draw for three prizes will take place at the end of each meeting. You must be present when the draw is made to claim your prize. More information can be found at: <https://unisonwestsussex.org.uk/news/branch-agms-2023/>

Enclosed with this AGM mailing are the following:

1. Agenda
2. Minutes of 2022 AGM
3. List of Branch Officers and Workplace Reps for 2023-24
4. Honoraria payments
5. West Sussex branch action plan
6. The branch Annual Report for 2022

I look forward to seeing you at our AGM.

Yours sincerely

Dan Sartin
Branch Secretary

UNISON West Sussex

2023 Annual General Meeting

Monday 27 March | 12.00-1.00pm
Tuesday 28 March | 4.00-5.00pm
Wednesday 29 March | 1.00-2.00pm

AGENDA

1. Welcome and introductions.
2. To approve the minutes of the AGM held on 29, 30 and 31 March 2022 (ENCLOSED). **VOTE REQUIRED**
3. To approve branch officers and workplace representatives for 2023-24 (ENCLOSED). **VOTE REQUIRED**
4. Branch finance and accounts 2022:
 - 4.1 To approve the accounts (TO BE TABLED); **VOTE REQUIRED**
 - 4.2 To agree honoraria payments (ENCLOSED). **VOTE REQUIRED**
5. To approve the branch action plan (ENCLOSED). **VOTE REQUIRED**
6. To approve the branch annual report (ENCLOSED) and receive any questions from members. **VOTE REQUIRED**
7. Raffle draw: 3 prizes to be drawn at each AGM.
8. Close of meeting.

UNISON West Sussex

Minutes of the aggregate Annual General Meetings held on 29th, 30th and 31st March 2022 via Microsoft Teams and Zoom.

Present: Ian Harvey (Chair), Sarah Etherington (Vice Chair), Dan Sartin (Branch Secretary), Karen Daubney (Deputy Branch Secretary), Jennie Barrett (Branch Treasurer) and 94 other members.

In attendance: Louise Barter (Regional Organiser, UNISON South East), Vicki Gibbs (Area Organiser, UNISON South East), Catherine Albon (Branch Administrator), Vicky Bowman (Branch Administrator – minutes).

1. Welcome and introductions

The Branch Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. To approve the minutes of the AGM held on 29, 30 and 31 March 2021

Resolved: The minutes of the AGMs 29, 30, 31 March 2021 were approved unanimously as a correct record with no matters arising.

3. To approve branch officers and workplace representatives for 2022-23

The Chair presented the nominations for Branch Officers and Workplace Representatives for 2022-23.

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

4. Branch Finance and Accounts 2021:

4.1 To approve the accounts

The Branch Treasurer reported on the Branch Finance and Accounts for 2021. Thanks were given to branch administrative staff for providing support with financial records and to branch auditor Nick Bendle who audited the accounts within a particularly limited timeframe this year. The Treasurer confirmed that the accounts were audited and submitted and received by UNISON Head Office for the 15 March 2022 deadline.

Resolved: The accounts for 2021 were unanimously approved.

4.2 To agree honoraria payments

The Branch Secretary moved to support 3 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, £3,988
- Paul Woodcock, Branch LGBT+ Officer, workplace rep and committee member, £250
- Stuart Gibbons, Branch Welfare Officer and committee member, £250

5. To approve the branch action plan

The Branch Secretary presented the branch action plan.

Resolved: The branch action plan was unanimously approved.

6. 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 2021. Thanks were given to branch staff, officers, reps, and the wider membership for their continued support.

A member expressed thanks to the branch for doing a fantastic job often under difficult circumstances and noted that there are local government elections taking place in Crawley, Worthing and Adur this year. The potential impact of these results on council staff and services was also noted. The Branch Secretary and Labour Link Officer encouraged any members in these districts to use their vote.

A member enquired as to whether there was any progress at WSCC in terms of an equalities plan. The Branch Secretary reported that the Council recognise they need to do more and have appointed a dedicated Equalities Officer. It was noted that there is also a new HR Director in post, and it is hoped that there will be engagement with UNISON on this issue at the next meeting with him. There are also plans for further discussion at the next branch committee meeting, with a view to bringing the branch Equalities Officers together to try and move things forward.

A member expressed an interest in finding out more about getting involved with the branch, particularly in relation to supporting the work on equalities and LGBT+ members. The Branch Secretary welcomed any support and encouraged members wishing to become more involved to sign up as a workplace rep in the first instance. Once nominated as a workplace rep, there are opportunities for activists to access UNISON training and to support the branch in activities via the branch committee. It was noted that there is a newly elected Branch LGBT+ Officer for 2022-23.

A member asked what the branch's position was in terms of employees impacted by collective processes, such as the anticipated TUPE of outsourced staff back to WSCC this year, that perhaps benefit from the collective work of UNISON despite not actually being members. The Branch Secretary noted that this is a frustration as more can be

achieved for members with a higher membership density. It was noted that the wider union needs to do more in terms of rebuilding people's confidence in trade unions as relevant, positive, democratic organisations. The branch will enforce this message as part of the TUPE process and existing members should be encouraged to promote the value of membership and try and recruit colleagues in order to assert more pressure on the employer during negotiations. The Branch Secretary urged any members who know of colleagues who are unsure about joining to have a discussion with a rep or be directed to face-to-face branch recruitment events in hub buildings scheduled from May 2022 onwards.

In relation to the Capita contract, a member queried if there was any rationale for the continuation of the Contact Centre being outsourced when all other services are due to come back in-house. It was noted that the Council have never run a contact centre and their position is that they do not feel they have the capacity or technology to set up from scratch.

With reference to the WSCC Staff Groups, a member queried if there is currently any UNISON representation on the Carers Staff Group or the Mental Health Staff Group. The Branch Secretary referred members to the list of Branch Officer roles. It was noted that UNISON does not constitutionally have a Carers Officer or Mental Health Officer and advised these specific groups to liaise with Deputy Branch Secretary/Branch Health & Safety Officer Karen Daubney in terms of any collective issues/ policy changes.

A member asked if there was any further news on HAY pay. The Branch Secretary referred to the agreement reached to peg HAY pay to NJC pay for two years (for those on SMG4, HAY, or Agenda for Change pay grades), with the 1.75% pay award being implemented and backdated to 1 July 2021 for these groups. There will need to be further negotiations after two years and membership density within these groups will be important. The value for money of UNISON subscriptions was highlighted.

A member asked if there was any news in relation to term-time only pay and holiday miscalculations. The Branch Secretary reported that there is no further news on this until the judgment from the Supreme Court is known. It was noted that the branch negotiated an agreement with WSCC that backpay will be paid if the appeal is upheld at the Supreme Court. Any members leaving county council schools to go and work for an academy, private school or other UNISON-related employer should maintain their UNISON membership (by contacting the branch office) and the branch will provide support to get any backpay they are owed.

With reference to the 1.75% NJC Pay award for 2021, implemented in March 2022, a member expressed disappointment at the low turnout of members to vote in the ballot. Although members voted by 70% for industrial action and in rejection of the 1.75% offer, the number of members taking part in the ballot fell short of the 50% threshold required under law to strike. Several members commented that the 50% threshold may not be common knowledge amongst the membership and may indicate a case for an awareness raising campaign, particularly thinking ahead to the 2022-23

NJC pay claim and the current rate of inflation. If members realise the impact of not voting at all, they may choose to take part next time with a potentially different result. The Branch Secretary concurred and reported that the branch has received a number of communications from members since the pay 2021 pay claim was settled regarding the cost-of-living crisis and mileage rates.

Area Organiser Vicki Gibbs noted that it has been a very difficult couple of years for all trade unions as the primary activity of organising in the workplace has been so limited during the pandemic. Despite the small decline in membership reported this year, the Area Organiser praised the branch for its achievements and the support it continues to provide to members. Any members keen to become more involved were encouraged to become activists by signing up as a workplace rep, with support available from both the branch and Regional Office.

Resolved: The branch Annual Report was unanimously approved.

7. Raffle draw: 3 prizes to be drawn at each AGM

The raffle draw took place with winners announced for each of the prizes.

- Charles Gauntlett (WSCC) £150
- Nikki Mayhead (Schoolsworks Academy Trust) £50
- Clive Newnham (WSCC) £25
- Vanessa Cummins (WSCC) £150
- Nicole Gardner (WSCC) £50
- Tim Stanton (WSCC) £25
- Craig Rough (WSCC) £150
- Helen Burrows (Bluebird Care) £50
- Karen Fisher (GBMET) £25

8. Close of meeting

The Chair thanked branch and regional officers, staff, and reps for all their hard work and commitment to supporting members throughout the year.

The meeting was drawn to a close.

UNISON West Sussex 2023/24

Branch Officers

Position/Officer	Name and Employer/ Service	Telephone
Chair	Ian Harvey, WSCC Place Services	033022 28215
Vice Chair	Sarah Etherington, WSCC CYPL	033022 27170
Branch Secretary	Daniel Sartin, WSCC Adults' Services	01243 777636
Deputy Branch Secretary	Karen Daubney, WSCC Adults' Services	01243 777636
Treasurer	Jennie Barrett, WSCC Finance & Support	01243 777636
Communications	Vacant	
Education Co-ordinator	Vacant	
Environmental	Vacant	
Equality, Disabled members	Sarah Etherington, WSCC CYPL	033022 27170
Equality, Black members	Olu Oyedele, WSCC CYPL	033022 23671
Equality, LGBT+ members	Karen Fenn, WSCC Adults' Services	033022 28772
Equality, Women's Officer	Carla Hardy, WSCC HR & Organisational Development	033022 22002
Health and Safety	Carla Hardy, WSCC HR & Organisational Development	033022 22002
Health and Safety	Karen Daubney, WSCC Adults' Services	01243 777636
International	Chris Hughes, WSCC Adults' Services	01243 777636
Labour Link	Daniel Sartin, WSCC Adults' Services	01243 777636
Lifelong Learning Co-ordinator	Vacant	
Membership	Vacant	
Pensions	Tim Stretton (Retired Member)	01243 777636
Retired Members Secretary	Julie Bolton, Clive Coleman (job-share)	01243 777636
Welfare	Karen Fenn, WSCC Adults' Services	033022 28772
Young Members	Vacant	
WSCC Adults' Services Convenor	Gerard Robson, WSCC Adults' Services	033022 22665
WSCC CYPL Convenor	Sarah Etherington, WSCC CYPL	033022 27170
WSCC Other Depts Convenor	Ian Harvey, WSCC Place Services	033022 28215
WSCC Schools Convenor	Keith Manville, Oakgrove College	033022 24917

Branch Reps

WSCC Children's Services		
Sarah Etherington	CYPL Convenor	033022 27170
Leah Bagnall	Adoption Support, County Hall North	033022 23802
Michaela Homewood	The Needles Children & Family Centre	07764 447362
Paula Knott	Crawley Broadfield Family Hub	01293 651760
Debbie Lawes	Fostering Team, Durban House	033022 25494
Helen Mallows	Careers Team, Horsham Youth Hub	033022 22057
Chloe Pascovitch	Family Safeguarding, Crawley Library	033022 22372
Louie Perren	Child Disability Team, County Hall North	033022 22635
Sarah Powell	Bognor Regis Nursery School	01243 642925

Jacqueline Richards	Boundstone Nursery School, Lancing	01903 276850
Denise Stephens	Business Support, County Hall	033022 24512
Sandy Tester	Child Disability Team, Bridge House	033022 27349
WSCC Adults' Services		
Gerard Robson	Adults' Services Convenor	033022 22665
Mohamed Chlouk	The Rowans, Worthing	01903 218022
Elaine Cruttenden	Lifelong Services, The Grange, Chichester	033022 28293
Annie Flack	WAMH Northern Team, County Hall North	01293 652300
Guy Flitton	Adult Care Point 2, County Hall North	033022 23479
Paul Gibson	Proactive Care, Horsham Hospital	01403 227000
Lauren Glanville	Worthing Hospital Team	033022 24107
Alex Grindley	Stanhope Lodge, Worthing	033022 26787
Laura Hard	Lifelong Services, County Hall North	033022 22376
Tamsyn Hicks	Placement & Sourcing Team (Hospital Discharge), Bridge House	033022 28303
Chris Hughes	The Laurels Day Centre, Rustington	01903 859078
Marina Humphrey	Glebelands Day Centre, Shoreham-by-Sea	01273 268920
Marie Kelly	Adur Community Team, Glebelands	033022 22091
Joe Lyndhurst	Bognor Community Team, Durban House	033022 25837
Helen Miles	Horsham Adult Team, County Hall North	033022 22049
Viktorija Millis	Contracts Team, County Hall	033022 27915
Claire Munnery	Worthing Community Team, Bridge House	033022 24156
Samuel Theodoridi	Stanhope Lodge, Worthing	01903 264560
WSCC Other		
Ian Harvey	WSCC Other Departments Convenor	033022 28215
Drayce Beckett	Finance & Support Services, County Hall	033022 27053
Jo Cooke	Communities & Public Protection, County Hall	033022 23891
David Dutton	Trading Standards, County Hall North	033022 24010
Carla Hardy	Health & Safety Team, County Hall	033022 22002
Paula Herbert	Law & Assurance, County Hall	033022 22719
Abigail Holdsworth	Customer Service Centre, County Hall	033022 28012
Robert Mcleod	Caretaking and Premises Support	03302 222829
Lyndsay Pink	Fire & Rescue Service, Bognor Fire Station	033022 25005
Jack Portman	Fire & Rescue Service HQ	01243 777636
Clare Snoad	Collections Team, West Sussex Record Office	033022 24597
Tim Stanton	Library Services, Crawley Library	01293 651744
WSCC Schools		
Keith Manville	WSCC Schools' Convenor	033022 24917
Chris Armstead	St Anthony's School, Chichester	01243 785965
Claire Bourner	Bourne Community College, Southbourne	01243 375691
Cheryl Brown	Storrington Primary School	01903 742047
Clare Christian	West Sussex Alternative Provision College (Lancing)	01903 270460
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
Jane Hartley	Thomas A Becket Junior School, Worthing	01903 202268

Tracy Howard	Millais School, Horsham	01403 254932
Russ Hubner	Millais School, Horsham	01403 254932
Simon Pettiford	The Angmering School	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
Anthony Whiffin	Bersted Green Primary School, Bognor Regis	01243 822885
Academies		
Kevin Birch	Warden Park Academy, Haywards Heath	01444 457881
Debra Cannons	Greenway Academy, Horsham	01403 252013
Sue Chant	The Littlehampton Academy	01903 711120
Jill Cox	Sir Robert Woodard Academy, Lancing	01903 767434
Angela Elliott	Shoreham Academy, Shoreham-by-Sea	01273 274100
Debbie Gillies	The Bewbush Academy, Crawley	01293 534897
Wendy Haider	The Globe Primary Academy, Lancing	01903 854970
Juliet Healy	Bishop Luffa School, Chichester	01243 787741
Nicola Long	White Meadows Primary Academy, Littlehampton	01903 731774
Rebecca Nicholl	Ormiston Six Villages Academy, Westergate	01243 546800
David Potter	Bohunt School, Worthing	01903 601361
Chloe Powell	The Globe Primary Academy, Lancing	01903 854970
Paul Smith	Warden Park Academy, Haywards Heath	01444 457881
Lorraine Solti	The Regis School, Bognor Regis	01243 871010
Further Education		
Karen Fisher	Chichester College Group Convenor	01903 273456
Alan Cooper	Chichester College Group, Chichester Campus	01243 786321
Kevin Maunsell	Chichester College Group, Northbrook College	01903 273060
Joanne Spear	The College of Richard Collyer, Horsham	01403 210822
Higher Education		
Chris Anderson	University of Chichester, Bishop Otter Campus	01243 816000
Roy Donaldson	University of Chichester, Bishop Otter Campus	01243 816000
Tracy May	University of Chichester, Bognor Regis Campus	01243 816000
Andrew Melchior	University of Chichester, Bishop Otter Campus	01243 816000
Other Employers		
Natacha Bricks-Yonow	South Downs National Park Authority	01730 814810
Sophie Brown	South Downs National Park Authority	01243 811533
Nicholas Butler	Southern Housing	01243 777636
Tom Conroy	Grace Eyre Foundation	01273 201900
Michael Corlett	Grace Eyre Foundation	01273 201900
Katie Cronin	Coastal West Sussex MIND	0300 303 5652
Tim Halpin	Grace Eyre Foundation	01273 201900
Jeremy Powell	BaxterStorey	01243 777636
Aimee Seabourne	Salutem LD Bidco Ltd, Ingfield Manor School	01403 782294
Lester Speed	Farney Close School	01444 881811
Kathryn Steele	South Downs National Park Authority	01730 814810
Trevor Wingate	Grace Eyre Foundation	01273 201900

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 UNISON head office, with deductions made for national insurance and tax. The first step is for any payments to be discussed at a branch committee and those approved are then submitted to the AGM in March for final approval by members.

The branch's longstanding practice has been to agree a maximum percentage of the branch's budget which is allocated by the branch committee to those officers and workplace reps who have made a significant contribution to branch activity. The set ceiling amount of 2.25% of gross subscription income payable to the branch is in the branch rules which were agreed in 2011. This amount was not changed when the rules were amended in other respects in 2017 and 2021.

The maximum permissible sum for honoraria in 2023 is £5,352.

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 officers and workplace reps who have contributed to good outcomes for the branch. Last year payments were made to the branch treasurer Jennie Barrett (£3,988), Paul Woodcock, branch LGBT+ officer (£250), and Stuart Gibbons, branch welfare officer (£250).

The AGM is asked to consider honoraria for 2023 and agree to the recommendations from the branch committee for the following (which total £5,113):

- Jennie Barrett, branch treasurer
Proposed at £3,988.
- Julie Bolton, branch environmental officer and workplace rep
Proposed at £250
- Judith Taylor, branch pensions officer and workplace rep
Proposed at £250
- Briony Stilliard, branch lifelong learning and education officer and workplace rep
Proposed at £250
- Diane Paquette, workplace rep
Proposed at £125
- Chris Scanes, branch Pension Advisory Board member
Proposed at £125
- Marilyn Cox, workplace rep
Proposed at £125

Dan Sartin Branch Secretary

6th March 2023, on behalf of the branch committee which met on 11th January 2023 and the branch's staff side executive committee which met on 22nd February 2023 to agree these recommendations to the AGM.

Action plan

West Sussex (LG)

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 2023

Status

Open

Book activists on mandatory GDPR e-learning <https://e-learning.unison.org.uk/>

Targets, objectives and other information

Branch secretary will send all activists and branch staff the link to complete training. Some have completed but some may not have done so

Assigned to

Branch Secretary

To be completed by

31 Dec 2023

Status

Open

UNISON West Sussex

Annual Report of the Branch Committee for 2022

Membership

Membership made a net loss in 2022 of 118 members (-2.1%).

Full members:	5,621
Unemployed members:	27
<u>Retired members:</u>	<u>699</u>
Total members:	6,347

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

2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
5,440	5,563	5,963	5,739	5,621
+2.0%	+2.3%	+7.2%	-3.7%	-2.1%

Across the Southeast region as a whole, membership loss was very similar to the branch at -1.9%. However, the union as whole grew by 0.3%, mostly due to new joiners in Health and Scotland where there were big pay disputes offsetting losses in other parts of the union.

This further loss of membership in 2022 is disappointing for the branch. Anecdotally we know some members are leaving due to the cost of membership during a cost-of-living crisis.

Face-to-face recruitment events were curtailed in 2022 and not at our usual levels. Where we have done face-to-face recruitment events, these have been in venues where there are less staff available due to flexible working arrangements. The branch committee has reaffirmed its commitment to physical recruitment events for 2023 so we will persist with these.

It still remains the case that branch membership is at its highest level for all but two of the previous eleven years, those two years being the years impacted by Covid-19 which saw very large numbers of joiners, many seeking H&S protection and advice from the union. It is regrettable that these members have not on the whole stayed with us.

We have seen encouraging signs of membership growth in January and February. At 27th February 2023, membership had **climbed back to 5,737**.

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 67,606 visits during 2022 (compared with 36,525 visits during 2021). We are a little unclear as to why there should be this huge growth and wonder if the methodology for collating website visits has changed. It is possible that people are just becoming more and more 'digital' in how they find out information about us, or members are more engaged in what we are sending them to read on our website!

Our website remains a good resource for members and is an effective one, which is kept up-to-date.

The branch has issued regular email communications to members throughout the year. Three editions of *Branch Lines*, our newsletter, were produced in 2022 as promised in our AGM report this time last year. These can be viewed electronically via our website: <https://unisonwestsussex.org.uk/category/pdf-newsletters/>

We intend to return to normal, full workplace distribution via reps from later in 2023, rather than posting copies to home addresses, as was the case during the pandemic. The branch committee has decided the branch should only produce two copies in 2023. One of these, the January/February 2023 issues, has already been published.

Reps

We have [92 workplace reps](#) and they have done a vital job for members and the branch. They do a great job for the branch and their members. If you would like to get more involved, please contact another branch rep or the branch office. We would love to hear from you. More information is also on [our website](#). Getting involved with the branch gives you a unique insight to your employer, the full span of its functions and how it works, and trade unions of course. Training is available for which you are usually released on full pay to attend (this can vary if your employer does not 'recognise' trade unions). You will develop skills and experience which can be useful for your own development and career prospects.

16 new reps joined the branch in 2022, compared to 16 in 2021.

40 of our reps undertook training during 2022, across 11 different types of in-person and online courses/ workshops, including:

*Organising Stewards; ERA Refresher; H&S Reps training; Introduction to Employment Law certificate; Disabled Members Branch Officer and Contact training; Tackling Racism in the Workplace; Recruitment Techniques; Black Members Training Weekend; Big Weekend Branch Officer Training & Strategy workshops

10 reps achieved Employment Rights Act accreditation or re-accreditation and 2 became certified H&S Reps.

The branch also arranged two bespoke training courses only attended by West Sussex branch reps and held at County Hall, Chichester: Challenging racism in the workplace and Sickness absence representation.

[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 2022.

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 breadth of collective work undertaken for branch members last year.

Year	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
JCC forums (ongoing)	17	17	17	18	18
Pay claims	10	15	7	7	12
Terms & conditions	22	13	13	12	15
TUPE transfers	15	10	15	9	21
Restructures	54	53	46	35	23
School restructures	35	29	13	21	11
Total	153	137	111	102	100

These figures represent generally good news for members as the very high numbers of restructures and restructures in schools we saw in 2018 and 2019 in particular are not currently being replicated.

Individual casework and advice

The Branch dealt with 221 formal cases during 2022 where a rep or caseworker was assigned to represent a member in an individual case. Those cases break down thus:

Disciplinary	57	26%
Grievance	48	22%
Sickness	104	47%
Capability	8	4%
Other	4	2%

Of the 104 sickness cases, 8 were Long Covid related.

'Other' is a new category we introduced in 2022 for cases where there is no formal process but where the member needs significantly more ongoing support than is usually given via our informal duty advice process. E.g. these might include individual pay issues which do not progress to grievance but take substantial time to resolve.

The branch also referred 1 Social Work England Fitness to Practise case to the UNISON Professional Services Unit for support and representation during 2022.

17 branch members pursued Personal Injury claims with Thompsons solicitors (the firm UNISON uses) during 2022. Compensation won is received by members without deduction for legal fees as the union fully funds personal injury cases for existing members and their close family members.

At time of writing there are 72 open formal cases the branch is supporting West Sussex members with.

Formal casework figures:

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

2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
200	235	252	232	221
-25%	+18%	+7%	-8%	-5%

In addition to formal casework, in 2022 the Branch dealt with 699 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
198	261	228	235	298	598
N/A	+32%	-13%	+3%	+27%	+101%

2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
595	573	1,030	842	699
-1%	-4%	+80%	-18%	-17%

This shows a reduction to something more like 'normal' following the exceptionally busy Covid years.

In total 920 members, 16.4% of the Branch membership, required formal or informal individual advice and support through the Chichester branch office during 2022.

Members can continue to rely on the branch to provide timely and helpful advice, support and representation, in large volumes.

The figures above exclude other non-casework 'once and done' enquiries (e.g. about membership or subscriptions), pieces of advice dispensed direct by workplace reps, 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.

Pay, pensions and mileage

The branch has supported local pay claims for members in 2022 in a number of employers where we are recognised for collective bargaining.

The 2022-23 NJC pay award was implemented for November 2022. This provided a settlement of £1,925, representing from 10 to 4% depending on your salary scale point. The previous year's award was 2.75%. West Sussex members taking part in a branch-organised consultative ballot rejected this pay offer by a margin of 72:28% on a 41% turnout. This was the highest turnout in the South East region and West Sussex was the only branch to achieve a Reject vote by members. This is testament to the amount of work put in by the branch to explain the limitations of the sub-inflation award and its failure as a pay offer to help members keep up with the increasing cost-of-living. Unfortunately, other South East branches did not come to the same result as West Sussex, and nationally only the North West and London regions delivered Reject votes, which led to a national decision to accept the pay offer of £1,925 plus an additional day's annual leave.

Whilst West Sussex are not happy with this, the branch received positive comments from members about both the pay award and our conduct of the ballot. The NJC pay award for 2023-24 has been submitted to the employers and is for a headline pay figure of RPI inflation plus 2%: equivalent to 12.7%.

Local pay for WSCC managers (a cohort of around 500 staff) was agreed during 2021 with WSCC to be matched to NJC pay awards for two years. This meant that the pay award including one additional day's leave was also made to staff on local pay. The branch is seeking the continued commitment of the council to match local pay to NJC pay and currently awaiting a formal response.

Judith Taylor, [branch pensions officer](#) did great work on the West Sussex Pension Committee, representing the interests of all LGPS members (working, retired and deferred LGPS members) across over 200 West Sussex employers admitted to the scheme. Judith stepped down on March 31st and we wish Judith a long and happy retirement. The branch tried to make good-faith arrangements with the council for UNISON to nominate a replacement but these were rejected by WSCC councillors, who sought to retain the power of appointment in their own hands. This could have led to a non-UNISON member representing the interests of UNISON members, without support from either the UNISON branch or our national pension experts. The branch remains unhappy with the council's approach to this issue, which fails to recognise the strengths we bring to the table and the safeguards. However, the branch is lucky to have brilliant people as our members, and Tim Stretton, who had been a UNISON member on the Pensions Advisory Board (which holds the Committee to account) stepped up and put himself forward for the Committee vacancy. Tim and several others (non-members) were interviewed for the role, but the council had little choice but to appoint Tim to the role given his huge experience of pension matters and accountability to UNISON members.

This does mean though that now Tim has come off the Pension Advisory Board in favour of the Committee and following the retirement also from the Board of UNISON rep Chris Scanes, who we also thank for his commitment and hard work for members during his tenure, that we need more UNISON members interested in pensions to come forward. Rebecca Caney remains on the Pensions Advisory Board and we thank her for her continuing support and diligence, looking after billions of pounds of members' deferred wages.

Mileage is negotiated locally and in 2022 the branch approached the council to increase its rate of 46.9 pence, due to the escalating cost of petrol and the general cost of living crisis. Following negotiation, the council agreed to increase the rate to 58.7pence for a temporary period from July 2022 to March 2023. The branch is currently working to evaluate the benefits of this increase to persuade the council to maintain its higher rate. The increase in 2022 was to the credit of the council as they were one of the first to increase it nationally, and perhaps the first locally. For the branch too, this also represented a successful negotiation for members during 'hard times' where councils can hardly be said to have benefited from any central government largesse: far from it, budgets are as pressured as ever. Councils that uprated their mileage rates were the exception, not the rule. We will do our best to ensure this valuable change to terms and conditions is maintained. We were delighted when Grace Eyre Foundation agreed to emulate the council's position for its staff too.

Our main employer, West Sussex County Council

Relationships with WSCC have continued to be productive and indeed 'normalised' after more torrid years from 2013-2019. The interim Director of HR who came in to 'steady the ship' after the previous Director left in disgrace ended up staying throughout both 2020 and 2021 and had a positive influence on industrial relations. She left the council in March 2022 and was replaced by a permanent Director of HR. Relationships continue to be positive and the branch believes this can only be of benefit to members, not just in the collective ways described above (pay, mileage), but we have also seen more collegiate approaches to individual member processes such as disciplinary and grievance procedures.

The Capita contract let in 2012 has been one of the worst and most costly decisions ever taken in the history of West Sussex local government. The contract should have been ended much earlier to avoid gross waste and inefficiency. It was allowed to limp on to avoid political embarrassment to those elected to lead the council, but WSCC has now successfully insourced the entirety of what was outsourced in 2012.

This is a victory for staff, and for common sense. The branch worked hard in 2022 to oversee and negotiate around this insourcing. Particular thanks go to the Capita lead rep Ian Harvey for his hard work. (Ian is now our WSCC Place Services Convenor, reflecting his new location within the WSCC structure.)

We have taken up two particular issues for insourced members: removing the loathed EG 'personal time' system and harmonising pay with WSCC equivalent roles for those on lower Capita 'spot pay' salaries. We have made good progress on both, with plans to minimise to zero any negative connotations of the old 'personal time' recording system; and the award of the NJC pay rise of £1,925 for staff on Capita spot-pay

salaries for the period from November to March; something the council did not need to do by law, but did so for sound reasons and following UNISON raising our concerns about the impact of a two-tier workforce formally and persistently since June 2022, prior to the insourcing in October 2022. This move by the council was welcomed by members and went a little way to 'closing the gap'. We continue to have formal meetings with the council, because until all services are either restructured or voluntary assimilation opportunities offered, we still live with the remnants of Capita's two-tier workforce. These must be fully eradicated during 2023 and the branch is expecting to see serious progress from April, concluding the work by the summer.

In 2022, less good news was the XMA contract. Service quality is very poor and this costs the council dearly in terms of staff productivity. Yet again, there has been wilful blindness on the part of some council management as to the real costs of outsourcing. At the time of the decision to move the service to XMA we thought we had assurances that UNISON would be involved in the commissioning process, but these did not transpire. We will pick this up in 2023. Members were repeatedly advised to ensure that enough of the staff on this contract joined the union. Without a critical mass of UNISON members, members are vulnerable to the worst employers doing what they can get away with legally but could not get away with if there was a strong union presence. Unfortunately, very few IT staff are in the union, and so XMA used this weakness to refuse to honour the NJC pay award of £1,925. Union membership is good value, and if you don't have it, it can cost you dear. Over 10 years, this will be a loss to staff of £19,250 salary plus lost employer pension contributions and reduced pension overall – a catastrophe. We invite non-members to wake up and smell the coffee and join us.

Other sad news was the final implosion of the Aspire adult education service in 2022. This was once the jewel in the crown for the council and was a significant net revenue contributor to the council's budget, year on year. A toxic combination of ideology alongside the ego of the council manager who headed the service at the time saw adult education 'mutualised' under the Coalition Government's new legislation. Adult education became 'Aspire' and almost went bankrupt within the year, only just managing to cover staff salaries at Christmas due to a council bail out. Now it finally has gone irrevocably bankrupt and our members, some of whom had worked in adult education for several decades, were called into a meeting and given a day's notice of their redundancy. UNISON is supporting its members and our rep Briony Stilliard has done a sterling job even though no longer employed by Aspire to continue to support them. UNISON is taking a legal claim for our members for their dismissal without due consultation.

The branch has supported members in the council's maintained schools with continued representation on the Schools' Joint Consultative Committee and Schools Forum. Importantly, in July 2022 the Supreme Court upheld UNISON's case for Term-Time Only pay. This was a **big legal win for all members**. We spent the remainder of 2022 negotiating how this would be implemented in West Sussex maintained schools and academies. For maintained schools, pay was corrected in January 2023 and back-pay paid in February. We are now trying to resolve the same for academies.

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 in February 2022. The branch also continued to exert influence on the union's national agenda. The branch has three members on UNISON's National Executive Council (the 'NEC', its governing body): Dan Sartin, Abi Holdsworth and Kiera Hilder. Dan Sartin is chair of the UNISON NEC's Finance Committee. Kiera is unable to stand again for a young member's seat due to her advancing age (26!) but Dan and Abi will seek re-election in June 2023.

Dan Sartin

Branch Secretary

On behalf of the branch committee, 27th February 2023.