



GREENWICH UNISON

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

In person meeting Tuesday 27th February 2024

4pm Council Chambers

Virtual meeting Thursday 29th February 2024 7.30 pm

AGENDA

Welcome and thanks to everyone for attending

1. Branch Officers Election results

(Virtual meeting only – We welcome a Speaker from Barnet Council to discuss the pay inequality for social workers in outer London)

2. Branch Report
3. Finance Report
4. Motions:

Greenwich LG Branch 3500 propose the following motions for Agreement at this AGM. If the total of these meetings are not quorate these will be ratified at Regional Council.

Motion 1

Branch Committee recommends that the Branch pay an Honorarium of £4000 to Clara Mason our Assistant Branch Secretary for Schools and Colleges, in view of her outstanding contribution to UNISON as a whole and our Branch in particular, to also reflect her status as a low paid member who is paid far less than the other Branch Officers on facility time and to recognise that she works far more hours helping our members than she is paid for.

Motion 2

Branch Committee recommends that the Branch Pays an Honorarium of £1500 to Elaine O'Flynn our outgoing Branch Chair and our new Branch Health and Safety Officer in recognition of her outstanding contribution to the Branch as Branch Chair and her loss of Income caused by her having to take unpaid time off to complete her Health and Safety Qualification which will be of the utmost benefit to the Branch in her new role with us.

5. Regional Officer Report
6. Questions 'Ask your Branch Officer'
7. AOB

AGM Pack contents: Election Results: List of Branch Officers for 2024

Motions

Branch Action Report

Audited Annual Financial Return

All Branch Reports can also be found on website including our Annual financial return at www.greenwichunison.org.uk



Greenwich UNISON Branch Officer Posts 2024

| Post | First Name | Surname | Contact Details |
|----------------------------------------------------------|------------|---------|-------------------------------------|
| Branch Secretary | Simon | Steptoe | simon@greenwichunison.org.uk |
| Branch Chair | Clara | Mason | clara@greenwichunison.org.uk |
| Assistant Branch Secretary Royal Borough of Greenwich | Jay | Lowman | jay@greenwichunison.org.uk |
| Assistant Branch Secretary Schools and Colleges | Clara | Mason | clara@greenwichunison.org.uk |
| Assistant Branch Secretary Private Sector | Vacant | | |
| Branch Treasurer | Debbie | Baker | deborah.baker@royalgreenwich.gov.uk |
| Branch Health and Safety Officer | Elaine | O Flynn | elaine@greenwichunison.org.uk |
| Branch Equalities Officer | Julie | Allcott | |
| Welfare Officer | Jay | Edley | jedley@hotmail.co.uk |
| Birchmere Convenor | Jamie | Breen | jamie.breen@royalgreenwich.gov.uk |
| Education Officer | Vacant | | |
| Communications Officer | Paul | Murphy | |
| Retired Members Officer | Richard | Mann | Mann362@btinternet.com |
| Labour Link Officer | Vacant | | |

Branch Staff:

Main Number 07425360008

Retention and Recruitment Officer & Rep for the Private Sector: Linda Delieu

Linda@greenwichunison.org.uk 07824 532966

Office Manager: Pauline Revell-Bowles: (pauline.revell-bowles@royalgreenwich.gov.uk)

Tracey Higgins – tracey@greenwichunison.org.uk (Rep School catering & Cleaning) 07881 384397

Greenwich Unison Finance Report 2024

We started the year with a deficit and knew we had to be prudent with our Finances. Although the Branch has healthy reserves, our current account which built up a healthy balance during Lockdown was being depleted due to reductions in membership which is still a concern for the Branch.

We were unable to find people who were free to attend the National Delegate Conference in 2023 and this has resulted in a penalty from our Branch Funding which we appealed unsuccessfully.

We have been prudent throughout 2023 and changed our mobile phone contract to SIM only which resulted in savings. Due to staff working mainly from home this has bought about further savings and we finished the year with a reduction in the deficit which we are relieved about. We still need to be mindful but our reserve account is attracting a good interest rate of approximately £7000 per year which we can draw upon should it be necessary.

Our Branch Secretary is determined that we use our budget where possible to reward our members. We do this by holding several events throughout the year- lunch time Pizza events have become legendary in The Woolwich Centre and are well received. We also do 'Breakfast at Birchmere' and again we have a very good attendance. Then we have our annual free Coaches to the Coast in August each year. We can't guarantee the weather but everyone who comes along enjoys themselves.

This year will be challenging. RBG are in deficit and there are likely to be cuts to all services. This could mean further losses in membership. It is imperative that we maintain our membership and attract new members. We must all do our bit to get the message out that staff need a strong union more than ever so we can mitigate job losses and continue to fight to maintain decent public services.

**General Fund Income and Expenditure Account
for Greenwich (Local Government & Grant Aid) Branch**

For the year ended 31 December 2023

| All Items | 2023 (£) | 2023 (£) | 2022 (£) | 2022 (£) |
|--------------------|----------|-------------|----------|-------------|
| Income | | | | |
| Total Income | | £114,389.07 | | £83,242.58 |
| Expenditure | | | | |
| Total Expenditure | | £123,892.69 | | £109,873.45 |
| Surplus/Deficit | | -£9,503.62 | | -£26,630.87 |

**Consolidated Balance Sheet
for Greenwich (Local Government & Grant Aid) Branch**

For the year ended 31 December 2023

| All Items | 2023 (£) | 2023 (£) | 2022 (£) | 2022 (£) |
|------------------------------------------------|----------|-------------|----------|-------------|
| Fixed Assets | | | | |
| Total Fixed Assets | | £1,309.17 | | £1,988.16 |
| Current Assets | | | | |
| Total Current Assets | | £392,343.18 | | £400,270.51 |
| Current Liabilities | | | | |
| Total Current Liabilities | | £1,230.88 | | £333.58 |
| Net Current Assets | | £391,112.30 | | £399,936.93 |
| Total Assets | | £392,421.47 | | £401,925.09 |
| Accumulated Funds | | | | |
| Accumulated General Fund at year end | | £8,148.01 | | £17,651.63 |
| Accumulated Industrial Action Fund at year end | | £384,273.46 | | £384,273.46 |
| Total Funds at End of the Year | | £392,421.47 | | £401,925.09 |

Authorisation Sheet

Branch Name

Greenwich (Local Government & Grant Aid) Branch

Branch Region

3

Branch Number

3500

Key balances:

| | | |
|------------------------------------------------|-------------------|---------------|
| Locally collected subs owed to National Office | AR1 | £12.00 |
| Tax deducted or paid on Investment Income | (AR2 + AR3 + AR4) | £0.00 |

| | | BalBFwd | Inc | Exp | Close Bal |
|------------------------|-----|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------------|
| General Fund | AR2 | £17,651.63 | £114,389.07 | £123,892.69 | £8,148.01 |
| Premises Fund | AR3 | £0.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 |
| Industrial Action Fund | AR4 | £384,273.46 | £0.00 | £0.00 | £384,273.46 |
| Total Funds | | | | | £392,421.47 |

Branch Treasurer's Statement

I certify that for the year ended December 2023, the branch has kept proper accounting records and maintaining a satisfactory system of control of accounting records, cash holdings and all the receipts and remittances as required by Section 28* of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992. I also certify that Forms AR2 to AR5 include all Branch Union funds and agree with the accounting records.

Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____

Branch Auditors' Statement

We certify that we have audited the branch accounts as set out on Forms AR2 to AR5 . We have conducted our audit in accordance with the "Guidance Notes for Branch Auditors" issued by UNISON National Office and we have received all the information and explanations we required. In our opinion the branch has kept proper accounting records and maintained a satisfactory system of control of the accounting records, cash holdings and all the receipts and remittances as required by Section 28* of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 and Forms AR2 to AR5 include all Branch Union funds and agree with the accounting records . In our opinion this return gives a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the branch as at 31 December 2023 and of its transactions for the year then ended.

| <u>Auditor 1</u> | <u>Auditor 2</u> | <u>Relation of the auditor:</u> |
|-------------------------------|------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| Name: <u>BARRY LYONS</u> | Name: _____ | Member / Non-member (Delete as appropriate) |
| Signature: <u>Barry Lyons</u> | Signature: _____ | |
| Date: <u>15-2-24</u> | Date: _____ | |

The branch auditors should preferably be members of the branch, although some branches will use external accountants instead. The branch auditors must not be members of the branch committee, as this would lead to a conflict of interest.

Date printed:

15/02/2024

Elaine O'Flynn Outgoing Branch Chair

I have enjoyed supporting the Branch Secretary with the Leadership of the Branch and chairing our committee meetings giving me a greater insight into how the Branch runs and supports its members.

I have been busy at Birchmere with health and safety issues. A wall that was in danger of collapsing had it been knocked with a bin. We have raised the issue of the dangers of taking bins from cupboards where there are electrical circuits or other utilities and Staff are no longer required to take bins from these cupboards. We have several locations where it was dangerous to walk a loaded bin down a ramp, and this was highlighted to management. I continue to support members in sickness reviews, Disciplinarys etc.

Due to time constraints I am now relinquishing the position of Chair and taking the role of Health & Safety Officer as this is where my interest is. I am studying for a Health and Safety Diploma with UNISON to better support our members to provide a safe and effective working environment. I wish Clara Mason luck in her new position as Chair and will continue to support the Branch in recruitment.

Tracey Higgins – Branch employed Rep: Private Sector; Catering and Cleaning (Term Time Only)

Another busy year for Catering and Cleaning Staff. I work hard to ensure that any company that is subject to TUPE from another company get their same terms and conditions transferred. I am working with the new catering companies to ensure that the London Living Wage is applied correctly and from the right date. I am currently locked in discussions with Caterlink, who are not paying the LLW to staff. For people on lower incomes these details are important. My recruitment figures are one of the best in the Branch and I am proud of my record.

We have successfully obtained an additional payment for the staff in Passenger Services who drive the complex needs buses to schools. These people take very vulnerable children to school and back each day, and have to be trained to ensure the children are safe and cared for, often administering medical procedures en route. The staff have never been offered any additional payment for this training and the additional responsibility until UNISON raised it as an issue. We are still ironing out the finer details of the offer, but it is at least now recognised that the staff should be valued and rewarded for this important work.

I continue to cover sickness reviews, disciplinarys and grievances. In most cases we make the difference between people being dismissed or keeping their job. It is a fact that without a Union to represent you, it is more likely you will be dismissed. We are there to ensure that procedures are followed correctly, as well as support our members through a difficult time.

Clara Mason, Assistant Branch Secretary for Schools, Colleges and Nursery's.

It has been unusually quiet within schools in relation to reorganisations with very few coming in this year.

We continue to see the budget pressures and drop in pupil numbers on schools and seeing reductions in support staff where some schools are not recruiting when staff leave, we are also seeing some schools struggling to recruit with pay continuing to be an issue – support staff are some of the lowest paid staff and vulnerable to job cuts.

A reoccurring issue our schools members face are the challenging and at times violent behavior of pupils they support. We are seeing an increase of members being injured and requiring time of to recover – we have had a number of instances where members have had long periods off as a result of injuries or the severe impacting on mental health and being penalized financially, we have successfully fought for members to receive injury at work payments in line with individual schools/Academy policies.

We continue to support members facing sickness reviews, disciplinaries, bullying and discrimination in the workplace – we do urge members to make contact as soon as possible for us to best support you through any of the processes- if you are not sure if we can help call and ask no question or situation is too small or trivial for us to help you with.

The Branch are pushing the issue on London Weighting where we are paid the outer London rate compared to teachers who are paid the Inner London rate we have taken this to our regional teams and committees as Greenwich is not the only borough to be impacted, we will continue to raise this and push for The Greater London region of UNISON to support us and push the council to make the first move getting this issue resolved.

We have finally had success with the two tier payments of support staff at one of our Academies where support staff at one school of three within the same trust are paid a grade lower – we are due to meet with the Academy this month to finalise the changes need to bring them in line with their fellow support staff. We are also looking at the other Academies and gathering necessary information and with our new success we hope will force the other Academies to follow suit – we are also looking at the council maintained schools and will be working on these to see how many schools are still being paid at scale 2.

I am leading on with both the local authority and schools/Academies to implement a kinship/special guardianship policy or to add them into the adoption leave policy an issue which is personal to me but very much has highlighted the real struggles our fellow members and colleagues face when asked to take on children of relatives and/or friends. I have now taken this up with our Union and London Councils in hopes that we see a positive change.

I look forward to continuing in my role as ABS for schools, colleges and nurseries whilst taking on the new challenge of Branch Chair for 2024

Jay Lowman Assistant Branch Secretary

2023 has been a tough year. RBG have announced they will need to make 33.7 million pounds of cuts so 2024 is going to be even more challenging. It is so important to be a member of a Union during these times.

Reorganisations

RBG are refusing to give TU's the assimilation of staff affected within a reorganisation, meaning Greenwich Unison can no longer contact our members directly to discuss any concerns they may have, as we don't know which members are affected. If you are a Greenwich UNISON member and you are going through a reorganisation you will need to contact Greenwich unison directly or contact myself via email, jay@greenwichunison.org.uk

RBG are stating that GDPR prevents them from issuing assimilation lists of staff, Greenwich UNISON plan to challenge this at a corporate level.

There will I am sure be many more reorganisations to come, as RBG try to balance the books, Greenwich UNISON will do all in our power to protect members jobs.

Settlement agreements

Greenwich UNISON have negotiated several settlement agreements for our members due to incorrect over time allowances being paid, we also have another four cases across RBG where members are owed back pay due to not being paid correctly, if any member feels this may affect them please don't hesitate to contact me.

Staff facilities

We are aware that mess rooms for our streets and caretaking staff in the borough are not fit for purpose, for instance, no hot running water, roofs that leak, infestation of mice, to mention just a few issues, we have informed DRES that we will carry out health and safety inspections ourselves if these issues are not resolved within weeks not years as has been the case.

Reasonable adjustments

I have dealt with several case's in 2023 where members have requested reasonable adjustments for disability which is supported by occupational health but the adjustments take months if not years to put in place, this is not acceptable, if any Greenwich UNISON members are having issues getting reasonable adjustments in place, please contact me.

Linda Delieu. Paid Branch Officer.

Representative for the Private Sector and Recruitment and Retention Officer.

The past twelve months have been extremely busy as the situation within the care sector has deteriorated from poor to absolutely dire.

Staff are not valued and when things go wrong in care homes the preferred route for management appears to be 'blame the staff' - no listening no learning and certainly no caring!

This Government have created problems with migration that were not there while we were members of the EU - and again care staff are blamed for all that goes wrong.

Zero hour contracts provide nothing for staff but are a great way for unscrupulous employers to cut corners and make even money!

Other employers such as GLL are examples of a business that really needs to be listening and learning - same issues in different workplaces dealt with completely differently? (If at all)

I hope that our members take advantage of all the many benefits of being a member of the biggest, and in my opinion best, public sector union and consider becoming more active within your workplace and/or the branch.

After 14 years of this Government our local authorities are at breaking point and we need to stand together.

We have brilliant workplace reps who go above and beyond every day - and we really do make a difference.

Action plan

Greenwich (Local Government & Grant Aid) Branch (3500)

Organising

Find out more. Health branches (www.unison.org.uk/at-work/health-care/big-issues/race-for-equality/). Other service groups at www.unison.org.uk/get-help/knowledge/discrimination/race-discrimination/

Targets, objectives and other information

To make challenging racism an agenda item and appropriately train reps and officers

Assigned to

BS + BC

To be completed by

21 Dec 2024

Status

Open

Improve member participation in UNISON branch

Targets, objectives and other information

Get greater participation in Branch Committee. Branch to spend time encouraging members to update email addresses. Branch to work with region to encourage more activists to use Movement communicating mechanism, particularly if needed for pay ballot/consultation.

Assigned to

Branch Secretary and Branch Committee

To be completed by

31 Dec 2024

Status

Open

Bargaining and Equalities

No Action Plans have been created for this section.

Campaigning and Influencing

To support the NJC Pay campaign and encourage member participation.

Targets, objectives and other information

Branch to actively support Pay campaign and encourage members participation - particularly in ballot, work with Region and encourage activists to use Movement, to try and reach 50% response needed if there is a ballot.

Assigned to

Branch Secretary and Branch Committee

To be completed by

31 Dec 2024

Status

Open

Campaign to change Inner and Outer London pay rates for London Weighting

Targets, objectives and other information

Branch wish to campaign to change London Weighting – there is a discrepancy with Inner and Outer pay – Branch believe it should be one pay band (move Outer up to Inner rate). In Greenwich particularly noticeable for schools where support staff are classed as Outer London whilst Teaching staff- in a different pay bargaining group – are classed as Inner London.

Assigned to

Branch Secretary and Branch Committee

To be completed by

31 Dec 2024

Status

Open

Building an Efficient and Effective Union

Develop existing and new stewards, equality training, member learning.

Targets, objectives and other information

Check up on existing stewards – are they active – refresher training. Find new stewards. Look to recruit, train, mentor and develop new reps. Do existing reps have equality training will look to develop this. Member learning - will look at ways to advertise opportunities for member learning through the union. continue 2024 - aim to recruit more activists.

To be completed by

31 Dec 2024

Status

Open

Plan to improve young members recruitment and participation.

Targets, objectives and other information

Map where we have young members, and contact them encourage them to become more active, use mapping to identify potential young member recruitment. Look to create young members group and officer post. Work with Local Organiser from Region to help identify, support and mentor.

Assigned to

Branch Secretary and Branch Committee, and Region

To be completed by

31 Dec 2024

Status

Open

Improve Branch capacity to provide representation.

Targets, objectives and other information

Make sure our new stewards are trained so they can undertake more lower-level representation for absence and investigations -ongoing.

Assigned to

Branch Secretary and Branch Committee

To be completed by

31 Dec 2024

Status

Open

Future of the Organising Framework

No Action Plans have been created for this section.

To be completed by

21 Dec 2024

Status

Open

Continue with recruitment plan - will update mapping of branch

Targets, objectives and other information

Mapping of public, private and community and voluntary sectors continue be updated. Branch will continue to recruit in all areas, the council, its associated companies GS Plus and GLL, Schools - LA and academies, FE college, Private sector- social care and community and voluntary. Mapping to be updated in all areas. Regular recruitment events to be held at main locations- Woolwich Centre and Birchmere Depot. Branch to work with Local Organiser from Region.

Assigned to

Branch Secretary and Branch Committee, and Region

To be completed by

24 Dec 2024

Status

Open

Find out more about data protection training at <https://e-learning.unison.org.uk/>

Targets, objectives and other information

Branch to look at Branch officers who haven't had training yet- or need refresher.

Assigned to

Branch Secretary and Branch Committee

To be completed by

31 Dec 2024

Status

Open

Succession planning

Targets, objectives and other information

Branch need to think about succession for Branch Employed staff; Branch secretary and other positions. Need to look at rep base and encourage them to think about officer positions - training and mentoring and support required.

Assigned to

Branch Secretary and Branch Committee

Campaigning and Influencing

To support the NJC Pay campaign and encourage member participation.

Targets, objectives and other information

Branch to actively support Pay campaign and encourage members participation - particularly in ballot, work with Region and encourage activists to use Movement, to try and reach 50% response needed if there is a ballot.

Assigned to

Branch Secretary and Branch Committee

To be completed by

31 Dec 2024

Status

Open

Campaign to change Inner and Outer London pay rates for London Weighting

Targets, objectives and other information

Branch wish to campaign to change London Weighting – there is a discrepancy with Inner and Outer pay – Branch believe it should be one pay band (move Outer up to Inner rate). In Greenwich particularly noticeable for schools where support staff are classed as Outer London whilst Teaching staff- in a different pay bargaining group – are classed as Inner London.

Assigned to

Branch Secretary and Branch Committee

To be completed by

31 Dec 2024

Status

Open

Building an Efficient and Effective Union

Develop existing and new stewards, equality training, member learning.

Targets, objectives and other information

Check up on existing stewards – are they active – refresher training. Find new stewards. Look to recruit, train, mentor and develop new reps. Do existing reps have equality training will look to develop this. Member learning - will look at ways to advertise opportunities for member learning through the union. continue 2024 - aim to recruit more activists.

Assigned to

Branch Secretary and Branch Committee