

Unison Derby City Branch AGM

Friday 24th February 2023

Quorate

Handwritten minutes taken by Julie Warner.

Typed by Becky Everett

Started 18.50 finished 19.37

Chair introductions huge thanks to all branch officers for all their hard work throughout the year and all done behind the scenes.

Thanks to all stewards for their work in nipping things in the bud.

Also, thanks to the regional staff for all their help.

Derby Pride, pop up events, more workplace visits, cost of living crisis looking at ways of helping people.

Apologies

Minutes agreed by Alex Clark and Josh Holmes.

Branch Sec report added to minutes.

Good evening and Welcome to Derby city Branch Annual General Meeting - as you know we must do this bit but as soon as it's complete, enjoy the food, music, raffle, drinking and dancing.

A quick message for Julie Warner our Agm Note taker I've printed this out for your notes so put your pen down for 5 mins.

I'd also like to welcome a few of my classmates from the East Midlands Leadership School - I can't believe our yearlong leadership education is coming to an end. It's been a fantastic journey - I wonder where the training will take us.

We also have some visitors from Regional Office here tonight, so welcome and hope you have a good night.

Also, in the meeting tonight, I have some family members who are members of our branch. Thank you for the continued support you all give me.

When writing my AGM speech, I look back at what we've done through our photos, and wow we've done a lot!! I don't think any of us realise how hard we work till you stop and look back through our very busy social media - No wonder we're all so tired! Here are a few of our best bits....

March 2022 saw us donate 100 Easter eggs to a local family Easter egg hunt, we saw our female branch officers attend the regional women's network empowering women's event, we held our own in person stewards training which was extremely successful. March also saw us have a defibrillator installed in the branch, all the local shops have all been made aware we have it and while I truly hope we never have to use it knowing we have it does give peace of mind.

April saw us as a branch nominate Richard for the service Group Executive, as a branch we held Fire safety training for all branch officers.

In May your branch officers completed First Aid Training - we did pass the course, but should you ever take poorly in front of any of the Branch Officers - let me just tell you Dennis was the only one who could maintain any rhythm with the defibrillator...

During our First Aid Training our very own Jill became a nanny to her first Grandson Oscar. We held a number of successful learning events at Derby College, Stores Road and Derby Homes and delivered numerous notice board packs to many other workplaces sharing information on UNISON free learning

May saw us pledge to support a local food bank and launch the one extra item campaign - this was a pledge from the work Julie and I did within the regional women's network where Julie is Chair- every time that basket is full Dennis delivers the items to St Marks church in Chaddesden only this week we delivered our 10th food bank collection, and we also support a local project that supports local girls and women with Personal hygiene products from shower gel to sanitary towels and deodorant- period poverty is very real and many women go without essential items so they can support the family, Early May I proudly took my place at East Midlands Leadership School, and 3 branch officers completed and passed advanced representation training. Also, In May 2022 at the Regional Branch awards Derby City won the communications award for our region. At the end of May your branch school team attended the National school's seminar which was the first in person seminar since Covid.

Crikey May was busy!

June saw us attending Local Government Conference, National Delegate Conference and supporting our sister unions in the RMT union.

June also saw Richard win his seat on the service Group Exec, Rich provides us with regular updates from the SGE.

In July we held our first in person Health and Safety training we invited our EMAS colleagues and extended our friendship and inter branch work with the EMAS branch.

Dennis and Ian supported the Social Care Lobby day with our Social Care workers in the Council House.

Late in July and throughout August we held our NJC workshops across many workplaces, it's always good to get out of the office and meet with our members especially when we had sunshine and could hold the events outside.

Also in August, I met a fantastic young man called Curtis Coy who works at Stores Road he has since become our Black members officer and as 2023 is the year of the black worker the quicker Curtis gets his training secured the better. Curtis has a lived experience of negative behaviours and is determined to bring change he has shared a range of stories with myself and his colleagues - his honest talking has inspired many and already started change. I personally have learned from Curtis.

Later in August Thompsons came to the branch and met with the Equal Pay claimants. Thompsons have also visited the branch on Tuesday of this week for us to get prepared for our Court dates later in the year.

September saw the Branch have a major role as a sponsor in Derby Pride led by Richard.

Our Local organiser Matt and myself set off on a 2 day private sector care home rally as part of the regions front line fortnight. We visited 44 private sector care homes in 2 days!

Your branch officers and many stewards attended a Training session on how to be a good Trans Ally - this training has already proved to be beneficial to our membership.

We also started to support the CWU and our posties with their strike action.

In October we proudly supported the Diwali event, the event raises money for disadvantaged children in Derby to take part in sport. We also held a show racism the red card event at Stores Road this was a huge success and real life conversations have started to make a difference. Four branch officers attended disabled members conference which gives our branch officers a better understanding of the many issues our disabled members face in the workplace.

October also saw me become a Grandma to my first grandson Hudson.

November 2022 saw the Branch Attend the Work Stress network conference, which Julie and Richard have leading roles within the network. Don't underestimate the damage work stress can cause.

November also saw us celebrate stars in our Schools over 60 schools across Derby had a visit, cakes, treats, notice board packs and we had a couple of hidden heroes too. Having 3 branch officers with a school back ground we do enjoy saying thank you to all school support staff.

I attended the TUC awards dinner and proudly accepted an award for the Protect our Jobs campaign on behalf of the region.

In December our young members officer Josh attended young members conference and Josh also spoke at conference, I know how nerve wracking this can be.

We also put on a Christmas dinner for our retired members, Mrs Claus also visited, and each retired member went home with a small gift.

We also supported the secret Santa project and supported a local young person in crisis to receive Christmas gifts.

We also supported our own UNISON Branches across the NHS with solidarity in there strikes.

We then entered 2023...

January 2023 Julie arranged a successful pensions event and held another one on Monday of this week. The pensions events gives our members the chance to get the most up to date information regarding there own circumstances. Anyone who knows Julie will know she is on countdown 32 weeks to go...

February 2023, we had a visit from Paul Nowak General Secretary and Lee Barron Regional secretary for the midlands from the TUC, Paul and Lee spoke to library members, young members, branch officers and The Branch Secretary from East Midlands Ambulance branch about the most recent ballot. We as a Branch will be supporting our colleagues in EMAS as they enter Strike action.

We've just celebrated some UNISON love with TUC love unions week in which we launched our helping hands project - we donated tea break items to Stores road - Julie and I have joined the Cost of living action group with Derby City Council in a bid to share information far and wide regarding where help is available for anyone struggling, if you find yourself in a pickle please contact the branch in confidence – we have an amazing welfare officer who can signpost you and support with pay plan applications and there for you applications. Tonight's raffle money will all be going to the UNISON there for you charity, every pound will go towards a helping UNISON member.

Four of us have just come back from Women's Conference, You won't be surprised to hear that women's conference had a huge debate on the cost of living crisis and the impact on women. It's frightening!!

More often women go without to provide for family and put others needs above their own. Which makes the work we do with the period poverty work more valuable than ever before.

The biggest part of the branch work since returning from the Christmas break has been the budget cuts within Derby City Council - 150 plus job losses predicted - all job losses are awful, stressful and cause so much stress for those impacted. The recent mess surrounding the community managed library closures is just one example of poor decision making. Closing. not closing, all staying open, 6 staying open, all closing to now all remaining open for a year its like the oaky Coky but without the fun!!- more evidence of the left hand does not know what the right hand is doing. The library staff all unison members may have another few months of work but the reality is this is a temporary pause in the nightmare of job losses. It's not good enough! And at branch level we will continue to ask the difficult questions and question poor management. Because our members deserve better!!

The branch has done an amazing job of covering all the achieving changes across Derby City Council. It's not been an easy task but all branch officers pulled together and ensured all our members had a UNISON body in all meetings. Huge thanks to Julie and Emma who ensured all meetings were covered while I was off poorly.

When I look back over our year, I realise we do so much, a lot of what we do is what many expect of a UNISON branch officer – sickness meetings, grievances, disciplinary meetings etc but when a member gets in touch with us in the early days of a situation a good old fashioned cup of tea conversation can sort out many situations before they get into any formal process. I am a huge fan of a cup of tea conversation.

We are a small team at Derby City, we all wear many different hats and try to have some fun along the way - tonight is our way of thanking you, thanking you for being part of the Derby City Branch Family.

No idea what the next year holds for any of us but what I do know is we will work harder for our members than we ever have before.

Have a fantastic evening.

Cheers!

Regional Officer Report – Emma Roberts 187 employers from DCC to small private firms, care homes etc

DCC162 job losses but down to 100 still a lot to do. Thanks to Ian Middleton for covering most of the meetings – a big shout out to him as he did most of the work.

Libraries – a farce lots of further work to be done.

Ashgate Nursery- hopefully positive outcome for EIA – consultation ends and encourage anyone who lives in Derby to respond.

Thanks to Matt for his help as part of the team.

Council Cabinet meet on 1st March

MHA received a 10% pay rise, I am the lead on this.

Real pleasure working with this branch – we have a tough year ahead concentrating on recruitment and activists – big focus

Endorsement of branch officers – all endorsed.

Endorsement of stewards, Health and safety reps, ULRS – all endorsed.

Finance will be a deficit this year, spent money on members – all paperwork within the pack.

Honorarium agreed

Becky and Richard recognised the hard work done by Julie walker.

Excuse me Rich, I've got an Any Other Business item,

So tonight we want to recognise the hard work and dedication one person in particular gives to our / your branch.

To get to this moment and it still be a secret is a bloody huge achievement. You really have no idea... to get something past this woman feels like a huge win in itself.

There is a lady in this room who keeps us all in order in her own unique way, she has worked under a few branch secretaries a few branch chairs and has seen an array of branch officers and stewards come through our unison family doors, and worked with many regional and National staff.

My first time meeting this force of nature was in 2015 - she was walking through the old unison office reception shouting receipts at hundreds of teaching assistants and school support staff... immaculately dressed like she had stepped off a plane... I quivered and thought to myself if I ever have to give that lady a receipt I'll do it straight away - I am not scared to admit I still panic if I misplace a receipt and believe me I will find it!! - and I know I'm not the only one.

Julie Walker wears many hats at Branch - some even at the same time! She is an impressive Steward, Health and Safety Rep, organiser, campaigner, and mentor to the stewards at Derby Homes - I've witnessed Julie turn what seems to be the most difficult situation into a win for members, I've heard her tell managers off - in the only way Julie can and you just know they won't ever use that line or phrase to another employee again. I've heard managers ring Julie and say can I do this... once Julie has gasped and said absolutely not, Julie will always put a solution forward, I've also seen Julie say to members this is a bloody mess - we're going to work together to dig for mitigation - she always "finds a something" Julie is an inspiration, incredible and powerful woman and well known for saying things like

It is what it is...

Let's sort it..

There's always a something...

And

I need cake!

I'm popping next door - next door is the local shop which I think has doubled its takings since unison moved into Roosevelt and now stocks not only Julie's favourite wine but also her daughters favourite wine too... and Julies wine has a place on the top shelf.

But most importantly to our branch she is our Treasurer, our Julie, having a good honest Treasurer speaks volumes. We don't go without at branch - we have the best resources to represent and support our members and our members don't go without either if a members workplace needs branch input it gets it!! Be it treats to cheer a team up, unisons freebies, tea and biscuits our members get it!

Our bills are paid, and we proudly support local charities.

None of which would be possible without Julie's watchful eye on the pennies! Or the pencies as she calls them.

The cost-of-living crisis has impacted the branch and Julie has managed this extremely well.

So tonight, I want to honour our branch treasure of we think @15 years, Julie is also my right hand woman in the branch.

Julie Walker you are an absolute gem, I couldn't possibly list everything you do for the branch as people need to eat and drink and dance, so...

can we please raise our glasses to Julie Walker and Thank her for the dedication to Unison Derby City Branch.

Thank you Julie Walker.

Guest Speaker Chris Jenkinson

Always look forward to coming to this AGM

54 branches make up the East Midlands Huge thanks to all officers and stewards for all you do.

Food banks – Teresa Coffey and a turnip comment. This is a land of tory poverty we are dealing with.

Dock workers went on strike for 5 weeks and they won

We have come a long way – Minimum wage social housing etc but we are taking a step back NHS is under threat.

This branch will be with you all the way.

Chair closing the meeting.

Thanks so much for all you do, branch officers, stewards and members.

Any ideas come and talk to us – we welcome new ideas

NJC negotiations are ongoing and we will keep you informed on this

I personally will raise any issues on the SGE

Solidarity to all UNISON members striking.

Meeting closed 19.37