**UNISON**

**Edinburgh Napier University Branch**

**Annual General Meeting**

**Minutes of the meeting held on 1st March 2013**

**Room H9 Merchiston Campus**

**Executive group present:**  Malcolm Mackay, John Wood, Afshin Dastafshan, Jodie Smith, Stephen McLelland, Elaine MacDonald, Maxine Wood.

**Branch members present:** counted as being 15 people

**In attendance:** Emma Phillips – full time officer for UNISON

1. Malcolm Mackay opened the meeting with a welcome and introduction. Advised that no proposals or nominations had been received prior to the meeting.
2. Emma Philips shared information and update on mergers between colleges and universities. This does not pose a threat at present. Emma brought to everyone’s attention the wider political picture regarding a yes vote for Scotland and course fees. At some stage we will need clarity for what independence means for Scotland and how this might impact on universities.
3. Emma Phillips spoke about recent dealings locally with Edinburgh Napier senior management. There have been concerns over the relationships between management and UNISON branch officials doing their work within the university. Issues have arisen around communication; at one point the Chair of Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) refused UNISON representatives the right to place their items on the agenda, as a result UNISON stopped attending JCC meetings. There is now work being carried out towards improving the relationship with the employer and we are seeking support from members in the strive for a good relationship to be redeveloped and established.
4. Malcolm Mackay spoke about the recent retirement of the Branch Chair Marilyn Philip. Malcolm provided a briefing and welcome for nominations from members and advised that training would be provided.
5. Malcolm Mackay advised members that branch officials are representing members once again at the JCC which over the past year we were unable to attend due to JCC Chair refusing our agenda items.
6. Malcolm Mackay provided a briefing of accredited representatives’ active in the branch currently and a briefing regarding an organisational change due to take place. No redundancies on the table but some reorganisation of staff expected.
7. John Wood provided a report on the branch finances. A summary of money paid into the branch and expenditure was circulated at the meeting as well as a balance sheet for the accounts which was produced by the branch accountant. It was noted that there had been a drop in the funds credited to the branch account from UNISON. Following discussion it was assumed this was due to our branch being deducted in funds for not sending representation to the National Delegate meeting in 2012.
8. John Wood informed members at the meeting this year we would be looking to use a proportion of branch funds to support charities and make donations. Any members undertaking sponsor work for charities are welcome to approach the executive team for some sponsorship from the branch.
9. Malcolm Mackay raised issue of recent credit card analysis of University spending. Further analysis of the report needed and further discussion. Members to be updated later this year.
10. Discussion took place around proposals for changes to policies. An update was provided lead by Malcolm Mackay around the work being carried out in this area from branch officials currently. Members were advised that the university is introducing a social Net Working/Social Media policy; there are some concerns over the proposed changes to the disciplinary policy. Negotiation on these policies continues and Malcolm advised further work to be carried out before the policies can be signed off from UNISON. The disability leave policy is due for discussion but not imminent yet. There was concern raised over the whistle blowing policy. Worry regarding this policy being truly confidential. Members anxious for this policy to be giving guarantee for confidentiality in order for whistle blowing to be considered.
11. One member raised concerns over staff being disciplined and the use of employee support. There is growing concern about the number of employees on employee support.
12. Another member raised concern over severance payments for senior managers and lower paid staff. There is a question around fairness and equity. One member raised whether a freedom of information (FOI) could be requested to provide more details on this topic. It was decided after consideration at the meeting that an FOI would most probably not provide the information needed to address this question adequately.
13. Annual General Meeting raffle was drawn and prize for nominations. Stephen McLelland was the lucky winner of the top prize of £50 for his nomination.
14. Afshin Dastafshan collected and collated all Nominations and advised members of the following:

* Afshin Dastafshan to be Branch Secretary and Steward
* Malcolm Mackay to be Steward and Health & Safety coordinator
* John Wood to be Steward
* Jodie Smith to be Branch Treasurer
* Stephen McLelland is currently undertaking TUC training for accreditation for Branch Stewardship
* Elaine MacDonald is a new Steward awaiting TUC Union Reps training
* Branch Chair currently remains vacant

1. The meeting was brought to a close; Malcolm Mackay gave thanks to everyone in attendance and for all contributions to the meeting.