

***Blaenau Gwent County Branch***



**Thursday 20th February 2020**

**@ 5:00pm**

**in the**

**Council Chamber**

**Civic Centre**

**Ebbw Vale NP23 6XB**

**AGENDA**

Welcome

Apologies

Minutes from 2019 AGM (for accuracy)

Chairman’s Report

Treasurer’s Report

Auditors’ Report

Honoraria

Election of Officers

Branch Assessment

**Guest Speakers:**

Caragh Hogan, Thompsons Solicitors

Eva Clarke BEM

Closing Remarks

Prize Draw

Eva Clarke BEM

Special Guest and recipient of the Blaenau Gwent, International Award for “outstanding contribution to learning and equalities”

Eva Clarke has been called the miracle baby. Eva was born in Mauthausen concentration camp. She and her mother are the only survivors of their family, 15 members of who were killed in Auschwitz-Birkenau: three of Eva’s grandparents, her father, uncles, aunts and her 7-year-old cousin, Peter.

Unison members attending this year’s AGM will be able to pay their respects and listen to a formidable, wonderful human being who has spent their life educating young people about the Holocaust and the important lessons learned for today.

On **Thursday, 20th February 2020 at 4.45pm**

please attend the Unison Branch AGM and **“Stand Together”**

to commemorate the

75-year anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau

Also, members will be able to pay tribute and show respect to

Eva Clarke for the tireless work she undertakes to make our

world a better place both for now and the future.

**Buffet and refreshments will be provided**

**County Borough of Blaenau Gwent**

**Bwrdeisdref Sirol Blaenau Gwent**

**MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER**

**ON THURSDAY 21st FEBRUARY 2019**

**PRESENT:** Ian Robins, Neville Southall, Simon Spree, Ashley Brace, Allyson Roberts, Simon Key, Claire Pitchford, Hayley Wright, Karl Gauden, Donna Beach, Anthony Beach, Gillian Barnett, Jo Collins, Isabel Jukes, Phil Diamond, Jonathan Morgan, Rosie Lewis Dan Perkins, Lyn Davies, Amy Smith, Mike Jackson, Mark Taylor, Dave Rees, Clare Nash, John Wright, Leanne Roberts, Melinda Powell, Alun Evans, Peter Butcher, A Rogers, JS Neil

**APOLOGIES:** Damian Assinder, Brenda Annand, Michelle Jones

The chair welcomed everyone to the AGM. He advised that Clare Nash from Thompsons Solicitors would be available after the meeting if members wanted to discuss the services they have available.

**1 Minutes of Meeting 8th February 2018 - (Accuracy)**

Rosie informed the meeting that hers may have been one of the illegible signatures noted on the list of those present at last year’s AGM as she is not listed but she did attend.

The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record

Moved: Phil Diamond Seconded: Simon Key

**2 Chairman’s Report**

The chair informed the meeting that for the ninth consecutive time it has again been an extremely difficult year. Austerity has made stress more prevalent and Unison has been trying to overcome this and offer members more support. Classes are going to be arranged on Mental Health and Wellbeing with guest speakers. Last year the branch paid for the councils Organisational Development officers to attend Mental Health Training to improve their mediation skills as sometimes the victims were not gaining any benefit from mediation.

It has been a challenging year for the Leisure Trust as employees did not receive a pay rise. The branch worked with the members and the local authority to achieve the pay rise. It was one of the largest turnouts for a ballot under the new system whereby 50% of those eligible to vote needed to vote and we had a 68% turnout with 88% voting to take industrial action.

Looking towards the future, the council is looking to carry out research across the UK for the best options and ways of working.

Blaenau Gwent were the first council to sign up to the Ethical Care Charter. Carers are now paid for travel time. The lowest paid have been recognised and will receive the biggest rise of over 2%. However, food banks are still being used by low paid workers

He praised the team effort to ensure that School Crossing Patrols would not be cut.

The branch has supported many worthwhile causes during the year including Show Racism the Red Card. The appeal for help for the Women’s Refuge was snowed under by the generosity of staff which resulted in the refuge having enough tinned food supplies to last for four years. In future we intend to tackle period poverty and look to provide free sanitary products in schools.

This year is the year of the young person. The Chair emphasised that they should have a stronger voice in the workplace or they may be victims of stress.

No decision has been made on whether Silent Valley will be coming in-house.

The chair asked for new ideas for social trips which may in turn attract new members. A questionnaire will be distributed.

The Chair introduced two new officers:

Ashley Brace is the branches new LGBT officer. She works in Schools with Neville and is a professional boxer.

Amy Smith is our new Women’s Officer and works in the Resources Department. This is excellent news as 70% of our workforce is female. These appointments will help improve to the gender balance on the executive

Finally, he thanked the executive and paid tribute to their tireless work throughout the year.

**3 Treasurers Report**

Copies of the accounts were distributed to all who attended the meeting. The General Fund balance is £43,838.00. As stated at last year’s AGM the branch needs to try to secure more funding. Our percentage has gone up by ½% this year from 21½ to 22% and it is hoped that this will increase next year.

Expenditure experienced a loss of £2,680.54. This was as a result of staff salaries and the employment of an Admin Officer which was jointly funded with Monmouth.

As a result of the Leisure Trust dispute a sum was transferred from General Fund to the Industrial Action Fund. This fund had previously been static for many years. Publicity material was purchased out of the fund for the strike. Other authorities usually have more in their Industrial Action Fund than the General Fund.

The national auditor gave the accounts a clean bill of health with only two small recommendations which had already been implemented for last year’s accounts.

The Chair asked to meeting to endorse the accounts.

Moved: John Wright Seconded: Simon Key

The Chair gave his sincere thanks to the treasurer for all his hard work during the year.

**4 Auditors Report**

Both auditors were unable to attend the meeting

Simon Spree read out a report from the Auditors. There were no errors in the accounts all queries raised have been addressed and they congratulated Jonathan on another year of excellent accounting.

**5 Honoraria**

The Chair explained that an honorarium is paid in recognition of work carried out by officers during the year and the amount granted this year has reduced. The Chair then requested the meeting to endorse the Honoraria.

Proposed: Mike Jackson Seconded: Dan Perkins

The honoraria payments were endorsed unanimously.

**6 Election of Officers**

The Chair advised that the branch has a shortfall of officers and requested anyone who may be interested to stay behind after the meeting to speak to himself or Ian.

**7 Branch Assessment**

Rosie spoke on the Branch Assessment.

This has been a busy and challenging year which has gone by very quickly. The NJC pay offer was a piece of good news and will be the same for the next financial year. Discussions are already in place for the 2020/21 pay claim.

Rosie again praised the branches efforts during the Leisure Trust dispute, the reps had been fantastic and deserved a lot of credit. There had been much going on behind the scenes but the members trusted the reps and they stood so strong. It was a textbook campaign and had boosted recruitment, however efforts still need to be maintained to recruit more members.

The Action Plan for next year includes recruiting a new communications officer to help the branch go forward on social media, updating IT equipment, promoting the training of more members, recruiting more young workers and encouraging them to be active in the branch.

Among the campaigns we will be supporting are Mental Health Awareness, Stars in our Schools, and regular health checks.

Relations with the Council are open and the branch is in a strong position. Rosie thanked the executive and the branch for their work in taking Unison forward in Blaenau Gwent

The Chair gave his recognition to all the support Rosie and Karl give to the branch.

**8 Guest Speaker – Neville Southall**

Neville spoke about the need for every person to have a level playing field in life. He gave examples of individuals who had been abused or bullied or had mental health problems. He said that we need strong union reps who can stand up to the bosses, charities should work together in the hope that we can take back society.

**9 Guest Speaker - Thompsons Solicitors**

The guest speaker from Thompsons Solicitors outlined the services they offer including insurance, will writing, free legal advice and representation on employment law or accidents at work. They also provide low cost conveyancing and have a dedicated team who deal with asbestos claims. Factsheets were available if any members who required more information.

**10 Closing Remarks**

The Chair thanked the executive for their work during an extremely difficult year.

The Branch Secretary thanked the Chair for all his hard work and help during the year.

**11 Prize Draw**

The prize draw took place with new executive member Ashley Brace winning the £50.00.

**JEC**

**26th February 2019**

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**County Borough of Blaenau Gwent**

**Branch Honoraria Proposals 2019**

Honoraria are discretionary one-off payments made to elected branch committee members to recognise their voluntary work for the branch.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Post | Name | **2018**  **£** | **Proposed**  **2019**  **£** |
| Secretary | Ian Robins | 800 | 800 |
| Treasurer | Jonathan Morgan | 750 | 750 |
| Schools Convenor | Simon Key | 350 | 350 |
| Welfare Officer | Simon Spree | 200 | 200 |
| Health & Safety Officer | Damien Assinder | 350 | 350 |
| Education & Training Officer | Phil Diamond | 250 | 250 |
| International Officer | Nev Southall | 200 | 200 |
| Minutes Secretary | Janice Collins | 200 | 200 |
| Auditors (2 Posts) | Carol Fry  Nicola Wyburn | 150  150 | 150  150 |
| Low Paid Member | Izzy Jukes | 200 | 200 |
| Young Member | Vacant Post | - | - |
| Social Secretary | Shirley Ford | 100 | - |
| Social Services Convenor | Mike Jackson | - | 200 |
| Equalities Officer | Louise Rosser | - | 200 |
| Social Media/Website Officer | Rhys Pearce | - | 200 |
|  | **Total** | **£3700** | **£4200** |

**Total for 2018 £3,700.00**

**Total for 2019 £4,200.00**

**General Fund Income and Expenditure Account**

**For the year ended 31st December 2019**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **All Items** | **2019 (£)** | **2019 (£)** | **2018 (£)** | **2018 (£)** |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| **Income** |  |  |  |  |
| Branch Funding | 44,858.77 |  | 43,778.00 |  |
| Branch Levy | 0.00 |  | 0.00 |  |
| Investment Income Received | 0.00 |  | 0.00 |  |
| Tax deducted or paid on Invested Income | 0.00 |  | 0.00 |  |
| Retired Members Subscriptions | 60.00 |  | 60.00 |  |
| Other Income | 0.00 |  | 0.00 |  |
| Regional Pool Income | 0.00 |  | 0.00 |  |
| Transfer from Industrial Action Fund | 0.00 |  | 0.00 |  |
| Transfer from Dedicated Action Fund | 0.00 |  | 0.00 |  |
| Locally collected subscriptions | 0.00 |  | 0.00 |  |
|  |  | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |  | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| **Income Total** |  | 44,918.77 |  | 43,838.00 |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| **Expenditure** |  |  |  |  |
| Fighting Fund | 0.00 |  | 8.20 |  |
| Staff Salaries | 4,754.73 |  | 8,631.73 |  |
| Rent | 0.00 |  | 0.00 |  |
| Rates | 0.00 |  | 0.00 |  |
| Utilities | 0.00 |  | 0.00 |  |
| Other administration | 9,970.13 |  | 5,829.51 |  |
| Honoraria | 3,700.00 |  | 3,550.00 |  |
| Conferences and group meetings | 6,587.60 |  | 8,857.38 |  |
| Branch Committee | 4,700.99 |  | 3,697.12 |  |
| Other meetings | 1,241.73 |  | 3,853.10 |  |
| Publicity | 2,697.34 |  | 2,389.14 |  |
| Education | 5,609.28 |  | 4,443.59 |  |
| Donations | 349.01 |  | 239.40 |  |
| Affiliations | 0.00 |  | 0.00 |  |
| Local Activities | 2,762.58 |  | 2,769.37 |  |
| Transfer to Industrial Action Fund | 0.00 |  | 2,000.00 |  |
| Transfer to Dedicated Fund(s) | 0.00 |  | 0.00 |  |
| Other Expenditure | 0.00 |  | 0.00 |  |
| Hardship Payments | 0.00 |  | 0.00 |  |
| Other Branch Funding Deductions | 0.00 |  | 0.00 |  |
| Tax | 0.00 |  | 0.00 |  |
|  |  | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |  | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| **Expenditure Total** |  | 42,373.39 |  | 46,518.54 |
|  |  | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |  | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| **Surplus for the Year** |  | **2,545.38** |  | **-2,680.54** |

**Consolidated Balance Sheet**

**For the year ended 31st December 2019**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **All Items** | 2019 (£) | 2019 (£) | 2018 (£) | 2018 (£) |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| **Fixed Assets** |  |  |  |  |
| Freehold Properties | 0.00 |  | 0.00 |  |
| Leasehold Properties | 0.00 |  | 0.00 |  |
| Equipment, Fixtures & Fittings | 5,129.57 |  | 3,469.43 |  |
| Investments (Quoted & unquoted) | 0.00 | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | 0.00 | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| **Total Fixed Assets** |  | 5,129.57 |  | 3,469.43 |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| **Current Assets** |  |  |  |  |
| Branch Funding | 0.00 |  | 4.30 |  |
| Third Party Debtors | 435.00 |  | 0.00 |  |
| Loans | 0.00 |  | 0.00 |  |
| Building Society | 0.00 |  | 0.00 |  |
| Bank Deposit | 0.00 |  | 0.00 |  |
| Current Account | 41,123.07 |  | 38,083.41 |  |
| Prepaid Card | 1,476.41 |  | 938.92 |  |
| Cash | 0.00 | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | 0.00 | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| **Total Current Assets** |  | 43,034.48 |  | 39,026.63 |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| **Current Liabilities** |  |  |  |  |
| Branch Funding | 76.31 |  | 0.00 |  |
| Third Party Creditors | 3,071.30 |  | 0.00 |  |
| HO Loans | 0.00 |  | 0.00 |  |
| Locally collected subscriptions | 0.00 |  | 25.00 |  |
| Credit Card | 0.00 | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | 0.00 | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| **Total Current Liabilities** |  | 3,147.61 |  | 25.00 |
| **Net Current Assets** |  | 39,886.87 |  | 39,001.63 |
| **TOTAL ASSETS** |  | 45,016.44 |  | 42,471.06 |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| **Accumulated Funds** |  |  |  |  |
| Accumulated General Fund at |  |  |  |  |
| year beginning | 26,963.72 |  | 29,644.26 |  |
| Brought Forward Balance Adjustment | 0.00 |  | 0.00 |  |
| Surplus / Deficit | 2,545.38 | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | -2,680.54 | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| **Accumulated General Fund at** |  |  |  |  |
| **year end** |  | 29,509.10 |  | 26,963.72 |
| Accumulated Industrial Action Fund | 15,507.34 |  | 13,660.60 |  |
| Surplus / Deficit | 0.00 | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | 1,846.74 | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| **Accumulated Industrial Action Fund at year end** |  | 15,507.34 |  | 15,507.34 |
|  |  | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |  | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| **Total Funds at end of the year** |  | **45,016.44** |  | **42,471.06** |

UNISON

**County Borough of Blaenau Gwent**

**Officer Nominations**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Post | Nominee |
| Secretary | Ian Robins |
| Chairperson | Dave Rees |
| Treasurer | Jonathan Morgan |
| Women’s Officer |  |
| Lifelong Learning Co-ordinator | Simon Key |
| Disabilities Officer | Mike Jackson |
| Health & Safety Officer | Damien Assinder |
| Communications Officer | Rhys Pearce |
| Education & Training Officer | Phil Diamond |
| Equalities Officer | Louise Rosser |
| Welfare Officer | Simon Spree |
| International Officer | Neville Southall |
| Sports & Social Secretary | Dan Perkins |
| Young Member’s Officer |  |
| Minutes Secretary | Janice Collins |
| Auditors (2 Posts) | Carol Fry /Nicola Wyburn |
| LGBT Officer | Ashley Brace |
| Black Members Officer | Nazia Akhtar |
| Social Services Convenor | Izzy Jukes |
| Labour Link Officer | Dave Rees |
| Retired Member / Pensions Champion | John Wright |

The above named Officers are nominated unopposed and are deemed elected, subject to AGM approval.



We still have vacancies for Stewards across all workplaces so any nominations or volunteers would be very welcome. Full training will be offered to anyone volunteering.

Officers of the union take the lead on specific areas of activity and work in close liaison with our Stewards and Workplace Contacts to ensure that we deliver effectively for our members.

Specific training is available for many of these positions so don’t feel that you will be on your own if you stand, or persuade a colleague to stand. There is only one qualification for officers, they need to be a member of the union; having an interest or experience of the specific areas of activity would of course be welcomed.

Stewards are the backbone of UNISON; they act as a link between members and the union in our workplaces. All new stewards have the right to paid time off for training which UNISON provides. New stewards also have the backup of more experienced officers should the need arise.

Your workplace will be a much stronger place should you nominate someone to act on your behalf, and remember different stewards get involved to differing degrees, so don’t worry if you feel you don’t have that much time, just being a presence in the workplace is often enough.

If you are interested please contact the UNISON Office:

**UNISON Office**

**Civic Centre**

**Ebbw Vale NP23 6XB**

**Tel: 01494 355252**

**Email:** UnisonOfficeAdmin@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk

**Website: www.unisoningwent.org.uk**

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Alternatively contact your branch office on

**01495 355252** for a brochure.



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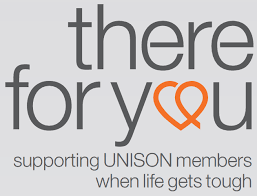
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(Charity registration number: 1023552 / SCO38305)

UNISON’s registered charity provides a unique confidential service just for UNISON members and their families. They offer:

* debt service
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* wellbeing breaks

Telephone: 020 7121 5620

Email: [thereforyou@unison.co.uk](mailto:thereforyou@unison.co.uk)

www.unison.org.uk/thereforyou







UNISON works in partnership with Thompsons Solicitors to provide comprehensive legal support for its members. Members also benefit from employment law advice and a range of services for family members too.

* Personal Injury
* Serious Injury
* Industrial disease or illness
* A free initial assessment in clinical negligence cases
* Basic will writing
* Reduced rates for conveyancing
* Employment law
* Criminal law advice





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**Look out for the Member Learning Programme**

**January - June 2020**

**Learning Grants**

UNISON wants to help members realise their potential. We offer financial support to members taking part in various educational and learning opportunities, as well as learning discounts from a number of providers.

* Open University Awards
* Learning Grants
* Grants for School Support Staff
* Grants for Care Workers

The number of grants is limited and they are awarded on a first come, first served, basis. Contact the branch office for further information.

## Learning online - UNISON’s learning site

Sometimes you just want to sit in a chair with a cup of tea and learn something new, at your own pace and in an environment where you feel comfortable.

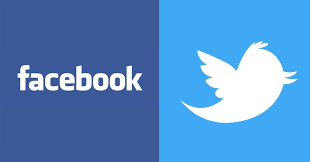
Online learning can offer you just that.

Any UNISON member can use their [My UNISON](https://www.unison.org.uk/my-unison) account to log in to our online learning site and enrol themselves in e-notes (quick, interactive online modules) on a wide range of topics. These give a useful overview of the subject and direct learners to further resources.

Recently added e-notes include: **Dyslexia Awareness**, **Introduction to Apprenticeships**, and **The Role of the Union Learning Representative**.

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[**www.unisoningwent.org.uk**](http://www.unisoningwent.org.uk)



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