



Aberdeen City Branch

To: **ALL UNISON MEMBERS**

BRANCH COMMITTEE MEETING

Members are requested to meet in St Nicholas Room, Town House on **WEDNESDAY, 14 MARCH 2018 At 12 noon or 5pm.**

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE AGENDA AND ASSOCIATED REPORTS WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR MEMBERS AT BOTH SESSIONS

BUSINESS

- 1 Chair Introductions
- 2 Apologies
- 3 Appointment of Scutineers
- 4 Minute of Previous AGM 1 March 2017 (Pages 3 - 10)
- 5 Transformation

OFFICER REPORTS

- 6 Branch Secretary Report (Pages 11 - 14)
- 7 Service and Conditions Officer Report (Pages 15 - 16)
- 8 Treasurer Report - will be circulated along with the accounts at the AGM
 - Annual Accounts – will be issued separately
 - Approval required for Bank Signatories
 - Approval required for Auditor(s)
- 9 Communications Officer Report (Pages 17 - 38)
- 10 Membership Services Report (Pages 39 - 42)

- 11 Education Officer Report (Pages 43 - 44)
- 12 Welfare Officer Report (Pages 45 - 46)
- 13 Health and Safety Report - to be circulated at the AGM

BRANCH OFFICERS/STEWARDS

- 14 Ratification of Branch Officers (Pages 47 - 48)
- 15 Ratification of Branch Stewards and Health and Safety Representatives (Pages 49 - 50)
- 16 Election of Delegates to attend Local Government and National Conference

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS

- 17 Any Questions from the Floor

GUEST SPEAKER

- 18 Kay Sillars - Pay and Bargaining Team at UNISON Scotland

Should you require any further information about this agenda, please contact Karen Finch, 01224 522723 or kfinch@aberdeencity.gov.uk



ABERDEEN CITY BRANCH

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

1 March 2017

St NICHOLAS ROOM, TOWN HOUSE

12noon (48 in attendance) and 5pm (18 in attendance)

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Item	Discussion
1. Opening Comments by the Chair	The Chair opened each meeting and welcomed members in attendance. He encouraged those in attendance to get more involved in the work of the union even something as simple as being a contact in the workplace so that information can be shared with members.
2. Apologies	Apologies from Members were recorded.
3. Appointment of Scutineers	Betty Lyon and Lesley Dunbar were appointed for the lunchtime meeting and due to the lower attendance at the evening meeting, no-one was appointed as a scutineer.
4. Minute of Previous AGM 2014	The minute was proposed as a correct record by Mark Musk and seconded by Raymond Morrison at the lunchtime meeting and agreed at the evening meeting.
5. Motion	<p>The AGM had before it a Motion, proposed by Brenda Massie and seconded by Alison Robertson at the lunchtime meeting, and proposed by Tommy Reid and seconded by Alison Robertson at the evening meeting.</p> <p>The terms of the Motion were as follows:</p> <p>BUDGET 17- 18: PROTECTING MEMBERS, DEFENDING SERVICES</p> <p>In light of Aberdeen City Council's Budget 2017-18, the AGM is deeply worried about the implications for our members.</p> <p>It recognises that staff were under pressure to continue to provide the same and sometimes increased</p>

Item	Discussion
	<p>level of service to customers (internal and external) at the same time as jobs are cut.</p> <p>Members are queueing up to complete their notes of interest in Voluntary Severance / Early Retirement. Many will be approved as a budget saving. Workload pressure, already high, will increase.</p> <p>This AGM pledges to do all it can to minimise the impact on its members. It calls on the branch to commit to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fully utilise UNISON support, materials and campaigns to address increased workload challenges being placed on its members • Equip Branch Officers and Stewards with knowledge and understanding of various Damage Series and other resources designed to mitigate stress on members regarding work - induced stress • Engage with and encourage members to monitor the impact of cuts in their workplace and report back to Branch Committee • Participate in and inform UNISON Scotland Issues Groups (Education Issues Group, Social Work Issues Group, Housing Issues Group) about issues encountered by Aberdeen City Branch Members. <p>Members asked questions in relation to the documentation available to Branches to assist with supporting members, wherein they were advised that the Damage Series was available on the Unison website and was essentially a toolkit for branches, made up of various sections for different work roles.</p> <p>Other questions related to what ACC and Unison were doing to record accurately stress levels across the organization and the actions taken to mitigate against stress. Members were advised that the figures were collated and presented at Health and Safety Meetings wherein stewards can see the figures and question management on actions being taken. Regular meetings with Service Managers have taken place to discuss the figures and to get assurance that action was being taken to address the issue, specifically in service areas where there are high stress related figures.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members in attendance supported the motion.

Item	Discussion
6. Branch Secretary's Annual Report	<p>The AGM had before it the Branch Secretary Report. The Branch Secretary spoke to her report and highlighted a number of campaigns and pieces of the work undertaken by the Branch over the past year which included:</p> <p><u>Disability Leave Policy</u> – ACC adopted Unison's Disability Leave Policy in 2016 after two years of discussion. If an employee has a recognised disability and requires time off for appointments to support their health then the time off will no longer count as Sickness Absence but as Disability Leave and should no longer require to take Annual Leave for appointments.</p> <p><u>Social Work Watch Day</u> – this is where Deirdre and Karen Davidson, Local Organiser visited all Social Work establishments to form a snapshot of Social Work activity and highlighted that there was a strong sense of huge workload pressures.</p> <p><u>Ethical Care Charter</u> – after 3 years of discussion with relevant partner agencies and stakeholders, the branch were successful in getting the Ethical Care Charter adopted across Health and Social Care Partnership, Integrated Joint Board, Bon Accord Care and Aberdeen City Council. The Charter sets the benchmark of standards all companies providing care should expect for staff conditions of service while providing the care to clients.</p> <p><u>Stalls During 2016/17</u> – the branch have organised various stalls to keep members informed and to seek your views of upcoming and ongoing campaigns.</p> <p><u>Pay Award</u> – the current position was that this year for the first time in a while, COSLA and the Partnership have entered into negotiation on the pay award. There was a proposal on the table from the Union side which had received an initial response which was countered and that a second response had been received. The next meeting to negotiations was to be held on 3 March 2017.</p> <p><u>Social Work Project</u> – a change in legislation will lead to all carers having to have a minimum qualification and to be registered with the SSSC. Further information on this still to be provided to the branch.</p> <p><u>Plea for Assistance</u> – Deirdre asked members in attendance to consider being more active in the branch to assist with the varying projects and challenges that were to come over the next year. She specifically mentioned the need to get Retired Members more involved in the work of the Branch as they had a very well organised group that may be able to assist. She also highlighted the importance of having a Communications Officer to assist the branch with all communications with members.</p>

Item	Discussion
	<p><u>Alternative Therapy Sessions</u> – the branch in conjunction with the Health Branch would be organising alternative therapy sessions for members to improve their own health and wellbeing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members noted the report and additional information provided.
<p>7. Service and Conditions Officer Annual Report</p>	<p>The AGM had before it the Service and Conditions report. The Service and Conditions Officers spoke to their report and highlighted the various issues that they had dealt with over the year, which included the following:</p> <p><u>Re-grading of Posts</u> – the branch have been successful in getting posts within Education Support Staff and Community Centres re-graded to more accurately reflect the level of work being carried out by those in the posts.</p> <p><u>Bon Accord Care</u> – regular meetings with the Managing Director and HR continued to take place to discuss various things including improving the Maximising Attendance Policy and reduction in absence.</p> <p><u>Reasonable Adjustments</u> – the branch continued to assist members to secure reasonable adjustments in the workplace.</p> <p><u>Customer Service Consultation</u> – regular meeting take with to discuss aspects of customer service provision including uniforms for front line staff and solutions to improve workforce management within the service.</p> <p><u>Health and Safety</u> – the Smoke Free Policy had been introduced and the branch are working with the Health, Safety and Wellbeing team to ensure a fair approach was maintained for all employees. Stress at work and other Mental Health issues continue to be monitored by the branch and are being discussed with the relevant service managers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members noted the content of the report
<p>8. Treasurer's annual report and audited accounts</p>	<p>The AGM had before it, the treasurer report. The Treasurer spoke to her report and highlighted the following:</p> <p><u>Financial Rules</u> – the report highlighted the out of pocket expenses that could be claimed in a 24 hour period whilst on Unison business. If on Unison business overnight then a non-taxable payment of £30 could be claimed as well as a £10 taxable payment for each 24 hour period. Where meals are provided the costs of £5 (lunch) or £15 (dinner) would be deducted.</p>

Item	Discussion
	<p><u>OLBA</u> – the income and expenditure entered into the online banking system automatically generates an end of year statement.</p> <p><u>Unison Prepaid Card</u> – the treasurer has a prepaid card to allow payment of travel, accommodation and welfare gifts provided to members whilst they are on long term sickness.</p> <p><u>Events</u> – the branch took part in Stars in our Schools Day on 25 November wherein cupcakes and goody bags were delivered to three academies. Unfortunately due to staff resources not all schools could be included this year. The branch also awarded a prize of a £50 gift voucher to one staff member from a Primary School and one from a Secondary school. Another event the branch are involved in is the alternative therapy sessions at the Health Village.</p> <p><u>Income and Expenditure</u> – the treasure presented the draft annual accounts which were currently still with the auditors. The treasurer advised that there had been a surplus of £19,807.37 which was mainly due to some events not being progressed during the year.</p> <p><u>Bank Signatories</u> – the following people were proposed as bank signatories: Jim Currie, Elizabeth Herlihy, Brenda Massie and Sarina Griffiths</p> <p><u>Auditors</u> – the auditors were Andy Pitbaldo and Dave Kilgour. Special mention was made to the sad passing of Les McGonigle who was one of the previous auditors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members noted the content of the report • Members noted the content of the draft accounts • Members approved the bank signatories • Members ratified the auditors
9. Branch Officers' Annual Reports	<p>The AGM had before it annual reports from the following Branch Officers –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Membership Services Officer • Welfare Officers Report • Sport and Social Officer Report • Education Co-ordinator Report <p>The Membership report provided details of the new members and the lapsed membership for the period</p>

Item	Discussion
	<p>January 2016 and December 2016. 142 members joined and 137 memberships lapsed.</p> <p>The Welfare report outlined the financial services available to members and provided information on the Unison There for You Charity</p> <p>The Sports and Social report outlined events that had taken place throughout the year.</p> <p>The Education Co-ordinator report outlined the need for all activists to have a training plan to ensure skills were up to date and to keep knowledge up to date and that this required to be completed and promoted amongst activists. It also stated that the branch would be organising training for members on a variety of topics throughout the year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members noted all of the reports provided.
10. Ratification of Branch Officers	<p>AGM had before it a list of nominations which had been received in terms of the timescales permitted in Unison rules for Branch Officer positions, and agreed to appoint to these positions as follows –</p> <p>Chairperson – Jim Currie Joint Branch Secretary – Deirdre Macdonald, Tuesday to Thursday Joint Branch Secretary – Brenda Massie, Monday and Friday Treasurer – Elizabeth Herlihy Joint Service and Conditions Officer – Mark Musk Joint Service and Conditions Officer – Brenda Massie Education Co-ordinator – Elizabeth Herlihy Health and Safety Officer – Alison Robertson Unison Learning Rep – Sarina Griffiths Welfare Officer – Brenda Massie Sports and Social Officer – Andy Brown Membership Services Officer – Karen Rennie Minute Secretary – Karen Rennie</p> <p>In addition, a form for the position of labour link Officer was submitted on the day of the AGM. The AGM agreed to accept the nomination as follows – Labour Link Officer – Valerie Taylor</p>

Item	Discussion
11. Ratification of Branch Stewards and Health and Safety Reps	<p>The AGM agreed the list of prospective stewards and health and safety representatives as follows –</p> <p><u>Corporate Governance Stewards</u> Brenda Massie Mark Musk Denise Thomson Carol Ince</p> <p><u>Education and Children's Services Stewards</u> Elizabeth Herlihy Kevin Stelfox Tommy Reid Cherry Lawson</p> <p><u>Sport Aberdeen Steward</u> Lesley Mathieson</p> <p><u>Grampian Housing Association Steward</u> Jim Noble</p> <p><u>Health and Safety Representatives</u> Mark Musk Lesley Mathieson Jim Noble</p> <p>In addition, forms for other Stewards were submitted on the day of the AGM. The AGM agreed to accept the nominations as follows – Jennifer Moerman and Leslie Tarr for Corporate Governance Alison Robertson for Communities, Housing and Infrastructure.</p>
12. Election of Delegates to attend Local Government and National Conferences	<p>The Chair advised that if any Stewards or other Branch Officers were interested in attending the conferences that they get in touch so that they could be accommodated.</p> <p>He also requested approval for the item to be referred to the next Branch Committee Meeting for a decision on those to attend the conference.</p>

Item	Discussion
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members approved the referral to the next Branch Meeting.
13. Guest Speaker – Betty Lyon	<p>Life After Unison – Community Activism</p> <p>The Chair introduced Betty Lyon. Betty spoke about her previous 25+ years of working with Unison and on approaching her retirement she started to get interested in local community projects.</p> <p>She spoke with passion about the Bay of Nigg Campaign and how she got involved with promoting the activities of the group and helped with leafleting homes in the area to bring the campaign to the attention of local residents which resulted in more supporters coming forward.</p> <p>Another community group that came to her attention was the Torry Community Council. Prior to retiring and without doing some research she said that she knew nothing about the Community Council. Following attending a meeting at the Town House, she put her name forward to be elected onto the Community Council and was successful, and soon after became the Chair.</p> <p>Her next mission took her to Old Torry Community Centre where she found them to be inviting and wanted to be part of the group. She soon became the secretary of the group.</p> <p>Betty highlighted that she had lots of experience dealing with a Variety of issues via her working life and wanted to keep busy on her retirement. The skills being involved with Unison has helped her to get involved in work in the community and urged members to consider joining groups, volunteer, give something back to the community you live in.</p>
14. Guest Speaker – Lesley Dunbar	Walking with Women
15. Meeting close	The Chair thanked both speakers for their interesting presentations and brought the meetings to a close and thanked all members for attending.



BRANCH: ABERDEEN CITY
DATE: 23 February 2018
OFFICER: BRANCH SECRETARY REPORT
TITLE OF REPORT: AGM REPORT

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Branch – note contents of this report

MAIN ISSUES:

Target Operating Model (TOM)

UNISON, along with the other Trade Unions have a presence at the TOM board meetings. It should be emphasised however that we are present but are not involved in the decision making. In order to optimise the contribution we make on behalf of our members, we have had invaluable help from our Regional Officers who help us scrutinise reports and agendas. Also a much appreciated session on how to read and get the most out of a heavy programme of Reports.

UNISON – our branch has also assisted the other Trade Unions by offering a mythbusting session re jargon used.

The branch continues to assess the potential changes with the protection of hard won terms, conditions and pension in mind.

UNISON with the support of the other Trade Unions led the stance against the challenge to formal opportunities to meet with Elected Members (Joint Consultative Committee) and the reorganisation of Health & Safety Committees.

In Aberdeen City Council there are some examples of good practice which focus on early discussions about proposed change. This takes place at fortnightly and now to be weekly meetings with HR. Not many councils work this way and the branch continues to protect this good practice. Examples include UNISON's stance against Random Testing for Drugs and Alcohol and mandatory training for officers expected to undertake Investigations and Disciplinary Hearings.

Out of adversity often comes benefit. For this branch this has come in the form of a vibrant Branch Committee which has grown up partly in response to the TOM. Whereas there was a problem achieving a quorum up to this time last year, we now have monthly half day quorate committee meetings. There is a greater engagement of Officers and Stewards with many more people giving up valuable time and energy.

This means that there is proper discussion and widespread decision-making which is greater democracy and a greater representation of our branch members.

VS/ER

Generally, there have been a number of queries from members around VS/ER over the last year. The initial tranche of VS/ER diminished staff numbers considerably as management sought to reduce posts. Following the more recent announcement that the organisation is expected to further reduce the head count by almost 300 posts, the branch committee continue to encourage members to keep a note/log of any tasks previously performed by officers who have left or an increase in tasks where there wasn't before.

BON ACCORD CARE

Holistic Review

The most significant piece of work UNISON has been involved in at Bon Accord Care has been the Holistic Review. During this time there were several challenges to how services were being redesigned. BAC demonstrated on more than one occasion when UNISON challenged the proposals that this was truly a consultative process. Services were advised that the proposed changes were unworkable and the proposed structure was revisited.

The review is now complete with staff now settling into the new structure ahead of the new Financial Year. Additional support is still being put in place for some Senior Support Worker roles to optimise the chance of meeting the needs of that role. This means new ways of working. Systems which were already in place prior to the Holistic Review continue to be reviewed to ensure that employee wellbeing is given consideration on an equal footing to the provision of service.

SSSC Mythbusting Day

In conjunction with Bon Accord Care and third sector colleagues the branch held an event at the Beach Ballroom in June 2017, focussing on people working in the care/housing support sector. The event ran on a drop-in basis and there were workshops providing information on qualifications, SSSC registration, one member's experience of the SSSC and the pitfalls of social media. UNISON was pleased to see an attendance of 112 staff representing all Care providers in Aberdeen.

CHILDRENS SERVICES

School Support Assistants

Work with this group of staff continues to progress in order to reach a satisfactory outcome. It has been a long road since the paperwork was submitted almost 18 months ago.

Lochside

Support has been given to staff moving from Torry and Kincorth Academies. UNISON has had to challenge several crazy things, the craziest of which was that potentially displaced staff could not apply for VSER.

Early Years

The Government is proposing an expansion of Early Years Provision across Scotland and the branch is consulted over how this will be provided in Aberdeen.

The Governance Review

Again, a Scottish Govt initiative which ultimately puts a lot of power within individual schools and dilutes the role of Local Authorities in managing education.

ABERDEEN HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE PARTNERSHIP

The main focus for this branch's involvement has been in two parts.

The first part was in shaping the processes to fill posts. The major problem with this for our members has been that the pay grades of local authorities and health boards differ greatly and the trade union involvement has been to ensure as much parity where possible.

UNISON supported the initiative of the Ethical Care Charter Committee which has oversight of Companies in the voluntary and private sector and their compliance with the charter.

UNISON has brought together reps from Health and Council branches in North of Scotland to consider common themes eg how budgets are allocated and the national Joint Working Agreement.

ADULT SERVICES SOCIAL WORK

UNISON conducted a survey of members in Criminal Justice the results of which were taken to management with an assurance changes would be put in place.

Stalls during 2017/2018

One of the ways we contact our members is by holding a series of stalls based on themes like:

- Pay Ballot
- Member Learning
- Target Operating Model

Member support

The branch website has been redeveloped to include a "Get Help" section of the new this is proving a useful tool for members who can use the form to get in touch with the branch.

We are also endeavouring to improve communication with our members, highlights this year have included a newsletter, more use of social media and where possible communicating with members via e-mail. If you'd like to hear from us more, please check with the Resource Centre at Alford Place that they have your up-to-date contact details. This can also be done online at www.unison.org.uk/my-unison/

SPORT ABERDEEN

The Branch has supported members in Sport Aberdeen during 2017 to challenge the behaviours of this organisation re redesign and the non-payment of 16 – 17 Pay Award.

ORBIS

This company holds the contract for cleaning the multis in the city. It is possible this work may be brought back in house which would be to the delight of the remaining member who was TUPE transferred previously.

PAY AWARD

At time of writing this has not been settled. It has been difficult to muster enthusiasm with members re the dwindling pay in real terms when members fear for their jobs. Aberdeen City responded well to the online consultations that took place in 2017. However this was not translated into members prepared to take industrial action against this austerity government.

BACKGROUND PAPERS / LINKS: None

REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS:

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BRANCH: ABERDEEN CITY
DATE: 23 February 2018
OFFICER: SERVICE CONDITIONS OFFICER
TITLE OF REPORT: AGM REPORT

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Branch – note contents of this report

MAIN ISSUES:

TARGET OPERATING MODEL

Perhaps the biggest issue the branch has been dealing with this year is the transformation of the organisation. The branch continues to challenge options presented to protect Terms and Conditions of members.

VS/ER

The branch has dealt with a number of queries in relation to VS/ER as the employer seeks to reduce the head count of the organisation. This has led to concerns about reduction in staff leading to increased workload for those who remain. The branch encourages members who have been affected by this to contact the branch and keep note of extra tasks they are being requested to carry out.

ABERDEEN CITY HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE PARTNERSHIP

Alongside colleagues from Grampian Health branch we continue to have an involvement in the joint staff forum, integrated working and some project groups.

ETHICAL CARE CHARTER

A working group was set up following the adoption of UNISON's Ethical Care Charter by the Aberdeen Health and Social Care Partnership, the Council and Bon Accord Care. The purpose of the group was to ensure that the Ethical Care Charter is implemented across the partner organisations. Although some ground work has been done it has been some time since the group met.

BON ACCORD CARE

The Branch continues to meet regularly with the Managing Director and HR.

In consultation with the branch, perhaps the biggest change over the past year for members in Bon Accord Care was the implementation of the Holistic Review. We continue to work with Bon Accord Care to resolve issues as and when they arise.

COMMUNITIES, HOUSING & INFRASTRUCTURE

Over the last year, teams from within this service have been encouraged to meet with Trade Unions, including Unison with a view to improving working relationships.

EXPANSION OF EARLY YEARS CARE

The branch have taken part in the briefings organised by the service in terms of staff development and planning for the future. It is noted that alongside the plans for expansion that members are concerned about their workload, pay and conditions.

LIVING WAGE ACCREDITATION

The branch were pleased to note that Aberdeen City Council has been recognised for its commitment to the Living Wage.

BACKGROUND PAPERS / LINKS: None**REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS:**

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BRANCH: ABERDEEN CITY
DATE: 14 March 2018
OFFICER: Communications (Alexander Ryland)
TITLE OF REPORT: Communications Annual Report

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That delegates to the Annual General Meeting:

1. Note the contents of the report and outcomes of the Communications Plan 2017/18 as approved by the Branch Committee;
2. Instruct the Communications Officer to establish a Communications Group of lay members to shape campaigns for 2018/19;
3. Approve the Communications Plan 2018/19 and instruct any changes to be reported to Branch Committee on a regular basis.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Approved expenditure in 2017/18 on communications activities has included:

- SSSC myth buster event (£2,500);
- Annual website hosting fees (£72);
- A Young Members' barbecue event (£200);
- A mental health workshop at the CG & OCE conference (£350);
- Social media advertising using Twitter & Facebook (£200);
- Printing of Our Principles transformation leaflet (£200);
- Printing of AGM invitation leaflet (£150);
- Printing and postage of newsletters in February (£300);
- Advertisement in ATUC Annual Report (£200).

MAIN ISSUES:

What is the Communications Plan?

The plan looks at the different methods of communication available to the Branch and when these might be appropriate to use. It also analyses who the different stakeholders are for the Branch, identifies how they should be communicated with, what the key messages are, and when this should happen.

The plan empowers any member of the branch to bring campaign ideas to the Branch Committee and be able to lead these campaigns with the support and approval of the Branch Committee. Campaigns should contribute to achieving one or more of the plan's objectives for the year. Communication is the

responsibility of all Branch Officers and will be supported by the UNISON local, regional and national structures.

How will we organise campaigns?

A Branch Communications Group is recommended to be established. These volunteers will develop campaign ideas and plans for the branch. As this is not permitted facility time, the Group would meet outwith working hours.

This should be established formally by the Branch AGM and comprise of as many lay members as are interested. The Communications Officer will chair this group and report regularly to the Branch Committee on its activities and recommendations, seeking permission for campaign plans and funding as required.

What were our campaigns this year?

The plan identified some example campaigns for 2017/18 which came from a branch committee workshop held in June. Since the first draft of this plan the Council has approved the Target Operating Model [TOM]. The means that the VSER campaign changed to focus on the broader issues surrounding the TOM which includes voluntary severance. It is anticipated that the Pay Award 2018 campaign will be managed at a regional level now that Aberdeen City Council has voted to rejoin COSLA in August 2017. Some initial activities were undertaken in relation to the Keep Your Mental Healthy campaign.

Activities which have taken place alongside the drafting of the plan include 1) re-design of the Branch website; 2) improving social media channels; and 3) initial discussions about running campaigns on mental health and TOM.

How do we use the plan?

Branch Officers should refer to the plan periodically when considering how best to communicate about a workplace issue or campaign. The plan should be refreshed annually by updating the objectives and headline campaigns as a minimum, to be approved by the Branch AGM.

PERFORMANCE AGAINST OBJECTIVES:

No.	Operational objective	Communication objective	Outcome
1	To ensure the employer maintains a commitment to no compulsory redundancies by putting pressure on management both internally and externally, including use of the media;	Ensure that the employer is aware of opposition to compulsory redundancies and use collective pressure to prevent this;	<p>There is a continuing political commitment among the Labour Group and an expectation that any change would require a vote of Full Council. This has been incorporated into our TOM Principles campaign.</p> <p>We are now using our communications to highlight risks around the recently announced job cuts and put pressure through internal channels on political leaders and management.</p>
2	To support members with their mental health, creating a positive attitude and openness in the workplace about dealing with mental health;	Inform members how to access services, where help is available, and how to keep healthy;	HR were asked for evidence of performance against the mental health policies, but this has not been made available. An event raising awareness of mental health at work was held at CG Conference, but this campaign stalled to some degree due to the TOM issues arising. It is recommended to continue this work and seek support of organisations like SAMH in the coming year.
3	To support members through the VSER process while this is in place and ensure that it is not misused by the employer to remove staff unfairly;	Signpost to information about the process and tell members what their rights are under this;	Members have been continuously supported through this and some have now left the organization. The branch has used meetings with management and direct engagement to challenge the inconsistencies in application.
4	To ensure that non-members are aware of the protection which a union provides through collective bargaining by holding stalls and other events;	Recruit new members by highlighting the benefits that unions bring to individual members of staff;	Stalls have been held throughout the year, although there has been difficulty at times in getting permission to organize these. The use of workplace meetings in some services has also raised awareness with non-members of the benefits of a union. Facebook advertising has had a large reach among potential members and will be used to a greater degree in the coming year.

5	To improve use of existing communication channels through redesigning, regular engagement and getting feedback from members;	Engage people in union messages and activities and increase awareness and understanding of campaigns;	The website was comprehensively redesigned with a member experience focus. It now provides useful advice on employment issues, benefits of the union, relevant local information on our campaigns, and is being used for updates to members. Members can also request support online and submit feedback on proposals. Combined with the improved use of social media channels and advertising this has become a more effective channel. Responses through these channels have shown an increase in member engagement.
6	To create a positive relationship with the employer through openness and transparency about our members' concerns and finding ways to support positive change during the broader programme of council transformation.	Highlight issues facing members and ensure these are properly understood and accounted for in change programmes.	The union has been actively engaged in transformation boards and used all available channels to raise issues in an open and constructive fashion. This has had mixed results and required the support of other methods of communication, such as leafleting and workplace meetings.

ACHIEVEMENTS FOR 2017/18:

Relaunch of a member-focused branch website

Last summer the branch website was rebuilt to provide a use platform which focused on providing a more interactive user experience for our members. This was built on a zero-cost basis using skills within the branch committee. The design concept was based on the needs of members – primarily to get help and advice at work. The website now allows users to:

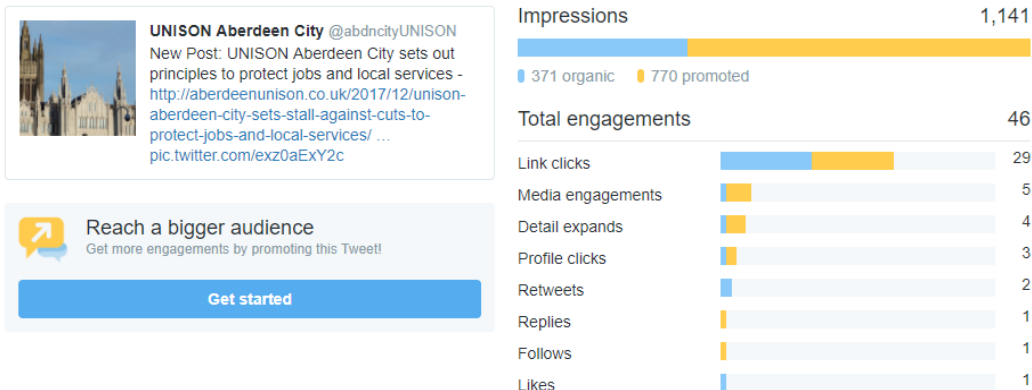
- Read up to date information about branch activities, campaigns and achievements;
- Find out about their local steward or workplace rep, and members of the committee;
- Make a request for representation online using a simple form;
- Sign up to become a steward online using a simple form;
- Carry out online consultations with members to get their feedback on workplace issues;
- Find helpful links to social media, campaign resources, and joining information;
- Prompt to join the union using pop-ups and banner displays;
- Find useful information from ACAS, Mind, SAMH and UNISON National using a custom search box (e.g. search for “disciplinary advice”).

Improved accessibility features now mean that the website meets web standards for accessible content. Users can change text size, background colour, and use screen readers and keyboard navigation. This is designed to improve the experience for members with disabilities and focus on our equalities objectives.

The website is also now capable of taking events bookings, sends automated confirmations, and uses SSL/TLS encryption to keep data secure. Statistics have shown an increase in traffic since the change from one or two unique visits per month to hundreds when content is promoted. Linking the website to the Twitter and Facebook accounts to auto-publish any new posts has further driven traffic to the website. There is still much to do in getting the message out, but this is becoming a much more useful tool for our members.

Using social media advertising to raise local issues

Experimenting with boosted posts on Facebook has increased the reach of posts to thousands of users and created a much higher level of engagement with posts. These have been targeted by location, age range, and interests to try and direct marketing to potential and existing members. The most effective messaging has involved achievements of individual members, or dealing with workplace change. Using paid features has vastly improved reach and engagement figures.



Target Operating Model campaign

The transformation programme has been a significant organizing and campaigning issue for the branch this year. Initially focusing on supporting members through the VSER application process, this fundamentally changed in August when the Target Operating Model was announced.

Our communications approach has been developed by setting out our principles for change (also known as "red lines"). This has provided Branch Officers with a common platform on which to represent members' interests. These were developed through a series of workshops and communicated using a leafleting campaign, social media advertising, blogs and emails to members. We have also raised awareness directly with elected members and management on this.

As UNISON has a seat at the Delivery and Control boards which was approving activities within the transformation programme, we are able to have a direct influence on what is happening. Our position on these boards is as advisors, but we have been influencing outcomes in a number of areas. This is being fed back to members through our email transformation updates and blogs on the website.

At each stage of change, UNISON is providing consultation responses to management. This is based on feedback from workplaces via our network of stewards, as well as the expertise of our Branch Officers and Regional Officers within the wider union. Our most recent consultation response was published on the website so that members would be able to scrutinise our position.

Much of the communication from the employer has been lacked detail, and many negotiations are taking place directly with management. This is having an influence on change and has prevented some significant issues arising. However, not all of this can be openly communicated in order to maintain negotiating channels with the employer. The Branch Communications Group will provide a forum for discussing better ways of getting this information across to members.

Survey to get member feedback

In February 2018 a brief survey was issued to member asking for their views on Branch communications. This received just 18 responses giving communications this year an average rating of 3.3 out of 5. Due to the low response rate this data is not reliable – nonetheless, the results are summarised below:

- 93% of respondents preferred contact via email from the Branch;
- 82% had read the Branch transformation updates;
- 76% knew who their local steward was;
- 59% were aware they could get help online;
- 47% were not confident in reporting a workplace issue;
- 35% hadn't heard of any of our main campaigns this year.

There were only a few comments for improving the way we communicate with them, all related to the frequency of communications. The respondents were 70% women members, 11% disabled members and 6% LGBT+ members. Low paid workers made up 35% of respondents.

Over the coming months the new Communications Group will look to develop new methods to ensure that there is a greater degree of engagement in future.

UNISON Scotland Communications Awards 2018

The Branch website and social media accounts were submitted for the Best Online Presence category of the annual UNISON Scotland Communications Awards. The results were announced on 3 February 2018 at Scottish Council where UNISON Aberdeen City were awarded Gold (first place).

BACKGROUND PAPERS / LINKS:

Branch Communications Plan 2017/18

UNISON Aberdeen City website – <https://aberdeenunison.co.uk>

UNISON Aberdeen City Twitter / Facebook - @abdncityUNISON

APPENDICES:

Appendix A – ATUC Annual Report 2018

Appendix B – Branch Communications Plan 2018/19

REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS:

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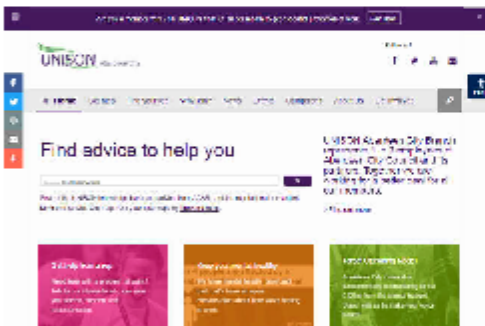
APPENDIX A



It's been a challenging year at Aberdeen City Council. Over the summer the Council approved a "Target Operating Model", constituting a major restructure and plans to cut £125m from the annual budget by 2022/23. This is a fundamental change to the way the Council delivers services. Many experienced members have left ACC through Voluntary Severance and Early Retirement. UNISON is concerned that it will threaten jobs, essential services, and could have a damaging effect on the wider city.

Getting the message to our members

We began the year considering how we might campaign on mental health, recruit new stewards, and communicate better with our members. We welcomed several new branch officers and stewards to the team and have been building a much stronger presence in the workplace. We're increasingly finding that workplace meetings are an essential tool to organising our members.



The branch website was overhauled and now has plenty of useful information for members. Members can now find help and guidance on workplace issues and read about how we're representing them. They can submit requests for representation online, sign up to be a steward, and send us feedback on core campaigns. Our social media presence has been improving as the branch starts to take advantage of targeted advertising to get our message out.

Ethical Care Charter

UNISON's Ethical Care Charter was adopted by ACC, the city's Health & Social Care Partnership and Bon Accord Care. This guarantees no zero-hours contracts and no 15-minute-slots and other unpalatable headline hitting disgraces. Staff will be treated with respect and paid properly. The Branch did not rest

there and have persuaded the Partnership to establish a working group to ensure this standard is rolled out to all the companies who provide care in the city.

Changes to carer registration prompted a Myth Busting Day for all carers in Aberdeen where staff could speak directly to the Scottish Social Services Council and learn from the experience of others. This was attended by over 100 carers from all sectors.

Challenging change – facing up to cuts and defending jobs

This improvement in communications turned out to be useful preparation for what is going to be a significant challenge for our union and Aberdeen City Council. The proposals for "transformation" at the Council are symptomatic of the longer-term trend in the public sector toward outsourcing, restructuring and redundancies.

The value of our public services and the importance of keeping them in public hands needs to be made clear to the people who live and work here. In our first major response to the employer, UNISON has set out its **ten principles for change** to challenge the transformation agenda.

While the Council has committed to No Compulsory Redundancies, members are unsure what their future looks like. UNISON has been engaging with the Council fully to represent our members' views and keep services in house.

Local government is under threat

The austerity agenda in Scottish local government will hit our most vulnerable people most. This is measured best by the shameful and increasing need for food banks. Since budgets began shrinking 90% of jobs lost in the Scottish public sector have been in councils across the country. Yet we are expected to deliver more services of a higher quality with fewer staff and constantly reducing funding.

We need to stand up for providing decent local services to the people who live and work in Aberdeen. Our members are always there for you. They pick up your bins, provide social care for your family, fill in the potholes on your street, and read the vows at your wedding. We are not just council workers – we are your friends, families and neighbours.

Will you be there for us?

UNISON Aberdeen City Branch

UNISON Aberdeen City represents members in 26 employers, the largest of which are Aberdeen City Council and Bon Accord Care. You can find out more about our branch at <http://aberdeenunison.co.uk> or on Facebook and Twitter @abdnunison.

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Branch Communications Plan 2018/19

Document control

Version	Reason	Updated by	Date
0.1	Update to 2017/18 plan	A Ryland	11 Jan 2018
0.2	Revision to objectives and funding	A Ryland	20 Feb 2018

About the branch

Aberdeen City Council is a Scottish unitary authority with more than 6,900 FTE staff (including 1,800 teaching staff). UNISON represents 1 in 3 non-teaching staff and has members in partner organisations and arms-length organisations. The branch has a small number of dedicated stewards and one full time officer funded through the FAIR agreement.

Summary

It is important for the local branch to outline the way it wants to communicate and the message it needs to get across. This Branch Communications Strategy outlines the key objectives for the year and the methods by which these will be communicated. It gives an overview of the main campaigns which will be undertaken and any predicted costs associated with them. This strategy should be updated annually including a review of the previous year's campaigns. This will provide the necessary learning to continuously improve our communications every year.

Branch communications are everybody's responsibility. The Branch Secretary will often lead communication as the Full Time Officer, and the Communications Officer will ensure that communication channels are available to use and the strategy prepared. However, a devolved approach to communications empowers all branch officers, stewards and members to let people know the benefits of being in a trade union, the campaigns we are running, and our key messages.

Objectives

The objectives of the Branch Communication Strategy are designed to be SMART and ensure that there is a measurable outcome. Each of the objectives should fit with the Branch Business Plan, comply with UNISON policy and the Rule Book, and be designed to further the cause of the Union. These will be renewed annually as part of the refresh of this Strategy.

For the year **2018/19** the branch communications objectives are:

No.	Operational objective	Communication objective
1	To ensure the employer maintains a commitment to no compulsory redundancies by putting pressure on management both internally and externally, including use of the media;	Ensure that the employer is aware of opposition to compulsory redundancies and use collective pressure to prevent this;
2	To engage constructively with the Transformation Boards and represent members views and experiences	Feedback regularly to members on the changes being proposed, seek input to our responses to change, and encourage openness

3	To support members with their mental health, creating a positive attitude and openness in the workplace about dealing with mental health;	Inform members how to access services, where help is available, and how to keep healthy;
4	To support members through the VSER process while this is in place and ensure that it is not misused by the employer to remove staff unfairly;	Signpost to information about the process and tell members what their rights are under this;
5	To ensure that non-members are aware of the protection which a union provides through collective bargaining by holding stalls and other events;	Recruit new members by highlighting the benefits that unions bring to individual members of staff;
6	To improve branch communications through a Communications Group, getting feedback from ordinary members and using innovative new methods;	Engage people in union messages and activities and increase awareness and understanding of campaigns;
7	To challenge austerity and unnecessary cuts, highlight the importance of the services our members deliver, and promote social responsible public service delivery.	Outline our members' concerns and ensure that these are central to our campaigning, and ensure commitment to our ten principles is maintained.

These objectives can be measured through membership surveys, recruitment figures, and successful commitments to policy outcomes by the employer.

How the branch will manage communications

Communication isn't the job of just one member or indeed the Full Time Officer. It is a responsibility that all members should take on to ensure that the objectives of the Branch are fulfilled and shared as widely as possible. A devolved approach to communication will be taken in order to empower members to take responsibility.

Running a campaign

Campaigns may be led by any member of the Branch and brought to the attention of the Branch Committee for adoption and resourcing at any quorate regular meeting. Campaigns should have a short plan of action (see Appendix A) and be in line with the Communications Objectives. This should outline the objective, background, stakeholders, key messages, methods and other resources for the campaign.

New and urgent campaigns and communications matters may arise during the course of the year before the Branch Communications Strategy is refreshed. Plans for these campaigns should be attached in an Appendix and reviewed in the AGM report. This Strategy is not so prescriptive as to prevent this kind of flexibility as matters arise in the workplace.

Roles and responsibilities

National Support

The Area Organiser will provide support for media campaigns and national co-ordination. They will work with the Branch Secretary to ensure this meets the needs of the Branch.

Branch Committee

The Branch Committee will be responsible for oversight of campaigns and approving activities which are not otherwise noted in the Branch Communications Strategy. They will also provide the funding and resourcing for campaigns to take place.

Branch Secretary

The majority of communications are likely to be carried out by the Branch Secretary through regular engagement with the employer and members, representation and negotiation activities. This is a key role in disseminating the messages of the Branch and ensuring a consistent and clear line is presented to everyone. As the Full Time Officer they may also be requested to provide additional support to a campaign within the remit of their position.

Communications Officer

The Communications Officer will retain responsibility for drafting the Branch Communications Strategy and preparing an annual report on the performance of the Strategy at the Branch AGM. They will also be responsible for the general maintenance of digital channels and recommending methods of communication to the Branch Committee.

Campaign Leaders

Each campaign will be assigned a campaign lead and report on outcomes to the Branch Committee. They may also seek help and support for the Branch Communications Group if this is active.

Branch Campaigns Group

The Branch Campaigns Group will consist of volunteer lay members of the Branch. It is the responsibility of the group to review the communications strategy, design and run campaigns during the year, and provide support to the Branch Committee to promote its objectives. A call for members will be made each year alongside the elections at the AGM. If the group has no members, the Branch Committee may appoint people to it.

Stewards and local reps

Distributing information to members within services will be supported by local reps. They will be empowered to hold workplace meetings, recruit new members and meet all new staff to speak on behalf of the Branch about the benefits of working together in UNISON.

Stakeholder Analysis

Who	What	How	When
Corporate Management Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Views on transformation and business strategy Impact of change on members jobs and working environment Feedback from members on direction of the organisation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint TU meetings Engagement with HR Direct discussions with the Chief Executive where appropriate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monthly Monthly Ad hoc
Elected Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerns about reports which affect members Impact of business change on service delivery and capacity Political campaigns that members could support (e.g. living wage) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One-to-one meetings with members as appropriate Attendance at group meetings as appropriate Elected member/TU engagement sessions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ad hoc Ad hoc Monthly
Local media (EE, P&J, NorthSound)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote events and public campaigns Highlight appropriate workplace issues if escalated (e.g. strike) Challenges to public perception of council services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Press releases and interviews with local journalists Use of national media unit to engage with the press 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ad hoc Ad hoc
Stewards & Officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding employment matters and providing representation Supporting and challenging change within their services Training opportunities to better represent members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National newsletters with advice on employment matters Targeted emails and advice for representatives Discussions at branch meetings and local engagement with reps Clear training route for all reps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bi-monthly Ad hoc Monthly

Who	What	How	When
Members (office-based)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to access services from the union and understanding what we do to help • Who representatives are and what they do • Getting help with issues at work (both employment and personal) • Creating a mentally healthy workplace 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leafleting relevant areas of the workplace, using social media and writing blogs • Holding workplace meetings to highlight specific issues • One-to-one meetings about problems and representation • Signing up mental health champions a supportive culture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly check or update • Quarterly (or as required) • Ongoing • Ongoing
Members (frontline)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide points of contact for those not based in offices • Highlight the impact of different working environments • Support members with workplace issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure contact information is signposted and online • Engagement with members and managers in these areas • One-to-one meetings about problems and representation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly • Quarterly • Ongoing
Non-members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outline the benefits of collective bargaining; • Ensure understanding of workplace solidarity as a safeguard for jobs; • Recognise that the union is here to help and ensure change works for everyone (not just disrupt). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stalls in core offices for general recruitment drives • Stalls for specific recruitment drives or campaign activities • Targeted use of social media with particular demographics • Stewards visiting all new members of staff with a leaflet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarterly in Marischal College and Town House • Ad hoc • During campaigns (subject to budget for campaign) • Monthly or when a new employee starts

Note: While timescales in the “when” column are assigned, this should be considered a minimum for regular updates of different types of communication activities. If actions are required more regularly or for specific issues, this should be carried out.

Methods of communication

Social media

The Branch currently has a social media presence on Twitter and Facebook. Access will be available to multiple branch officers to ensure that this is updated regularly. The Branch Secretary will be responsible for posting any significant updates in line with the role of the Full Time Officer.

Social media will continue to be used for promotion of the following activities:

- Campaign messages for the local Branch in line with objectives;
- National campaigns and information, often through retweeting or posting links;
- Raising awareness of events for members to attend;
- Highlighting workplace issues that deserve attention;
- Providing answers to commonly asked questions;
- As a channel for members to get in touch through direct messaging.

If a member chooses to use social media to ask for help, these discussions should use the private messaging functions and not be held in the public sphere. Alternatively, the conversation can be taken offline or moved to another channel (e.g. email) in order to continue the conversation.

Advertising through social media will be used to target members and potential members with key campaign messages. This will use the demographic targeting features of the social media advertising platforms. No personal data will be required or accessed – this service is provided directly by the sites on a price per click/impression basis.

Press relations

The relationship with the press will be primarily managed through the Branch Secretary. Branch officers who wish to approach the press about an issue should co-ordinate this through the Branch Secretary to ensure that best practice is followed in terms of releasing information. This is a useful but risky approach to communication in terms of managing the relationship with the employer.

Press releases will be used sparingly, but may be required in order to highlight issues of particular concern where discussion with the employer has failed. Advice should always be sought from the Area Organiser or Regional Organiser before going to the press.

Workplace activities

Interacting with members in the workplace is an important part of communications. This should be actively encouraged by local reps. Activities may include:

- Workplace meetings within a service focused on specific issues of concern;
- Providing updates via email, online or other means to local members;
- Introducing local reps to new staff within a service, including a membership form.

Individual reps are empowered to hold these kinds of events in their service without the wider approval of the Branch. Events requiring branch approval will include:

- Stalls and sign-up events held in council offices;
- Protests or visibility campaigns outside council office.

From time to time the branch may also hold events in support of specific campaigns, to increase recruitment, or to raise awareness of workplace issues. These events will be signed off by the Branch Committee and should specify whether they are for members only or open events.

Current year campaigns – 2018-19

Each campaign will have a brief plan of action to be included in appendices to the Branch Communications Strategy. These may be developed through the year by the person assigned to lead that campaign. Any member can lead a campaign with the consent of the Branch Committee. In the current financial year the following campaigns have been approved.

Campaign name	Objective	Priority	Timescale
Mental health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To create a positive culture around mental health; To provide support to members in difficult situations; To highlight the impact of stress at work. 	Must Have	June to December
Target Operating Model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To challenge transformation which is not in the interests of our members or the public; To ensure that VSER is implemented appropriately and fairly; To campaign against privatisation and reduced services; To protect terms and conditions, pensions and prevent compulsory redundancies for our members. 	Must Have	Ongoing
Pay Award 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure that members are aware of the need for a pay rise; To put the case for ending low pay; To persuade management to make a real cost of living increase. 	Should Have	September/October (Likely to be run as a national campaign)

Financial resources

To support these activities the following financial resources are expected within the current year.

Description	Budget
Social media advertising	£1,000
Workplace meetings fund	£1,000
Website hosting	£72
Retired members events	£1,000
Community engagement fund	£1,000
Printed materials fund	£1,500
Total spend	£5,572

Appendix A: Keep your mental healthy

Purpose/Objective

To create a positive attitude toward mental health at work and ensure that members have the support they need in a changing environment to be mentally healthy. This supports Branch Communications Strategy Objectives 2 (mental health) and 3 (support through VSER).

Background

There's a stigma around mental health at work. Being stressed and anxious can be framed as your own fault, or something you should just get over. Someone with depression can be accused of being grumpy or just having a bad day. But anyone can suffer from poor mental health, just like poor physical health. We sometimes think of being "mentally ill" as conditions like schizophrenia or suicidal thoughts, developing a sense of fear and "other" about it. But that's just one part of the story.

In 2014/15, 43% of days lost at work due to absence in the UK are caused by mental ill health – some 9.9 million. We don't talk about our mental health enough and often don't receive the support we really need. A survey conducted by the Guardian in 2015 about stress in the public sector found that 76% of people took less than a half hour break per day, and 19% took none at all. A further 77% felt overworked and 53% felt stressed a lot of the time.

In the North East depression is a particularly acute problem amongst older men, and nationally is a big problem for teenagers in a more interconnected world. Every day dozens of colleagues say "hi, how are you" as they walk past, expecting the usual "fine, you?" If they stopped walking and really listened to you, would they hear more than you're letting on?

Stakeholders

- Members going through the VSER process or whose workload is impacted by the reduction in staffing resource and causes potential workplace stress;
- Members dealing with stress, anxiety and low mood and require the support of colleagues, professionals or changes to the environment in which they work;
- Members dealing with other mental health issues who should be empowered to speak out and feel comfortable in the workplace;
- HR&OD in terms of health and safety, policy and measuring outcomes – there are specific opportunities around the workplace mental health policies;
- Managers who are supporting people going through mental health problems by may not know how to deal with them appropriately.

Key messages

- Talking about mental health at work is important and will help to create a positive environment around mental health issues;
- Everyone has mental health and needs to be aware of their situation. No one should be forced to suffer in silence;
- Reducing the number of staff and maintaining workload creates an unsustainable cycle of stress which impacts on personal wellbeing and organisational productivity;

- Mental health doesn't just mean diagnosed illnesses – many of us have day-to-day experiences with stress, anxiety and low mood that affect us more than we realise;
- Asking “are you OK?” is important and should be a genuine attempt to reach out to people.

Methods

- Looking for mental health champions to provide other members with support;
- Running awareness events and talks on mental health;
- Offering stress support groups and safe spaces for you to be open;
- Lobbying management and councillors to make the mental health of our workforce a priority; and
- Providing access to training, support and guidance when members need it.

Other Resources

Mental health charities
Scottish Association for Mental Health website - https://www.samh.org.uk/
Mind (mental health charity) - https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/
Mental health at work
How to be mentally healthy at work - Scottish Association for Mental Health - https://www.samh.org.uk/documents/HowToBeMentallyHealthyAtWork.pdf
What is stress? https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/tips-for-everyday-living/stress/what-is-stress/
Time to change - https://www.time-to-change.org.uk/
Getting support
There For You - UNISON support services- https://www.unison.org.uk/get-help/services-support/there-for-you/
Samaritans - http://www.samaritans.org/
Elefriends - an online community for those struggling with mental health - https://www.elefriends.org.uk/
Legal issues
Thomson's Solicitors advice on stress (UNISON legal cover) - https://www.thompsonstradeunion.law/media/1173/stress-a-summary-of-the-law-thompsons-solicitors.pdf

Appendix B: Target Operating Model

Purpose/Objective

To challenge the Target Operating Model and ensure that our members' interests are represented through the process. To support members through VS/ER where appropriate, ensure that redeployment and re-training is adequate, and to fight against redundancies.

Background

In August the Council approved a plan to restructure toward a Target Operating Model. This plan gives a high-level overview of how the Council expects to achieve a £125m reduction in its annual spending by 2022/23 and what the organisation will look like to achieve that. It requires a dramatic change in the way services are delivered, focusing on commissioning services and using technology to automate them.

Understandably this causes a lot of anxiety for our members. It is a stated ambition to have a smaller and leaner organisation, with more flexible contracts and ways of working. There is a drive to use artificial intelligence and streamline the way services are delivered. While UNISON is not opposed to change that improves public services and makes our members' jobs easier and more efficient, we have significant concerns about this level of change and cuts.

Aberdeen City Council is already the lowest funded in Scotland per head, and has faced tens of millions in cuts already. Many of our budgets are protected by law, and many more are stretched to breaking point. Further cuts threaten our ability to deliver essential services to the people we serve, and puts jobs in the firing line. The Chief Executive has asked for a stronger partnership with trade unions, so we are going to be engaging with this fully to make sure that your voices are heard.

Stakeholders

- Members going through the VSER process or whose workload is impacted by the reduction in staffing resource and causes potential workplace stress;
- Management who are leading transformation programmes and proposing changes;
- Members of the public who receive services, community groups who campaign for them, and other local networks which expect the council to deliver in the public interest;
- Other trades unions who are experiencing the same issues and can campaign together.

Key messages

- While change happens, we will protect our members jobs from austerity and support vital public services our city needs;
- Our transformation principles must be adhered to for the union to provide support – we will apply these to all negotiations without exception;
- No compulsory redundancies, including by the back door, and protection of our hard won terms and conditions and pensions;
- Public services should be delivered in house first to protect jobs, services and communities;
- Appropriate action must be taken to counter any action which breaches our position (e.g. lodging complaints, staging a protest, involving councillors);
- Communicating with and consulting our members in an open and transparent way is essential to managing this change, for both UNISON and the Council.

Methods

- Provide monthly updates to members on information from the Transformation Boards;
- Publish our principles for transformation and distribute to members, councillors and workplaces;
- Hold localised workplace meetings to discuss plans and issues with those affected;
- Establish a working group with elected members to build closer relations;
- Create a retired members' network to engage with community councils and groups;
- Promote messages using social media with targeted advertising to potential members;
- Engagement with local political groups, national support and media as required.

Other Resources

Council transformation proposals
Target Operating Model – https://committees.aberdeencity.gov.uk/documents/s73076/CTOM%20-%20Appendix%20A.pdf
Interim Functional Structure – https://committees.aberdeencity.gov.uk/documents/s77474/TOM%20-%20Appendix%20C.pdf
Chief Officer job profiles – https://committees.aberdeencity.gov.uk/documents/s77472/TOM%20-%20Appendix%20D.pdf
Transformation updates
Our ten transformation principles – http://aberdeenunison.co.uk/2017/12/unison-aberdeen-city-sets-stall-against-cuts-to-protect-jobs-and-local-services/
Response to interim functional structure consultation – http://aberdeenunison.co.uk/2017/12/unison-challenges-interim-functional-structure/
Campaign page on website – http://aberdeenunison.co.uk/campaigns/target-operating-model/
Getting support
There For You - UNISON support services- https://www.unison.org.uk/get-help/services-support/there-for-you/
ACAS – Information on redundancy rules - http://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=1611
Legal issues
Thomson's Solicitors advice on employment matters (UNISON legal cover) - https://www.thompsonstradeunion.law/support/legal-guides-and-resources?topic=Employment+Matters&union=UNISON

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BRANCH: ABERDEEN CITY

DATE: 14 March 2018

OFFICER: Membership Services Officer

TITLE OF REPORT: Membership Figures and Information

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That members note the content of the report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

None

MAIN ISSUES:

(1) Membership Figures

Between January 2017 and January 2018 the Branch recruited a total of 200 members. The new member total month to month has been steady with an average of 15 members per month.

Over the same period the branch had 237 lapsed memberships. These are mainly attributed to staff leaving employment with the Council or the other employers linked to the Branch. The highest fall in membership was during December when a large volume of staff left ACC under Early Retirement or Voluntary Severance.

The branch currently has around 1686 members. The number fluctuates month to month.

(2) Membership Benefits

Membership of Unison comes with many benefits, from free legal services and statutory rulebook benefits to discounted stays at our holiday village and a range of exclusive financial deals.

Visit the website to access each of the services below:

<https://www.unison.org.uk/> or Telephone: 0800 0 857 857

Travel

- Croyde Bay Holiday Village is situated on the north Devon coast and has been owned and operated by Unison for more than 80 years. It is a popular addition to the benefits of Unison membership, offering

competitive rates, with special discounts for Unison members and families.
There are additional discounts for low-paid Unison members.

- Travel Club

Legal services

- Employment law (accessed via your UNISON branch or regional office)
- Personal injury – at or away from work, on holiday or on the roads
- Serious injury at work – including brain injuries and spinal cord injuries
- Industrial disease or illness
- Basic will writing and reduced rates for more complex wills and conveyancing
- Defending work related criminal allegations
- Free initial legal advice on any non-employment issue from UNISON's lawyers. This service entitles you to receive up to 30-minutes of telephone advice.

UNISON members' families are also covered for:

- Personal injury – away from work, on holiday or on the roads
- Reduced rates for wills and conveyancing

Insurance/Financial

- Cheaper car insurance and breakdown insurance
- Personal Insurance, travel insurance
- Family Insurance
- Home Insurance
- Pet Insurance
- UNISON protect accidental death insurance
- Lighthouse Financial Advice
- Vauxhall Associate Partners – Preferential discounts on cars
- Pre-paid Plus Mastercard
- UNION energy

Wellbeing

- Health plans
- Vision Express
- Dental plans

Learning and development

- Personal and career development courses (main UNISON site)
- Courses for reps and activists (main UNISON site)

There for you, UNISON's welfare charity

- Members experiencing financial and emotional difficulties can contact our welfare charity, There for You. For more information on the Charity and the services available either go the website:

<https://www.unison.org.uk/get-help/services-support/there-for-you/> or
contact the Branch Welfare Officer for assistance.

BACKGROUND PAPERS / LINKS:

REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS:

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BRANCH: ABERDEEN CITY

DATE: 5th March 2018

OFFICER: Elizabeth Herlihy, Education Co-ordinator

TITLE OF REPORT: Report for AGM 14th March 2018

RECOMMENDATION: **That the report is accepted and that training of members and activists will be supported.**

MEMBER LEARNING

The Branch recognizes the value of training and supports activists and members to take advantage of relevant training.

At the start of last year four free member learning courses were run at Café Coast on the Beach Boulevard.

- Deaf Awareness on 28 February 2017
- Dementia Awareness on 8 March 2017 and 9 March 2017
- Dyslexia Awareness on 31 March 2017

The courses were free with a soup and sandwich lunch provided.

Thanks to staff at Grampian Resource Centre who handled the bookings.

Kevin Duguid, UNISON Regional Learning Development Organiser, Lowlands & Uplands arranged the tutors and paid for most of the costs. The Branch paid the deposits for Café Coast and for the printing of flyers.

On 17 November 2017 the Branch organized a Your Skills, Your Future course at Café Coast on the Beach Boulevard with Kevin Duguid as tutor. It was well attended with 12 members benefiting from the training. Some were looking for new careers and others were looking for options after leaving their jobs.

ACTIVIST TRAINING

The Branch recognizes the value of training and supports activists to take advantage of relevant training.

To be accredited new stewards must attend the 5 day Organizing Steward course.

The Organizing Steward Course is held at the Resource Centre, 7 Alford Place, Aberdeen.

Further courses are available to stewards to update and develop their skills including opportunities to shadow more experienced stewards.

The branch recognizes that training costs are different depending on location and travel arrangements.

Officers and stewards will be encouraged to complete relevant courses when it suits them. It is noted that if courses are undersubscribed they may be pulled by the trainer.

On 18 January 2018 a Dealing with Paperwork course was run for activists. Again this was run by Kevin Duguid. It was really good with everyone benefitting from it as it dealt also with electronic communications and learning styles. All improved their speed reading scores and scanning technique.

The Branch Officers weekend (Residential) will take place in Glasgow on the weekend of 11-13 May 2018. All Officers will be encouraged to attend this worthwhile training.

REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS:

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BRANCH: ABERDEEN CITY

DATE: 19 February 2018

OFFICER: WELFARE OFFICER (BRENDA MASSIE)

TITLE OF REPORT: WELFARE OFFICER AGM REPORT

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Branch –

(a) Note the contents of the report

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS: None

MAIN ISSUES:

Branch welfare officers are the first point of contact for members who are experiencing personal, emotional or financial difficulties, or for those who need advice. They also help members apply for help or funding.

If you are aware of a colleague who has been on sick leave for a period of six weeks or more, or they have recently lost a family member, please let the branch know so we can arrange something to let them know they are in your thoughts.

There for You

The branch welfare officer is the local representative of There for You, Unison's charity.

If you haven't heard of There for You before, they provide support a confidential service for members (and their dependents) over the phone or in person

- debt advice;
- listening and support;
- financial assistance;
- breaks and holidays;
- personal advice.

You may have financial problems for reasons including:

- relationship breakdown;
- loss of income;

- being off work/suffering from a long illness/recovering from surgery;
- needing to buy equipment because of a disability;
- caring for someone with additional support needs or an illness.
- living on the breadline and needing to pay for a major bill or vital item

All There for You grants and activities are paid for by donations from UNISON members and UNISON itself.

One way you may consider supporting There for You is by taking part in the UNISON lottery, a monthly prize draw which raises money for the charity and awareness about the work that the charity does. Recently re-launched, you can find further details here unison.charitylotteries.co.uk

Lighthouse Group Advice

This service is one of the many available via UNISON Living. They can assist you with financial issues whatever your circumstances

BACKGROUND PAPERS / LINKS:

<https://unison.org.uk/get-help/services-support/there-for-you/>

REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS:

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Welfare Officer
Aberdeen City Unison Branch

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Aberdeen City Branch
Annual General Meeting
14th March 2018

Ratification of Branch Officer Nominations

OFFICER POST	NOMINATION RECEIVED
Chairperson	Jim Currie
Branch Secretary Joint	Kenny Luke
Branch Secretary Joint	Deirdre Macdonald
Treasurer	Elizabeth Herlihy
Service Conditions Officer Joint	Brenda Massie
Service Conditions Officer Joint	Mark Musk
Equalities Officer	Cherry Lawson Steven Dongworth
Communications Officer	Alexander Ryland
Education Coordinator	Elizabeth Herlihy
Labour Link Officer	Val Taylor
International	
Young Members' Officer	Naomi Gray
Health and Safety Officer	Alison Robertson
Union Learning Rep (ULR)	
Recruitment and Organisation Officer	
Welfare Officer	Brenda Massie
Minute Secretary	Karen Finch
Sports and Social Secretary	
Membership Services Officer	Karen Finch

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Aberdeen City Branch

Annual General Meeting 14th March 2018

Ratification of Steward and Health and Safety Rep Nominations

Post	Name	Employer/Department
Steward	Carol Ince	ACC – Corporate Governance Archives
Steward	Steven Dongworth	ACC – Corporate Governance Civic and Elections
Steward	Alexander Ryland	ACC – Corporate Governance Customer Services
Steward	Karen Finch	ACC – Governance, Town House
Steward	Tommy Reid	ACC – Education & Children's Services
Steward	Elizabeth Herlihy	ACC – Education & Children's Services
Steward	Brenda Massie	ACC – Revenues & Benefits
Steward	Mark Musk	ACC – Revenues & Benefits
Steward	Naomi Gray	ACC – Galleries & Museums
Steward	Kenny Luke	ACC – Galleries & Museums
Steward	Angela McLeman	ACC – CH&I – Kittybrewster
Steward	Alison Robertson	ACC - CH & I
Steward	Leslie Tarr	ACC – IT & T
Steward	Val Taylor	ACC – IT & T
Steward	John Connon	ACC – Adult Services/Criminal Justice
Steward	Ian Robison	ACC – H&SCP Adult Services
Steward	Ross Cunningham	ACC – Social Care

PTO

Post	Name	Employer/Department
Steward	Thomas Duffy	Henry Rae Community Centre
Steward	Jim Noble	Grampian Housing Association
Steward	Gwen Watt	NESCOL - Fraserburgh
Health & Safety Rep	Alexander Ryland	ACC – Corporate Governance Customer Services
Health & Safety Rep	Mark Musk	ACC – Revenues & Benefits
Health & Safety Rep	Leslie Tarr	ACC – IT & T
Health & Safety Rep	Thomas Duffy	Henry Rae Community Centre