



Community & Voluntary Branch AGM Newsletter 2020

Annual General Meeting 2020

Please make a note of the meeting nearest to you.

Monday 23rd March
Coach Inn, Omagh
1pm

Tuesday 24th March
UNISON Office, Derry
7pm

Wednesday 25th March
UNISON, Galway House, Belfast
5:30pm

Thursday 26th March
Adair Arms Hotel, Ballymena
1pm



Welcome to the UNISON Community Branch Newsletter 2020. With over 2000 members working across a wide range of services from mental health and social care organisations to housing associations and homelessness charities throughout the region. Our community based membership covers a host of local organisations including the women's sector and the majority of NGOs working on equality and human rights.

Branch membership receives support whenever required, may that be some advice over the phone or more extensive in cases involving such issues as workplace bullying.

We provide extensive representation to both individuals and groups of members on issues such as protective notice, redundancy payments and TUPE transfers.

Despite these problems we have also succeeded in preventing many closures and we continue with our bargaining strategy to secure pay awards for a wide range of organisations.

Our branch is involved in some of the union's most important campaigns on the Supporting People Programme, Women's Rights, Black & Migrant Worker's Rights, LGBT+ rights, on challenging cuts to the welfare system and on challenging the impact of Brexit on everything from funding for the community and voluntary sector, to the threat to the Peace Process, rising racism, and the general impending economic disaster.

UNISON Community Branch activists provide a voice for Community Sector workers and will continue to fight against poor terms and conditions and wage inequalities. Creating workplaces where UNISON are at the centre of all discussions.

NOT YET A UNISON MEMBER? JOIN TODAY!

Call Membership on 028 90270190 or Join Online <http://www.joinunison.org/>

How can I get involved in the union? Workplace stewards and reps are the foundation of the union. In your workplace, get together, elect your steward or UNISON rep for the coming year and let us know the result. Please contact us for assistance.

What is involved in the branch posts? We have a wide range of branch posts and you can find short descriptions of them on our website at www.unison-ni.org.uk/branch-agms. If you believe in trade union values and have a particular interest in any of the posts listed in the attached form then get 2 other current UNISON members in your branch to counter-sign and return it by freepost **before 5pm on 9th March 2020**.

What kind of activity would I be involved in? As an elected UNISON representative you will provide help and support to other members. This might be through formal representation in the workplace or encouraging members to take part in our excellent education programme, or you might want to specialise in equality and our self-organised groups. Your interest may lie in International Solidarity or with encouraging young people to become active trade unionists. You will also be involved in wider UNISON and Irish Congress of Trade Unions activities.

You may be interested in taking on the challenge of chairing branch meetings, working as a key negotiator in one of the Branch Secretary posts, helping to co-ordinate the branch finances as Joint Treasurer or help with our branch communications. If you are interested in any of these posts you can run for several but can only hold one of them. **In all of these posts, and the new Convenor posts, you will be expected to encourage new members to join UNISON and be part of the team which represents and negotiates.**

What does the new post of Convenor entail? Our membership falls into a number of specific categories and we have identified 5 areas for the new Convenor posts. The Convenor will act as a co-ordinator for all of the stewards or workplace reps in that sector and will also assist the Branch Secretaries with representation and negotiation with the employers in that specific sector. At present we have identified 5 Convenors covering employers in community groups, health and social care providers, housing/homeless organisations, women's rights, and equality & human rights.

When do we meet? All elected reps from the Branch Committee meet monthly. The Convenors will also agree a timetable for meetings for all stewards in their sector. UNISON steward teams in larger employers will agree their own timetable.



MEMBERSHIP SERVICES

Legal Advice: As a UNISON member, you receive free legal advice and assistance for:

- 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.

UNISON members' families are also covered for personal injury and reduced rates for wills and conveyancing. For further information contact 0800 0857 857.

The **UNISON Welfare —'There For You'** service is FREE to all UNISON members and is there for you at times of difficulty and crisis. For full details please see UNISON's website. www.unison.org.uk/get-help/

The **UNISON College:** Education courses are free to all UNISON members. Visit www.unison-ni.org.uk/education-and-training or contact 02890270190.

BRANCH CONTACTS

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