University of York
Annual General Meeting
Minutes
28 March 2019, 13:00 – 14:00, H/G21 Heslington Hall

Attendance:

There were 21 members in attendance, which made the AGM quorate.

Registration and Lunch

Opening Remarks from Jenny Underhill, Branch Secretary

Jenny welcomed Lorraine Fitzsimons and Daniel Marten from UNISON Leeds.

Lorraine opened the Regional talks by thanking the Branch Officers and stewards for their hard work and dedication.

Daniel Marten gave a brief talk about possible challenges facing the Higher Education sector in the year ahead:

- Pay increases: the 2018/19 pay negotiations had resulted in a 2% pay increase, which had been the highest in 10 years, but does not match RPI. During last year's pay ballot, this Branch was very active and met the 50% threshold for industrial action. This strengthens UNISON’s hand in future negotiations. The Higher Education trade unions national claim for 2019/20 has been submitted, this is for RPI plus 3%, or a minimum increase of £3,349 (whichever is greater).
- Working hours: The Higher Education trade unions are also claiming for a 35 hour working week for all staff working in universities.
- Industrial action: Regionally, UNISON has been successful in challenging decision making through industrial action at the University of Hull (pension changes) and the University of Bradford (jobs at risk of redundancy). An active Regional group benefits this Branch in their own negotiations.
- Committee representation: UNISON is also pushing for trade union representation on the highest university committees, either to listen or to participate and vote. This will have impact on future decision making.
- Mental health and stress: UNISON is extremely concerned about mental health and stress, and will be running campaigns in the year ahead. Over 90% of employees calling in mental health / stress related illnesses give a different reason for their absence.
- Video: Daniel Maarten presented a video he had made of the campaigning and recruitment activities taking place in the Region over the last year.

1. Appointment of Scrutineers
Karen Harper and Kym Done were appointed.
2. Minutes of the AGM on 28 March 2018
These were approved without amendment, proposed by Anne Stroughair and seconded by Kym Done.

3. Annual Report
Jenny Underhill presented the Annual Report.

i) Thanks were extended to members for their continued involvement and support of the Branch.

ii) The last year has seen an increase in requests to support both individual casework and change management. The Branch is committed individually and collectively to supporting its membership.

iii) In the last year, the Branch campaigned for the pay ballot and met the 50% threshold for industrial action. Although nationally the results fell short of the threshold, this was a great result, as UNISON is as strong as its members. The 2019 Higher Education pay negotiations are now underway.

iv) Thanks were extended to all the Committee Officers and Stewards for their hard work and dedication, and to the two Regional Officers supporting the Branch. In particular, two departing committee members were thanked for their service: Jacqui Chainey (Steward and Membership Officer) and Kym Done (Steward). Both will be greatly missed. Kym Done will continue to be part of the Committee as the Retired Membership Officer.

The Financial Report was presented by Anne Stroughair. AS noted the branch had spent more income in the last year and drawn down on reserves. This overspend was deliberate to support the education bursaries offered by the branch. AS encouraged members to apply for education bursaries, these can be taken to learn new skills for work or for leisure activities.

5. Membership Report
The Membership Report was presented by Jenny Underhill. Total membership is an increase on the previous year. There had been a membership drive in November 2018, and another will follow later this year. JU encouraged attendees to talk about their membership of the UNISON and how it has helped them – the strongest recruitment tool is word of mouth.

6. Election of Branch Officers
The following nominations were received in advance of the meeting:
- Branch Chair – Fransess Daly
- Equalities Officer – Fransess Daly
- Branch Secretary – Jenny Underhill
- Assistant Branch Secretary – Karen Harper
- Treasurer – Anne Stroughair
- Assistant Treasurer – Michelle Hickman
- Membership Officer – Martine Davis
- Education Officer – Annette Johnson
- Retired Members Secretary – Kym Done
The following positions received nominations from the floor:
- Welfare Officer – Annette Johnson

There were no further nominations from the floor on the above positions and therefore approved.

The following Officer positions remain vacant:
- Health & Safety Officer
- Communications Officer
- International Officer
- Labour Link Officer
- Young Membership Officer
- SOG Co-ordinator

There were no further nominations from the floor for the above positions.

The following Steward nominations were received in advance of the meeting:
- James Creaser
- Fransess Daly
- Karen Harper
- Michelle Hickman
- Kayonda Ngamaba
- Jenny Underhill
- Karen Young

There were no further steward nominations from the floor.

The following Workplace Reps were received in advance of the meeting:
- Paul Cooper – Cleaning Services (Heslington East)

The following Workplace Reps were received from the floor:
- Jackie Wilkinson – Health Sciences

7. Motions
No motions were received.

8. Any Other Business
i) Nomination of Charity for 2019-20; nominations had been received in advance of the meeting and following a ballot, the charity with the most votes was St Leonard’s Hospice.

ii) Thanks were extended to the Annual Financial Accounts auditors – Gina Drake and Adele Lawrenson.