

**UNISON CYMRU/WALES
MINUTES OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE
17 SEPTEMBER 2009, THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, POWYS
COUNTY COUNCIL, LLANDRINDOD WELLS**

IN ATTENDANCE

Margaret Thomas	Anglesey County
Thelma Parry	Anglesey County
Jill Bird	Blaenau Gwent County
Jane Iles	Bridgend County (Chairperson)
John Hughes	Bridgend County
Edgar Gibbs	Caerphilly County
Gary Enright	Caerphilly County
Mark Turner	Cardiff County
Cathy Graham	Ceredigion County
George Nicholas	Ceredigion County
Mike Davies	City & County of Swansea
Malcolm Harrington	City & County of Swansea
David Hawkins	Conwy County
Sarah Taylor	Flintshire County
Ian Jones	Flintshire County
Patrick Morgan	Neath Port Talbot County
Dawn Abbott	Neath Port Talbot County
Jon Holmstrom	Newport City
Stephanie Davies	Newport City
Janet Wyer	Pembrokeshire County
Sheila Lewis	Powys County
A Gareth Jones	Powys County
Phil Carter	Vale of Glamorgan
Margaret Wilkinson	Vale of Glamorgan
Bob Harding	WJEC
Steve Hibbert	Wrexham County - Vice Chairperson
Lesley Robinson	Wrexham County
Mike Harriman	Service Group Executive Committee
Linda Webb Thornton	Service Group Executive Committee
Sian Stockham	National Executive Committee

1. WELCOME

Jane Iles, Chairperson welcomed delegates to the meeting.

Dominic MacAskill, Secretary, stated it was the first Cymru/Wales Local Government Committee meeting since Billy Liddon, former Chairperson, Rhondda Cynon Taff County Branch, had sadly passed away and Dominic read a tribute to Billy.

DM stated that an article had been placed in the Pontypridd Observer and submitted to UNISON U and FOCUS magazines by Dominic and Bill King, UNISON Convenor, Monmouthshire County Branch.

Cymru/Wales Local Government Committee delegates held a minute in silence in remembrance of Billy.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Mike Hayes NEC; Maria Derrick SGE; Karen Evans, Elaine Stevens Denbighshire, Tom Sexton, Torfaen; Rob Evans, Blaenau Gwent; Angie Shiels, Cardiff County; Helen Morton, Conwy County; Elaine Stevens, Denbighshire County;

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING 1ST JULY 2009

Silyn Roberts, Gwynedd, attended the meeting of 1st July. With this addition, the minutes were accepted as a correct record.

4. MATTERS ARISING - NOT ON THE AGENDA

There were no matters arising.

DM reported that the following from previous minutes were subject to action:

Report of Activities for 2008 - Letter to Heather Wakefield. Regarding issues that arose during the national industrial dispute. No response. DM to continue to pursue.

ACTION DM

Meeting the Organising Challenge - Paul O' Shea, Regional Secretary - to circulate letter regarding the roles of the RO's, AO's and LO's. DM to pursue.

ACTION DM

Car User Allowances - circulate information.

ACTION DM

OBJECTIVE 1 RECRUITING, ORGANISING AND REPRESENTING AND RETAINING MEMBERS
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**5. MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENT
- FIGURES AUGUST 2009 - CIRCULATED**

DM reported that recruitment figures for August for the Cymru/Wales region were poor compared to last year's figures and would not meet the regional target.

- DM stated that it was necessary to focus on the positive and not the negative aspects.
- There was a need to be better organised in schools -
- Jess Cromie, Regional Organiser, now responsible for schools' briefs

- Supplies of Schools' Newsletters were distributed at the meeting; Copies were to be obtained from branch offices and further copies to be ordered from the print department at the UNISON Swansea office, if required.

<p>OBJECTIVE 2 NEGOTIATING AND BARGAINING ON BEHALF OF MEMBERS AND PROMOTING EQUALITY</p>
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6. LOCAL GOVERNMENT PAY CLAIM

Branch Consultative Pay Ballot 2009 - circulated

JI gave a short briefing on the proposals of the current pay claim accepted by the NJC .

JI stated that it had been proposed at the last NJC meeting that in parallel to the pay claim, a separate claim be registered regarding improvements to maternity pay. JI urged branches to consult with members and respond accordingly. (Information to DM and the NJC).

- Next meeting of the NJC: 13 October

DM reported that following consultations with all 22 Local Government Branches regarding the Pay Ballot 2009, 22 of 23 branches had submitted information to DM and the NJC. DM thanked branches for submitting information.

DM referred to the 2010/11 pay claim and branch consultative returns and requested branches to consult with branches and provide responses, as appropriate.

ACTION BRANCHES

Vic Dennis, Pembrokeshire County, expressed concern regarding the accuracy of the voting figures; quoting the figures contained in the national newsletter.

DM advised delegates that he would check the figures contained in the national newsletter.

ACTION DM

7. EQUAL PAY/JOB EVALUATION/SINGLE STATUS

DM referred to the UNISON submission to the Health and Wellbeing Committee which had been circulated previously.

DM reported on latest developments and stated that Stefan Cross, 'No Win - No Fee' solicitors were now targeting Wales and had held a series of meetings in Carmarthenshire, carried out mass mailings, placed advertisements in newspapers, and were now targeting the Gwent area.

DM referred to the circular sent by Dave Prentis, General Secretary, stating that Stefan Cross had withdrawn all sex discrimination claims against UNISON.

DM emphasised that the law had not changed and that all advice and procedures needed to be adhered to and that there was a need to ensure that UNISON representatives attended all Stephan Cross meetings.

Delegates discussed job evaluation and the new structures, which were progressing in a number of branches.

Delegates requested information regarding Pay Modelling Training Courses.

ACTION DM

8. MAKING THE CONNECTIONS UPDATE - REPORT

DM reported that Darron Dupre, Regional Organiser, had met with Mid Wales Central Plus Area Committee.

DM further reported that the South East Wales Project was progressing to finality and we were now arranging to meet with the other six authorities. Peter Short, Regional Organiser, had been appointed as the Lead Organiser.

Jl reported that the South East Wales Consortium had met with Will McLean, Employer Coordinator, on 16 September and had discussed the Management of Change Document. Only four Trade Union branches were represented at the meeting. Jane urged all branches in the ten authorities in the south east Wales area to attend meetings.

Steve Hibbert had attended the APSE Conference, Cardiff on 9 September. Brian Gibbons, WAG Minister for Social Justice and Local Government, had given an address at the Conference.

Mark Turner, stated that Cardiff County Council was discussing management of change without any consultation. MT further reported that there was an intention to transfer staff using TUPE and that it was felt that members could not be balloted at this time.

DM stated that the Cardiff County situation was unique and advised that the only way out of the financial situation would be to cut public services. DM further advised that for members to take industrial action would not be appropriate and that other options should be explored.

DM advised that members should use the public arena to organise and campaign against cuts:

- A Million Voices for Change
- Positively Public
- Use resources available ie General Political Fund - Regional Pool.
- Appoint a dedicated campaign coordinator
- Organise in the community

Mike Harriman, SGE, highlighted the merits of the use of the 'Exchange Wales' software system from WAG.

Delegates outlined situations in their respective areas.

9. SCHOOL SUPPORT STAFF FORUM - WALES' CONFERENCE

draft agenda previously circulated -Schools' Newsletters distributed

DM stated that the lengthy agenda for the schools Conference showed the number of issues facing UNISON members in schools and urged branches to try to ensure that schools' representatives attended the conference.

DM stated that this was a high profile event for UNISON and that Jane Hutt, WAG Minister for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills was to address the Conference and would conduct a question and answer session.

DM advised branches that UNISON was the only trade union supporting school support staff and advised branches to lobby their respective AMs on the specific issues regarding school support staff. DM reported there was to be a Lobby of the WAG Assembly Building at 3.30pm following the conference.

DM outlined the key actions decided at the meeting of DCELLS on 22 July 2009.

- Look at the report prepared by Unison to the Health and Well Being Committee providing details on those local authorities that have concluded single status.
- Need to gain a better understanding to what extent single status/job evaluation exercise has been rolled out in all 22 LAs and how consistent pay and terms and conditions of service are as a result.
- Ask LAs through HR Directors/ADEW to look at the effect of what the job evaluation/single status exercise has had on the consistency of pay and terms and conditions and job descriptions in schools for support staff through the NJC levels against the wider context of remodelling. (wording of questions to be agreed with SS unions)
- To be followed with a meeting with ADEW/HR directors, WLGA, WAG, Support Staff Unions and Special Adviser to consider what we do once we have the information.
- WAG to discuss with lawyers what powers/future powers we would need if Wales were to setup a negotiating body similar to that of England.
- WAG to discuss with lawyers what powers already exist through the ASCL Bill.
- WAG to look into the possibility of the Negotiating body in England covering Wales also.
- Set up a meeting with Support Staff Unions, WAG, WLGA and Special Adviser with input invited from Support Staff Working Group in England to gain a better understanding of the Negotiating Body in England and to learn from their experiences.
- Discussion of compliance arrangements at Union Partnership Meeting on 8th September to take account of compliance with terms and conditions for support staff as well as teachers
- Review of professional standards, CPD and performance management to cover the whole workforce, including support staff, to reinforce cultural changes required to boost the status of support staff
- Support staff unions to inform WAG of examples of schools displaying best practice in respect of support staff deployment and terms and conditions.

DM to circulate key actions to branches.
Social Care

ACTION DM

The Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) Further Advice - circulated;
UNISON Cymru/Wales Response: 'Consultation - Proposed Social Care
Charges' - circulated.

- UK Social Care and Homecare Conference 23/24 February 2010

10. **CYMRU/WALES SECTORS & OCCUPATIONAL COMMITTEES/FORUMS - REPORTS/UPDATES**

DM presented reports from the various sectors and occupational groups.

- **Further Education and 6th Form Colleges**
(Lead Organiser - Eddie Gabrielsen)

The report was noted.

- **Careers Companies - Wales**
(Lead Organiser - Jeff Baker)

The report was noted.

- **Social Services Forum -**
(Lead Organiser - Donna Hutton)

The report was noted.

Peter Crews, Convenor, gave a further updates to the report:

PC referred to the WAG consultative documents which referred to future changes within social services.

PC stated that a C/W regional response was needed and that comments were to be submitted to Peter to refer to Amber Courtney, UNISON C/W Research Officer.

PC further reported:

- Shared services/SE Wales - out of county placements:
project running - PC requested branches to advise of any joint projects/generic workers.
 - PC urged branches to ensure that delegates attend the next Social Services Forum: 19 October, Llandrindod Wells.
 - PC reported that a Social Care in Wales Conference was being arranged for 2010.
- **School Support Staff Forum**
Lead Organiser - Jess Cromie

The report was noted.

- **Youth & Community Workers Forum**

There was no report.

- **Chief Officers & Senior Managers**

There was no report.

- **Housing**

There was no report

- **National Parks**

There was no report.

- **Fire and Rescue Service**

There was no report.

- **Meat Hygiene Service**

DM reported that the Meat Hygiene Service was to be deregulated at the latter end of 2010 and that the campaign was at an early stage. Simon Watson, LG National Officer, responsible for the Meat Hygiene Service was to ask for this to be placed on the agenda for the National/European Labour Link

DM reported that Amber Courtney, UNISON C/W Research Officer, had raised this issue with Labour AMs through the UNISON Cymru/Wales Labour Link forum.

DM further reported that Alan Davies, Labour AM, South West Wales was to raise this matter with the appropriate WAG Minister.

Delegates requested a list of chairpersons of all Cymru/Wales Sectors and Occupational Sectors/Groups/Forums etc.

ACTION DM

11. **REPORTS**

- **National Executive Council**

There was no report available.

- Next NEC meeting 9 December

- **Local Government Service Group Executive
(Mike Harriman, Maria Derrick, Linda Webb Thornton)**

The report was noted.

Mike Harriman further reported:

- policy weekend was to be held at the end of September
- 'Service Group Conference' would possibly be on the agenda as there were concerns regarding the lack of motions submitted to conference.
- Devolution/devolution protocol also on the agenda for discussion.

- **National Joint Council - (Robert Evans, Jane Iles)**

The report was noted.

**12. LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE TRAINING
23 October - South Wales; 3 November - North Wales**

This item had been covered previously on the agenda.

13. JOINT COUNCIL FOR WALES (PROVINCIAL COUNCIL)

NJC for Wales

DM reported that the issue of an NJC for Wales was to be discussed at Staff Side meeting of the JCW on 29 - 30 October.

DM stated that as the C/W LG Committee had agreed to explore the possibility of an NJC for Wales, it was necessary to have a full discussion/debate regarding this issue. DM therefore suggested that a meeting of the NJC for Wales Group be convened to plan strategy etc.

DM stated that he had spoken with Douglas Black, Head of Local Government, Scottish Region, who had stated that he would be happy to host a delegation from the C/W LG NJC for Wales Group.

DM was to discuss the final agenda items for the meeting with JI and SH.

ACTION DM

<p>OBJECTIVE 3 CAMPAIGNING AND PROMOTING UNISON ON BEHALF OF MEMBERS</p>

**14. REPORT BACK -
MEETING WITH BRIAN GIBBONS, WELSH ASSEMBLY MINISTER
FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT - 17 AUGUST 2009**

DM reported that Making the Connections and the Shared Services Agenda had been discussed with the Minister and that he had restated UNISON's position on this issue.

15. CAMPAIGN TO DEFEND JOBS AND SERVICES

Branches were urged to action the Financial Template Plan circulated by DM.

ACTION BRANCHES

Further, it was agreed that DM would write to all local authorities to request certain information under the Freedom of Information Act:

- Staffing & Post numbers;
- General Fund Revenue Account - Annual Revenue Outturn Returns
- Chief Officers' Pay
- Costs of Employing External Consultants & Agency Staff, and Total Staffing Costs
- Information of Councillor Allowances

ACTION DM

Delegates requested copies of the Freedom of Information standard letters that were to be sent out by DM.

ACTION DM

OBJECTIVE 4 DEVELOPING AN EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE UNION
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16. CYMRU/WALES CONSTITUTION

An amendment to the C/W constitution was detailed:

6.5 Add 'C/W' NEC Members

The amendment was accepted.

The Cymru/Wales Local Government Service Group Constitution to be submitted to Regional Committee for ratification.

ACTION DM

17. CYMRU/WALES SERVICE GROUP LIAISON COMMITTEE

Delegates discussed the establishment of the Cymru/Wales Services Liaison Committee and how LG could interface with Health and other groups.

Following discussion, it was agreed that the C/W Service Group Liaison Committee should encompass all service groups on the basis of two representatives from each group.

It was agreed that the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson of the C/W LG Committee would be representatives on the C/W Liaison Group.

It was agreed to raise as an item to the Cymru Wales Committee.

ACTION DM

**18. CYMRU/WALES LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE
THURSDAY 26 NOVEMBER & FRIDAY 27 NOVEMBER 2009**

DM outlined and discussed the programme for the workshops on Thursday 26 November.

**19. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS NOT COVERED UNDER THE
AGENDA ITEMS**

There was no other urgent business.

Details	ACTION
Report of Activities 2008: Pursue a response from Heather Wakefield, National Officer, to letter sent from C/W LG Committee regarding issues that arose during the national industrial dispute	DM
Meeting the Organising Challenge: Staffing Changes: Provide written clarification of the role of the UNISON ROS, AOs and LOs DM to pursue with Paul O'Shea	DM
Circulate information regarding car allowances	DM

**UNISON CYMRU/WALES LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE
17 SEPTEMBER 2009
ACTIONS SUMMARY**

Details	ACTION
6. LG PAY CLAIM - Ballot 2009 Figures contained in national newsletter of voting figures incorrect. 2010/11 PAY CLAIM Consult with members and feedback to DM	DM BRANCHES
7. EQUAL PAY/JOB EVALUATION STATUS Circulate information regarding Pay Modelling Courses	DM
9. SCHOOL SUPPORT STAFF FORUM - WALES' CONFERENCE Circulate Key Actions: DCELLS Meeting 22 July 2009	DM
10. C/W SECTORS & OCCUPATIONAL GROUPS/FORUMS Circulate list of chairpersons to C/W Sectors/Groups/Forums	DM
13. NJC FOR WALES Convene strategy meeting NJC for Wales Group Final agenda - DM with JI and SH	DM
15. CAMPAIGN TO DEFEND JOBS & SERVICES	

<p>Action Financial Template Plan</p> <p>Write to LAs to request information under Freedom of Information Act.</p> <p>Copies of letters to branches</p>	<p>BRANCHES</p> <p>DM</p>
<p>16. C/W CONSTITUTION</p> <p>Submit for Ratification to Cymru/Wales Committee</p>	<p>DM</p>
<p>17. C/W SERVICE GROUP LIAISON GROUP</p> <p>Raise as item to Cymru/Wales Committee</p>	<p>DM</p>
<p>18. C/W LG COMMITTEE 26-27 NOVEMBER</p> <p>Revise Timetable</p> <p>Review of Devolution Protocol - extend time</p> <p>Workshops - include</p> <p>National LG Service Group Conference 2009</p> <p>Motions 2010</p>	<p>DM</p>