

**NOTTINGHAM CITY UNISON  
CORE BRANCH RULES,  
CONSTITUTION AND  
STANDING ORDERS**

**AGREED AT BRANCH EXEC COMMITTEE (12.11.2019)  
APPROVED BY REGIONAL OFFICE (30.1.2020)**

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## **SECTION A - BRANCH NAME**

The Branch will be known as Nottingham City UNISON.

### **1. BRANCH FINANCES**

The Branch will hold a general bank account in the name of Nottingham City UNISON and a separate Hardship account. Whilst the Branch does not envisage a reduction of staffing, the Branch also holds a redundancy fund as it is seen as good practice to set aside a contingency fund for this purpose. This fund can only be used for the purposes of staff redundancies.

The Branch year will run from January 1 to December 31.

The Branch will endeavour to take full advantage of national funding criteria and ensure Branch funding is in accordance with membership.

**Full details on Branch finances can be found in the Branch Financial Regulations – Appendix 4.**

## **SECTION B –** **BRANCH MEMBERSHIP**

1. Branch membership will be comprised of UNISON members employed by:
  - Nottingham City Council (NCC)
  - Nottingham City Schools Academies
  - Nottingham City Homes (NCH)
  - Nottingham Revenue & Benefits (NRB)
  - Housing Associations
  - Private, Voluntary & Independent Sector (PVI)
  - Members from other Employers as agreed by the Branch Executive
2. Eligibility for membership shall be in accordance with the UNISON Rules.
3. Applications for membership take effect from the date at which completed forms are received, or the date at which the on-line application is made.
4. In extreme cases a meeting of the Branch Executive may decide not to support a membership application but such a decision must be consistent with the Rules and with Statute. The decision must be explained to the individual in writing, together with their rights of appeal.
5. All members must comply with the Rules.
6. Disciplinary action may be taken against a member in accordance with Section I of the National Rules.
7. All members have guaranteed rights (Appendix 1).

## **SECTION C – BRANCH OBJECTIVES**

1. The objectives of UNISON are contained in Section B of the rule book.
2. The objects of the branch shall be:
  - (a) to organise within the Branch all staff employed in the employers listed in Section B1, to engage in union activities and to ensure all members are represented in the Branch by aiming to have a UNISON steward and/or contact in each workplace / office.
  - (b) to advance and protect the interests of its members
  - (c) to stimulate and foster support to the objectives of UNISON
  - (d) to make representations to the East Midland Regional Council, Local Government Committee and appropriate Regional Committee on matters relevant to the objectives of UNISON.
  - (e) to submit motions through the Regional Council, or otherwise, for the consideration of the National Executive Council, or the National Local Government Service Group.
  - (f) the principles of fair representation and proportionality are central to the organisation of the Branch.
3. The Branch must maintain records of meetings, financial records, books of accounts and other appropriate records to enable the Branch to function.

**SECTION D –**  
**RELATIONSHIP TO NATIONAL ORGANISATION**

1. Branch Rules will be in accordance with National Rules, decisions of the Annual Delegate Conference and the NEC.
2. A copy of the UNISON Rule Book is available online. A paper copy will be made available if requested.
3. The Branch shall make an audited return of Branch income, expenditure, assets and liabilities as prescribed by the NEC and in accordance with the National Rules.

## **SECTION E - FAIR REPRESENTATION AND PROPORTIONALITY**

1. It is the policy of the Branch to secure the election of Branch Officers and Stewards as appropriate by Branch members, to ensure the widest possible participation of Branch members in meetings.
2. The Branch is totally committed to the principle of fair representation and proportionality. It is our belief that UNISON will be a more democratic organisation and that member's interests and aspirations will best be furthered by representatives who reflect the gender, occupations, grades, sexuality, ethnicity and disability of the membership.
3. Appendix 2 outlines the procedure which shall be followed to establish fair representation and proportionality.
4. The Branch shall encourage and facilitate the organisation of self-organised groups for:
  - Women members
  - Black members
  - Disabled members
  - Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual and Transgender + members

The Branch shall also encourage and facilitate the young members (aged 26 or under) and retired members organisations.

5. It is the policy of the Branch to encourage the election of representatives in all workplaces where membership exists.

## **SECTION F - BRANCH STRUCTURE**

### **1. BRANCH STRUCTURE**

Nottingham City UNISON Branch Structure is organised as follows:

#### **Nottingham City Council:-**

Children & Adults  
Commercial & Operations  
Strategy & Resources  
Development & Growth

#### **Nottingham City Schools**

#### **Academies within Nottingham City**

#### **Nottingham City Homes**

#### **Nottingham Revenue & Benefits (NRB)**

#### **Housing Associations**

#### **Private, Voluntary & Independent Sector**

A structure chart of the Branch can be found at Appendix 3

### **2. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

- (a) There will be an Annual General Meeting of the Branch to elect Branch Officers, Stewards, Health & Safety Reps and Union Learning Reps. All posts are open to job share. A minimum of two months notice will be given to all members of the date of the Annual General Meeting.
- (b) Other General meetings may be called by the Branch Executive Committee or by 5% of the membership.
- (c) The AGM of Nottingham City UNISON will be held in March each year. The Branch will aim to hold a number of meetings at various times and locations across the city to encourage attendance. Any additional expenditure incurred by members in order to attend the AGM, i.e. dependent care, travel, etc. can be claimed from the Branch.
- (d) Each meeting will elect Branch Officers, Stewards, Health & Safety Reps and Union Learning Reps who will take up office from 1 April following the AGM.
- (e) All posts are open to job share. Where a post is filled on a job share basis and both parties attend the same Committee they will only have 1



voting right between them. They will also only be counted once towards the quorum.

- (f) The quorum of the AGM (effective from March 2013 meeting) will be 30. However, in line with the Code of Good Practice the Branch aims to increase the quorum to between 2 – 3 % of membership effective from 2014.
- (g) The AGM will determine the basis of representation in the branch and the number of stewards to be elected in each work group or workplace.
  - The Branch accepts the general principle of 1 Steward per 20 members or 1 Steward per work area whichever appropriate. Stewards will be elected by members within their work group annually.
  - Stewards will normally represent members within their own department. However, Stewards may represent members outside their own department when an experienced Steward within the department is unavailable.
- (h) Nottingham City UNISON AGM will elect the following Branch Officers, all of which are open to job share

**Senior Branch Officers**

Branch Secretary	Assistant Branch Secretary
Branch Chair	Service Conditions Officer
Treasurer	Health & Safety Officer
Learning Co-ordinator	

If any of the senior Branch Officer post are contested, a full member ballot will take place prior to the annual general meeting. The results of the ballot will be announced at the meeting.

**Other Branch Officers**

Vice Chair	Equalities Officer
Education Officer	International Relations Officer
Welfare Officer	

If any of the other Branch Officer seats are contested, a confidential vote will take place at the meeting. The results will be announced as soon after the last meeting as possible

**Labour Link Officer**

The Labour Link Officer must be nominated by members of the affiliated political fund and only these members may vote in any ballot.



- PVI Organisers (non voting)
  - Branch Co-ordinator (non voting)
  - The Retired Members Secretary plus an additional elected representative from the Retired Members Committee (retired members shall only be entitled to vote on issues not relating to the pay and conditions of members in employment).
- (b) Where one person holds more than one post, they are able to nominate a substitute to attend the committee. The substitute must be elected from one of the Branch Constituted Committees i.e. Departmental Stewards Committee, H & S Committee, Learning Committee.
- (c) The Branch Executive will:-
- Meet monthly in the City Centre from 2.00 p.m.
  - Have a quorum of at least one third of the total Branch Executive Membership, or a figure agreed at the AGM each year which may vary dependent upon the number of vacant Branch Officer seats.
  - For 2019/2020 the quorum will be 15.
  - Notice of meetings, agendas and motions for discussion shall be distributed electronically seven days prior to the meeting date. Committee Members will be expected to bring all relevant paperwork with them to the meeting.
  - Voting shall be by a show of hands, unless otherwise decided, and decisions shall be reached by a simple majority of votes. Where a decision/vote needs to be reached and the meeting is not quorate, the decision/vote will be postponed until the next meeting wherever possible. If this is not practicable, for example a deadline needs to be met the Branch Secretary and Branch Chair will decide if an electronic vote (i.e. email) should take place. Where an electronic vote takes place all relevant information will be supplied to those eligible to vote (as detailed in Section F 3(a) above) so that an informed decision can be reached.
  - Any two members of the Branch Executive Committee (as proposer and seconder) may submit motions for consideration by the Committee. These should be submitted to the Branch Secretary and distributed 7 days before the meeting. Emergency motions will be allowed if the meeting so agrees.
  - Other Officials, Officers of the Union and branch employed staff

may attend in a non-voting capacity with the agreement of the Branch.

- (d) The objectives of the Branch Executive Committee shall be to:
- Administer Branch business in line with the Branch rules and guidelines issued by the National Executive Council.
  - Provide the corporate voice of the union in negotiations with the Employers.
  - Ensure Branch Officers are properly exercising their functions.
  - Promote and monitor the effective implementation of Branch rules with regard to the operation of fair representation, proportionality and self organisation.
  - Monitor the application of election procedures for all Officers and Representatives within the Branch and ratify the election of all such Officers and Representatives in between AGM'S.
  - To receive the minutes of all bodies/committee meetings under the rules and constitution of the Branch.
  - To provide the corporate voice of the Branch within UNISON at Regional and National levels.

All Committees, Officers and Representatives of the Branch shall be accountable to the Branch Executive Committee.

#### **4. SUB-COMMITTEES**

Nottingham City UNISON will have the following Sub Committees:

**(a) Finance and Administration Committee**

Branch Secretary  
Assistant Branch Secretary  
Chair  
Vice-Chair  
Equalities Officer  
Service Conditions Officer  
Treasurer  
Learning Co-ordinator / Education Officer  
Health & Safety Officer  
Departmental Organiser from each NCC Stewards Committee (or a

substitute if the Departmental Organiser is also a Branch Officer)  
NCC Senior Reps  
1 representative from Nottingham City Homes  
1 representative from Housing Associations  
1 representative from the PVI sector  
Branch Co-ordinator (non-voting)  
PVI Organiser (non-voting)

Where any of these posts are job shared, both parties will be eligible to attend the committee, but only one will be able to vote. The Branch Co-ordinator will administer the meetings, report on finance and administrative issues, but will not have any voting rights.

- (b) Service Conditions Committee**  
All Branch Officers, Departmental Organisers and Senior Reps plus  
1 Representative from each Self Organised Group.
- (c) Health and Safety Committee**  
Health and Safety Officer and all Health and Safety Representatives
- (d) Learning Committee**  
Learning Co-ordinator and all Union Learning Reps.
- (e) Staffing Committee**  
Branch Secretary, Chair, Treasurer and Service Conditions Officer.

The following committees will not meet on a regular basis but may be established if necessary.

**Equalities Committee**  
**Disputes Committee**  
**Communications Committee**  
**Welfare Committee**  
**Social Committee**  
**International Relations Committee**  
**Labour Link Committee**

For further information on Departmental Organisation and Branch Sub Committees see Appendix 4.

## **5. STEWARDS COMMITTEES & FACILITY TIME**

### **NCC / NCH / NRB / SCHOOLS & ACADEMIES**

Departmental Stewards Meeting will be held monthly, organised by the Departmental Organiser(s) or Senior Reps.

At the first meeting following the AGM (normally April each year), the Steward Committee will elect a Departmental Organiser(s) and / or Senior Rep(s) (dependent upon the size of the department). They will also elect representatives and substitutes to the Branch Executive Committee. Only nominated Stewards can vote in these elections. The Branch Secretary should be invited to this meeting.

The Departmental Organiser(s) will be the UNISON Lead Representative in the Department on all issues affecting UNISON members.

For further information on the roles of Stewards, please see Appendix 6.

### **FACILITY TIME**

The total number of days of facility time is negotiated and agreed with NCC. These days are then allocated by the Branch. Full time release (5 days) is provided for the Branch Secretary and Service Conditions Officer positions. The remaining time is allocated across NCC departments proportionate to the membership in each department e.g. 1000 members = 10 days facility time, with the exception of schools, which has a separate facility time agreement set by NCC. NCH and NRB also have separate agreements.

The allocation of the facility time for the Departmental Organiser and Senior Reps posts in each department is then subject to an election at the Departmental Stewards Committee.

### **HOUSING ASSOCIATIONS / PVI SECTOR**

The Branch PVI Organisers will be responsible for convening regular meetings for Stewards in this sector, where representatives and substitutes will be elected to the Branch Executive Committee. The Branch PVI Organisers will provide quarterly reports to the Committee.

### **FACILITY TIME**

The facility time in the Housing Association / PVI Sector will be determined separately within each employer.

## **SECTION G - CONDUCT / ORGANISATION OF MEETINGS**

### **General Meetings**

- All meetings will be conducted in a fair and democratic manner.
- All meetings should be advertised widely as far in advance as possible.
- The procedures to be used at the meeting should be explained clearly.
- Voting shall be on a show of hands unless otherwise decided and decisions shall be reached by a simple majority of votes.

Guidelines for organising meetings are attached as Appendix 7.

## **SECTION H - MEDIA COMMUNICATIONS**

Communications to the media on behalf of the Branch shall normally be made by the Branch Secretary or Branch Chair. Other Branch Officers may communicate with the media only after receiving authorisation from both the Branch Secretary and Branch Chair.

## **SECTION I - EXPENSES**

Nottingham City UNISON is committed to encourage full participation in trade union activities of all members. The needs of the individuals who undertake activities on behalf of the Branch are important and no one should be excluded from participating in the Branch due to their individual financial circumstances.

The Branch will reimburse Branch Officers, Stewards, Health & Safety Reps, ULR's, Members of Branch Working Parties and delegates to outside bodies travelling and out-of-pocket expenses incurred whilst on Branch Business in accordance with the National Executive Council (NEC) Branch Member Expenses Scheme. This scheme ensures compliance with the HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) requirements to make expense payments to its members.

**A principle of the Branch is that no member will be out of pocket undertaking UNISON activities.**

### **TRAVELLING**

Reimbursement will be on the basis of **additional expenditure incurred** i.e. the difference between expenditure which would have been incurred had the claimant not been on UNISON business and the expenditure actually incurred. e.g. If the distance from home to work is 6 miles but instead the person attends a union meeting 10 miles from home, the miles you should claim is 4 miles.

Reimbursement for travelling will be at the following rates:-

- 45p per car mile (with a supplement of 5p per mile for accompanying passengers) or 2<sup>nd</sup> class rail fare (whichever is the cheapest)
- Actual Bus Fare
- Bicycle rate 15p per mile
- Motorcycle rate 20p per mile

Car Parking to be paid only if a receipt is attached to claim form.

The Branch may authorise taxis if appropriate to the circumstances of the individual.

**Where travelling costs can be minimised by taking advantage of special rail offer fares, or by sharing a vehicle, it is expected that, where reasonably practical, this will be done.**



## **SUBSISTANCE EXPENSES**

Reimbursement of subsistence can only be claimed in the following circumstances:

- For attendance on UNISON and other training courses where attendance has been authorised.
- For attendance as a delegate to meeting and conferences

There are 3 types of subsistence expenses:-

- (a) Daily rates payable when receipts are not required  
OR
- (b) Meal rates payable when receipts are provided
- (c) Overnights stays

### **(a) Daily Rates – receipts are not required**

- For periods away from home / work over 5 hours – claim £5.00
- For periods away from home / work over 10 hours – claim £10.00

In addition to the above if returning home after 8.00pm a dinner allowance of £15.00 can be claimed.

### **(b) Meal rates – receipts are required**

Breakfast:	when leaving home before 7.00am	up to £5.45
Lunch:	where absence from their normal place of work is between 12.00pm-2.00pm	up to £7.10
Dinner:	when returning home after 8.00pm	up to £20.15 (excl. alcohol)

Only up to 3 meal allowances can be claimed in any 24 hours

### **(c) Overnight Stays**

The overnight rate is £40 (£38 net of tax).

For any period over and above the first 24 hours, expenses payable should be the daily or meal rates until the next 24 hour period is complete and so on.

Tax is deducted for each payment of £40 for overnight allowances.

Where meals are provided centrally £5 per lunch and £15 per dinner must be deducted from the amount claimed.

### **All Inclusive Events**

Where an all-inclusive event or meeting is held and all meals are provided, members are entitled to receive a £5 out of office allowance for each 24 hour period in place of the subsistence allowances stated

When a meal has been centrally provided, a deduction of £5 will be made in respect of lunch and £15 where a dinner has been provided.

### **Tax Implications**

The Branch will deduct the tax payable on the expense claims and the National Office will claim this from the Branch and pay this over to the HMRC. For basic rate tax payer's no further action is needed. Non tax payers may be able to reclaim the tax paid from the HMRC. Higher rate tax payers will be responsible for paying any additional taxable amount due on the expenses received.

### **AD-HOC STEWARDS MEETINGS WITH MEMBERS**

Reps meetings with members should normally take place in the workplace wherever possible with the usual refreshments facilities used. However, if it is not feasible to meet in the workplace the Branch will reimburse the rep for the cost of a non-alcoholic drink when meeting members in a local café.

### **TELEPHONE EXPENSES**

The Branch will reimburse the cost of telephone calls made on behalf of the Branch where they could not have reasonably been made from UNISON Offices.

All claims for reimbursement must include receipts or documentary evidence of the phone charges incurred.

### **DEPENDENT CARE ALLOWANCES**

Dependent care is split into two categories; the first is where a dependent accompanies the members to a meeting / conference and the second where the dependent stays at home.

#### **Accompanying a Member**

Where an adult or child dependent accompanies a member to conference the Branch will pay for their accommodation. They will also be entitled to the following rates:-

Adult or child dependent aged between 13-17 - full daily allowance of £40

Child under the age of 13 - 75% of daily allowance, £30

If the child is placed in a crèche then a rate of £15 per day applies instead of the allowances above.

### **Child Dependent Home Care**

Where a child dependent stays at home and does not accompany a member to a meeting / conference then only that expenditure that is over and above what would normally be incurred by the member can be reclaimed.

Day rate      up to a maximum of £32

Night rate    up to a maximum of £16

The night rate is payable from 6.00pm and an overnight stay need not be incurred for this allowance to be claimed. An additional 20% of the above rates can be claimed for each additional dependent.

Dependent childcare is paid for children up to the age of 17. All claims need to be accompanied by a receipt that states both the name and address of the carer.

## **SECTION J – FACILITATION**

The Branch will pay for reasonable facilitation costs, interpreters etc. Should delegates to conference need a facilitator, the Branch will pay for their accommodation and subsistence at the same rate as the delegates.

## **SECTION K – APPROVAL / AMEMDMENTS TO BRANCH RULES**

Branch Rules must be approved in accordance with UNISON's procedures.

Any changes to Branch Rules must be agreed and approved at a quorate Branch Executive Committee by two thirds of members present.

## **SECTION L – AFFILIATIONS / DONATIONS**

Affiliations to relevant constituency Labour Parties will be decided by the APF membership.

Affiliations to Trade Councils will be determined by the AGM, Branch Executive Committee or Finance and Admin Committee.

Donations and affiliations will be determined by the Finance and Admin Committee.

## **SECTION M – NEGOTIATING BODIES**

### **NCC**

#### **(a) JTUC**

UNISON has 8 seats on this body which meets monthly. These seats are determined by the Branch Executive Committee and normally include:

Branch Secretary  
Service Conditions Officer  
Departmental Organisers / Senior Reps (6 posts)  
Health & Safety Officer (ex-officio)

The Departmental Organiser / Senior Rep seats are elected at the Branch Executive with a view to encouraging fair representation and proportionality.

#### **(b) Secretary of Joint Trade Union Committee (JTUC)**

This is a UNISON position, which must be filled by the Service Conditions Officer.

#### **(c) Central Panel**

UNISON has 3 of the 6 Central Panel trade union seats. This body meets monthly to conduct corporate negotiations with management.

These representatives will consist of the Joint Trade Union Secretary, Branch Secretary and one other elected representative, elected by the Branch Executive Committee.

### **NCH / NRB / ACADEMIES / HOUSING ASSOCIATIONS / PVI SECTOR**

The negotiating arrangements in the remaining employers will be determined separately within each employer.

## **SECTION N – BRANCH STAFF**

The Branch Secretary will be responsible for the employment, direction and supervision of any staff employed by the branch consistent with employment law and current good practice.

In the event of any first stage hearings of staff disciplinary or grievance matters, the Branch Secretary will be joined by another Senior Branch Officer other than the Branch Chair.

Any appeal arising from a first stage grievance or disciplinary hearing will be heard by the Branch Chair and other Senior Branch Officers not involved at the first stage hearing.

The outcome of any disciplinary or grievance hearing will remain confidential and the outcome only will be reported to the Branch Executive Committee on its conclusion.

**MEMBERS RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. Members have rights to:

- Receive a membership card.
- Stand for election to any office open to them within the union rules.
- Hold an account of those representatives elected on their behalf.
- Participate in the development, change and implementation of policy.
- Raise questions about any matter and receive a considered reply within a reasonable time.
- Have any issue raised with a representative to be dealt with in the strictest confidence.
- Have access to a wide range of union services.
- Refer any complaint, which the member feels the Branch has not dealt with, to the Regional Secretary and/or ultimately the General Secretary.

2. Members responsibilities:

- To comply with UNISON's national and branch rules
- To notify the Branch Membership Officer of any change of home address, telephone number, employer, workplace, job or any other relevant information
- To notify the Branch Membership Officer immediately if their subscriptions cease to be deducted
- To supply information to their Steward and / or Health and Safety Representative on problems or issues in the workplace

3. New members will receive a membership card and a booklet - "Welcome to UNISON – Guide for Members, which gives full details of the range of benefits available for members.

4. The Branch will endeavour to carry out the following:

Provide members with information about the union and its work on a regular basis, in language and design that is easily understood.

Ensure that members take part in appropriate meetings, discussions and educational activities arranged by the union to meet their trade union, working and domestic needs.

## **ACHIEVING PROPORTIONALITY AND FAIR REPRESENTATION**

### **1. RESPONSIBILITY**

The responsibility for achieving these policies lies with the Branch Executive Committee, assisted by the relevant Sub-Committee. The Sub-Committee could include members as well as Officers and Stewards.

The Sub Committees will be set up as required and their work will be valued and given priority.

### **2. THE POLICIES**

Proportionality: the representation of women and men in fair proportion to the number of female and male members within the Branch.

Fair Representation: the broad balance of representation of members within the Branch e.g.

- part-time and full time workers
- manual and non-manual workers
- different occupations, skills, qualifications and responsibilities,
- race, sexuality and disability

Greater membership involvement is key to achieving our policies of proportionality and fair representation.

### **3. BRANCH AUDIT AND ACTION PLAN**

Each year the Branch will undertake an annual audit of its membership and representatives. This information allows the Branch to see what progress is being made to achieve the policies, and where further targeted action is needed. The Branch will use RMS/WARMS to collect and hold relevant information about its members and representatives:-

Comparing the membership breakdown with that for Stewards and Activists will identify which groups of members are under represented.



**Nottingham City UNISON**  
**Financial Regulations**

This policy sets out the main financial procedures to be followed within Nottingham City UNISON. The procedures have been agreed by the Branch Executive Committee and are designed to ensure the accuracy and completeness of financial records as well as minimise the risk of error or fraud.

If, for any reason, the procedures are not followed, the circumstances surrounding this must be reported to the Treasurer and Finance and Administrative Committee at the earliest opportunity.

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## **SECTION ONE**

### **BANK ACCOUNT**

#### **1.1 The Bank Account**

- All bank accounts will be held in the name of Nottingham City UNISON.
- The Bank Mandate is determined by the Finance and Admin Committee.
- Signatories will be Officers of the Branch and should include the Branch Secretary, Treasurer, and Chair.
- All payments will be authorised by two signatories.
- The Treasurer is responsible for ensuring that the bank mandate is kept up to date following any change in signatories.
- Signatories will only sign cheques / authorise payments, which are payable to themselves, once approved by another signatory.
- Cheques should be filled in completely (payee, amount in words and figures and date) before cheques are signed.

#### **1.2 Funds on Deposit**

- Nottingham City UNISON may operate a deposit account. Transactions with this account may only be to and from the current account.
- Deposits would be made by cheque signed in accordance with the mandate.
- Withdrawals may only be in the form of transfers to the current account and authorised by the Treasurer who is responsible for ensuring adequate cash flow arrangements.
- The Branch may allocate funds for specific purposes, e.g. staff redundancy fund, private, voluntary and independent sector worker fund, only following agreement by the Finance and Admin Committee.

## **SECTION TWO**

### **INCOME**

#### **2.1 Incoming Resources**

- All income will be banked, including cash.
- Income will be banked on a regular basis, but at least monthly.
- Banking slips / banking sheet with full details of the income is to be completed.
- Any donations or similar income will be acknowledged in writing and a copy of the letter filed with the banking sheet.

## **SECTION THREE**

### **EXPENDITURE**

#### **3.1 Payment by Cash**

- Wherever possible payments will be made by BACS transfer or cheque, not cash.
- As required cash will be withdrawn from an ATM using the Branch Prepayment Card by a staff member (normally the Branch Co-ordinator), to “top up” the petty cash float to £200.
- A member of staff, designated by the Finance and Admin Committee will maintain the petty cash tin, but other members of staff may have access to the tin.
- Whenever cash is taken from the tin, either:-
  - Receipts matching the exact amount attached to a completed petty cash voucher, will be placed in the tin, or
  - A note indicating the amount withdrawn, date and name is placed in the tin, and this is removed when the change and receipts are put in.
- The Branch Administrative Officer will enter the transactions into the petty cash book and reconcile with a cash count taken to verify the balance. This is will checked periodically (normally when the petty cash is `topped up') by the Branch Co-ordinator.
- Any discrepancies must be reported to the Treasurer.
- Payments by cash are for office/sundry expenditure only.
- Cash payments to Stewards and Branch Officers should only be made in an emergency. Authorisation is needed for all payments to Officers and Stewards.

#### **3.2 Payments by Cheque and Bank Transfer (BACS)**

All payments will be processed by the Branch Co-ordinator.

- All invoices, member/steward expense claims are to be passed to the Branch Secretary for authorisation. In the absence of the Branch Secretary, the Branch Chair or Treasurer may authorise payments.
- All expense claims should include receipts where appropriate.
- Incomplete or disputed claims should be referred to the Finance and Admin Committee.
- Payments shall be authorised / signed in accordance with the bank mandate. Signatories should see the invoice/claim form before signing.
- Signatories should check that the expenditure has been authorised by the appropriate person before signing the cheque.
- Payment must be within the agreed budget.
- The authorised invoice/claim will be marked with the date and cheque/ BACS transaction number.

- The Branch Co-ordinator will file the invoice/claim form and all relevant paperwork, (including a photocopy of the cheque) in cheque number order.
- The Branch Co-ordinator will enter all payments onto the On-Line Branch Accounting System (OLBA) on a monthly basis.
- In cases where a cheque is reported lost, a replacement should not be issued until the Branch has received written confirmation from the Bank that the cheque has been stopped.

### **3.3 Payments by Direct Debit or Standing Order**

- Any direct debit / standing order instruction must be authorised in accordance with the general bank mandate.
- Copies of all direct debit/standing order instructions will be maintained with the bank statement file.

### **3.4 Payments of Salaries and Pension**

- Community Accounting Plus will be used for payroll purposes.
- The Branch Co-ordinator will notify CA Plus of any changes to salary.
- The Branch Co-ordinator will also notify the Pensions Department by completing the appropriate form, signed by the Branch Secretary.
- Employer and Employee Pension Contributions will be deducted by UNISON prior to Branch funding.
- The Branch Co-ordinator will arrange for payment to be made to the Inland Revenue on a monthly basis in accordance with the paperwork received from Community Accounting Plus.
- Any amendments to salaries must be authorised by the Branch Secretary before they can be processed.
- Salaries will be paid by BACS on 20<sup>th</sup> of each month.
- As part of the preparation of the annual accounts, the Treasurer should ensure that the correct payments have been made.

### 3.5 Payment of Expenses

- The Branch will reimburse Branch Officers, Stewards, Health & Safety Reps, ULR's, Members of Branch Working Parties and delegates to outside bodies, travelling and out-of-pocket expenses incurred whilst on Branch Business in accordance with the National Executive Council (NEC) Branch Member Expenses Scheme. This scheme ensure compliance with the HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) requirements to make expense payments to its member.
- Full details can be found in Section I - Expenses
- It is the duty of all branch members / officers / staff, to ensure that expenditure is authorised by the Branch Secretary or the appropriate committee (Finance and Admin / Branch Executive Committee) before committing the Branch to any expenditure. **If members are in doubt they should check with the Branch Secretary or Treasurer beforehand.**
- In certain circumstances payments for expenditure will be issued in advance, approval will be needed from the Branch Secretary.
- When advance payments are issued, receipts should be forwarded to the Branch Office within 7 days of the expenditure. No other claims will be paid until these receipts are provided.

### 3.6 Welfare Applications

- A Branch Welfare Officer will normally assist members in completing Applications for Assistance; however, they can also be completed by a Steward.
- Evidence of income and expenditure to accompany the form must be corroborated by a Welfare Officer.
- All applications must be submitted to a Branch Welfare Officer.
- All applications will be sent to National Welfare (with a copy kept by the Branch Welfare Officer).
- Where a local payment is considered:-
  - Both Welfare Officers will liaise to ensure consistency
  - An Application form with a recommendation from the Welfare Officer will be completed.
  - Written confirmation of the grant must be received and payment should be authorised in line with normal payment procedures.
- As recommended by the national auditor no welfare loans are to be issued from Branch funds.

### 3.7 Training Applications

- All training with the exception of basic Steward / H & S / ULR courses must be approved by the Finance and Admin Committee.
- Applications for all training should be submitted to the Branch Secretary, ensuring that enough time is allowed for authorisation by the Finance and Admin Committee prior to the training course closing date.

## **SECTION FOUR**

### **ACCOUNTING / REPORTING SYSTEMS**

#### **4.1 The Accounting System**

- All accounting records will be maintained on the On-Line Branch Accounting System (OLBA)
- The Branch Co-ordinator is responsible for input and reconciliation of all accounts.
- The Branch Co-ordinator will reconcile the entries to the bank statements monthly, overseen by the Treasurer.
- As part of the budget process the Treasurer will establish income and expenditure categories, which will be used to report to the Finance and Admin Committee.

#### **4.2 The Filing System**

- All accounts files shall be maintained for 6 years.
- The following files are required:
  - Bank statements in sheet order with reconciliation reports and bank mandate with standing order or direct debit instructions.
  - Income file with income sheets (with relevant documents attached) filed in date order.
  - Expenditure file with invoices in cheque number / on-line banking transaction number order and petty cash receipts in date and number order.
  - PAYE files for the current tax year and previous years.
- The Treasurer will keep files for the budget details, correspondence with UNISON nationally and annual accounts.
- A fixed asset register will be maintained which will include all assets costing over £250. This register will record details of date of purchase, supplier, costs, serial number and a photocopy of the invoice. This will be checked annually by the Branch Co-ordinator.

#### **4.3 The Reporting System**

- On a quarterly basis, the Treasurer will draw up budget variance records and any other reports that may be requested, for the Finance and Admin Committee.
- The Treasurer will write a report explaining the significant variances for consideration by the Committee.



#### **4.4 The Annual Reports and Accounts Audit**

- Each year the accounts of Nottingham City UNISON will be subject to an annual audit.
- An Auditor should not be a member of the Branch Executive Committee.
- The Treasurer is responsible for producing with the Auditor, the Annual Accounts for consideration by the Committee, and for liaison with the Committee and Auditor over the audit process.
- In order that the union can meet its statutory requirements, Branches are required to submit a Head Office return. This return must be completed by the Treasurer / Auditors by the appropriate date and signed by the Branch Auditors.

#### **4.5 The Budget and Salary Review Process**

- The following steps form the basic model for preparation of budgets within Nottingham City UNISON.
- In October / November, the Finance and Admin Committee will consider the plans for the following year. These should be broadly consistent with any longer term plan (Branch Development Plan) already in place. Where the year plan differs significantly from the longer-term plan, this may warrant a revision to the longer-term plan.
- In December the Branch Committee will approve or amend this budget.
- The budget is a guide. It is not used to provide absolute limits for specific categories of expenditure; however, any material variance must be reported by the Treasurer to the Finance and Admin Committee.
- Staff salaries are reviewed in line with the agreement with our employee representatives and UNISON nationally.

## **SECTION FIVE** **RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **5.1 The Responsibilities of the Branch Treasurer**

- To ensure payments are made in line with Branch and UNISON policy.
- To ensure any money due to Head Office or region is paid.
- To maintain the budget.
- To ensure Branch income is maximised.
- To ensure that accurate records of cash received and paid are maintained.
- To ensure accurate accounts are prepared for the Branch AGM.
- To send annual accounts and returns to Head Office on time.
- To report to the Branch Committee via the Finance and Admin Committee.

### **5.2 The Responsibilities of Members**

All Branch members have a responsibility to:-

- Submit accurate and timely expense claims.
- Provide accurate information and evidence of money spent or received.
- To ensure that expenditure is authorised by the Branch Secretary or appropriate Committee before committing the Branch to any expenditure.
- To repay back to the Branch any over claimed or overpaid expenses from the Branch.

### **5.3 The Responsibilities of the Finance and Administrative Committee**

The Committee will meet on a regular basis (at least quarterly) as determined by the Branch Secretary, Treasurer and Chair and minutes from all meetings will be submitted to the Branch Executive Committee . In situations where the Finance and Admin Committee are not due to meet and authorisation for expenditure is required, delegated responsibilities are outlined in Section Six.

The responsibilities of the Committee are:-

- To consider all requests for donations, affiliations, publications and subscription from organisations which are not in conflict with the aims and objectives of UNISON.
- To consider requests for attending all training courses (excluding basic Steward, H & S and ULR courses).
- To consider all conferences / seminar requests.
- To consider requests for purchase of equipment and unbudgeted expenditure.
- To consider disputed expense claims.
- To consider premises related expenditure.
- To approve the bank mandate.
- To approve the annual budget.
- To review financial information presented by the Treasurer.
- To review Branch Financial Regulations on a regular basis.

## **SECTION SIX**

### **DELEGATED RESPONSIBILITIES**

In situations where the Finance and Admin Committee are not due to meet and approval for expenditure is necessary, the Branch Secretary, in consultation with either, the Treasurer, Chair or Service Conditions Officer is delegated to agree expenditure up to the value of £200.

Delegated decisions shall be reported and noted at the next Finance and Admin Committee Meeting.

## **SECTION SEVEN**

### **SUSPECTED FRAUD OR IRREGULARITIES**

The Chair, Branch Secretary and Treasurer shall be notified immediately by anyone connected with the Branch of any circumstance which might suggest the possibility of suspected fraud or any irregularity affecting cash, financial transactions, property or in the exercise of any functions of the Branch.

The Chair, Branch Secretary and Treasurer shall make such investigations as they think appropriate and if evidence of a criminal offence is discovered, they should notify the Regional Office.

If a fraud is confirmed this will be reported to the Branch Executive Committee at the next available meeting.

In the case of the Treasurer being suspected of fraud or any other irregularity the Chair and the Branch Secretary will be informed immediately. In the case of the Chair or Branch Secretary being suspected of fraud or any other irregularity, the Treasurer will be informed immediately. The investigation process as above will apply as appropriate. Another officer or member, can be asked to assist with the investigatory process.

**NCC DEPARTMENTAL ORGANISATION**

Each department shall have a Departmental Stewards Committee. The Committee will meet monthly and meetings will be organised by the Departmental Organiser(s).

The Departmental Organiser(s) will be the UNISON Lead Representative in the Department on all issues affecting UNISON members.

**Role of Departmental Organiser**

The Departmental Organiser's role will be to:-

- lead and support senior reps and stewards across the workplace.
- lead and manage the development of UNISON across the workplace.
- organise UNISON member consultation and participation on bargaining issues.
- lead negotiations on bargaining issues that affect UNISON members.
- ensure UNISON members are provided with a good standard of individual representation.
- map the UNISON membership and increase our density.
- recruit new UNISON members and ensure new starters are contacted.
- recruit new reps and ensure they are properly trained.
- convene monthly meetings of UNISON reps to ensure members are involved in issues that affect them.
- provide occasional representation at senior/board level i.e. appeal.
- provide individual representation where stewards are unable to.

**Stewards Committees**

All Stewards shall be entitled to attend the appropriate Stewards Committee.

Branch Officers and other Officials and Officers of the Union may attend in a non-voting capacity.

The function and responsibilities of Departmental Stewards Committees are:

1. to elect Stewards to the appropriate negotiating bodies. This will be based on fair representation and proportionality, appendix 1 refers.
2. to elect Representatives to the Branch Executive Committee.
3. to receive reports from Representatives on negotiating panels and from stewards.
4. to arrange consultations with members within the Department on issues relating solely to that Department.

5. to receive reports from Stewards on recruitment of new members.
6. to carry out Branch Executive policy in respect of negotiations and consultations.
7. formulation of policy proposals to the Branch Executive.
8. meetings of the Committee shall be held at appropriate times and locations to facilitate the fullest participation of Stewards. A Central Panel Rep or the Branch Chair should attend each meeting.

### **Template Agenda for Stewards Committees**

1. Welcome, Attendance and Apologies
2. Minutes from the last meeting
3. Update from Branch Secretary/Chair/Service Conditions Officer on corporate negotiations
4. Report by Steward Representatives on Branch Executive Committee
5. Report by Department Organiser on local campaigns/negotiations
6. Report from Stewards on representation / casework
7. Update on Departmental Recruitment plan and membership
8. Feedback from Stewards on workplace meetings
9. Steward Development / Training / Shadowing opportunities
10. Any other business – Date of next meeting

The role of the Steward is in accordance with Section G (5) of the UNISON Rule Book and the Branch rules. Appendix 5 details their role in terms of recruiting new members.

Members based in employers outside Nottingham City Council e.g. NCH, NRB, Academies, Housing Associations and the PVI Sector shall have a Steward system appropriate to their relevant organisation.

The formulation and operation of each committee will be determined in line with the principles of fair representation and proportionality.

## **BRANCH SUB COMMITTEES**

To ensure the effectiveness of the Branch in conducting its business the following Sub Committees shall be established to report to the Branch Executive Committee:

### **FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE SUB COMMITTEE**

The Finance and Admin Committee will operate in accordance with Section 5.3 of the Financial Regulations – Appendix 4

### **SERVICE CONDITIONS SUB COMMITTEE**

- To co-ordinate the Service Conditions negotiations on each panel of negotiating body
- To co-ordinate national and city wide conditions of service
- Report regularly to the Branch Executive Committee and produce an annual report to the AGM
- Help with management of authorised industrial action
- Membership of the Sub Committees shall be in accordance with 4(b) of Section F Branch Structure.

### **HEALTH AND SAFETY SUB COMMITTEE**

- Oversee the work of Health and Safety Representatives throughout the Branch.
- To consider appropriate action for individual personal injury cases and monitor their progress.
- Members of this committee shall include Health and Safety Officers, and Health and Safety Representatives
- To submit an annual report to the AGM.
- Elect Representatives as appropriate to the Health and Safety Negotiating structures.

## **A STEWARD'S ROLE IN RECRUITING NEW MEMBERS**

### **Why Recruitment, Retention and Organising is Essential**

One of the most vital jobs of a steward is to recruit new members.

Organised workplaces with a high density of union membership means UNISON will have much greater influence with local management and with employers. Members will have a stronger sense of confidence and ability to change things, together with much higher chances of winning recognition in non-recognised workplaces.

Such workplaces will have greater clout with other trade unions within the workplace. They will have more stewards, safety representatives and workplace contacts who run the union locally and ensure that the branch is truly representative.

All of this means that the union will have greater influence both locally and nationally, which helps UNISON campaign to improve public services, to stop discrimination, for equality of opportunity and for better pay and conditions of service.

The union will have greater stability. The more members we have locally, the greater income the branch has to provide support for stewards and members. Remember that it is particularly important to recruit young members if UNISON is to grow and be strong in the future.

'Nobody asked me!' -- that's the single biggest reason people give for not having joined a trade union, and the best people to recruit new members are the UNISON members working alongside them.

Successful recruiters can influence non-members to join when the union is seen to be active, has credibility, organises in a workplace and actively contacts potential members on a regular basis.

An organising approach to recruitment is more likely to succeed than telling members the benefits of joining, and promising a servicing role in which members expect stewards to solve their problems for them.

There are a number of specific techniques you can adopt to help you influence someone to take the step and join. There are many barriers in the



way of people joining a union. Effective organisers aim to remove as many of these as possible.

Consider how you present yourself to the potential member and the language you use. You need to be assertive and clear in your arguments but not pushy. A good technique is to use inclusive language such as "our union" or "your union". Avoid union jargon as far as possible and illustrate your arguments with real-life examples of how the union has been effective in their workplace.

Consider which recruitment material to use and whether you need to produce your own to supplement the national, regional and branch materials.

### **The organising approach**

- Listen and ask questions for at least 70% of the time when you meet a potential recruit
- Identify any concerns of the non-member; don't make promises but highlight that there may be hope
- Recognise that concerns about joining are real and acknowledge them. No large organisation is perfect - be honest about the union
- Speak to new employees as soon as you can. Make sure they know where you can be contacted
- Bear in mind that potential members are more likely to be recruited by colleagues they know and trust. We know that 'like recruits like'
- Approach recruitment and retention from the perspective that members need to get involved and understand that only by working together can their problems be resolved
- Use empathy - a powerful influencing technique can be to explain how you joined the union and became an active member, including your experience of the union and its achievements. Remember, UNISON is a member-led union and we want members involved

### **Be organised**

- Keep a list of all members and potential members in your constituency
- Make sure that you are informed when new employees are starting
- Keep appropriate UNISON recruitment literature and supplies
- Display UNISON recruitment and other appropriate UNISON posters in the workplace
- Always carry membership application forms with you - you never know when you might need them

## **GUIDELINES FOR ORGANISING AND RUNNING MEETINGS**

UNISON meetings should be accessible and welcoming to all members. In practical terms this means that:

- meeting places should be accessible to all, if possible on public transport routes
- meeting times and days should be varied to fit the needs of shift workers and part time workers
- meetings should be spread geographically to encourage attendance
- dates, places and times for meetings should be planned and advertised well in advance and not unnecessarily be altered.

Following consultation with stewards it was agreed that the Branch Executive Committee meeting would take place in the City Centre at 2.00pm normally on the second Tuesday of each month.

New members should always be welcomed to their first meeting. A more experienced member should sit with the new member to help them understand the procedure. Where possible new members will be briefed on procedures prior to their first meeting.

It is the responsibility of the Chair and Secretary to ensure that the discussion at meetings is effective and not repetitive and that decisions are recorded.

Everyone at the meeting should have the opportunity to contribute.

The Chair should ensure that the meeting remains friendly and accessible for all members.

To assist this process they should:

- ask anyone who uses jargon, or sets of initials to explain what they mean in ordinary language
- make sure the procedure is explained clearly and actively encourage individuals to speak but refuse to allow only a few people to dominate

Racist, sexist or homophobic language must not be permitted. Nor must attacks on individuals be made in personal terms (as opposed to attacks on policies).

Action and tasks required at meetings should be shared and not left to the Secretary to action. This includes giving reports which should be shared among the Stewards / Convenors present.

When an action has been decided the Chair should ensure that everyone present is clear about what has been decided and who is responsible for actioning the point.

### **GUIDELINES FOR ORGANISING MEETINGS**

UNISON's commitment to Fair Representation and Proportionality seeks to involve all members. The Branch shall seek to organise meetings that are user friendly for all members.

### **TIMING AND VENUE**

Consider the best dates and times for your meeting. This will depend on the make up of who is attending the meeting such as shift workers, people with family responsibilities, transport arrangements and distance to the meeting.

Meeting times and dates should be varied to allow the fullest participation. Experience will be gained through contacting members who have not attended previous meetings.

Try to set the dates and times of meetings well in advance and advertise them well. Do not change the dates and times once agreed, unless you really have to.

Hold meetings in places which are familiar, on public transport routes and do not create difficulties for particular groups of members.

Move the meetings around the city to encourage attendance from all groups.

Buildings which are reasonably accessible during the daytime may present other difficulties after dark. Wherever possible buildings that are accessible to disabled members will be used.

Maps of location should be provided each time. Put up notices and arrows on doors/lifts to show people where to go. Offer lifts to and from the meeting if there are difficulties with public transport.

### **SETTING UP THE MEETING**

Every meeting should be necessary and have a clearly defined purpose. If meetings of the Branch at whatever level are lacking purpose or are badly attended then the purpose of the meeting needs to be reviewed.

Meetings should not last longer than two hours.

Meetings should not be convened more frequently than needed.

Notice of the meeting should be sent out well in advance.

Facilitation should be provided to enable members to attend and participate in meetings. These facilities shall be advertised in all mailings pertaining to the meeting asking members to book their requirements.

### **AGENDA AND MINUTES / ACTION NOTES**

Each meeting within the Branch should have the same style of agenda and minutes / action notes so members can identify and know their way around the papers.

The agenda shall be brief but informative, giving people an idea of the main items for discussion so that they can prepare themselves.

Details of the discussion around each item are not usually included in the minutes, except where the main purpose of the meeting is to develop policy or give information so that keeping a record of the way ideas have developed is important. More generally, the point is to show what was decided and who is responsible for carrying it out. An action at the side of each page of minutes gives everyone a clear idea of who is responsible for actioning points.

Emergency resolutions should be allowed for cases where the matter could not have been foreseen. 'Any other business' should be kept strictly to minor matters of information or decision and not be used as an opportunity to bring up new matters unannounced.

