

**MINUTES OF THE UNISON DEVON COUNTY BRANCH
EXETER AGM
HELD ON TUESDAY 2nd MARCH 2021, ZOOM**

	PRESENT: As per signing in sheet. In attendance: Lucy Roke (Minutes)	ACTION
1	Apologies: Lorraine Brown, Joanne Goldworthy, Graham Hamilton, Colin Lomax, John Mills, David Parks, Jane Snow, Carol Swiecicka,	
2	Minutes of 2020 AGM: Agreed Matters Arising No matters arising	
3	<p>Branch Business: Ratification of Stewards and Health & Safety Representative Ratified</p> <p>Election of Branch Officers Ratified</p> <p>SR said it would be very good to get some more officers. Every role is vital, but it would be very good if the branch could elect a H&S officer, women's officer and also a life long learning co-ordinator. SJ explained what a lifelong learning co-ordinator involves. AG has shown interest taking on this role with some guidance. SR is happy to take on welfare officer. – All agreed</p> <p>Election of SW Regional Council, National and Local Government Delegates</p> <p>We are not sure what is happening with conferences this year. Last year they were cancelled. We believe they will more than likely be online as this has worked for other smaller conferences, but we have not had any confirmation yet.</p> <p>Next regional council, SR is going to ask all stewards and H&S reps to attend. SR is happy to guide anyone if they need it. We need more people to attend. It should be virtual.</p>	
4	<p>Branch Treasurer's Report: -</p> <p>MD read out the Treasurer report. Because 2020 was a strange year it meant we have not spent much money. The auditors have signed off the accounts and they are accurate and correct. The biggest spend of the year was the AGM. We have not been able to set a budget this year as we do not know what income we will be receiving.</p>	

5	<p>Branch Chairperson Report –</p> <p>No chairperson report.</p>	
6	<p>Branch Secretary Report –</p> <p>The branch office closed last year on 17th March. The only time we have been into the office is to collect any post. We decided we were not going to put anyone at risk with face-to-face meetings. We will probably have more online meetings in the future as it has saved a lot more time as we have not needed to travel. The only downfall is not being able to sit down with the member especially when it is a sensitive issue. We will be opening the office at some point, but not sure when. We are not sure if this will even be 5 days a week, but probably not. We would need to make sure a risk assessment was in place and how to maintain distance. DCC have been trying to move us out of the Matford building for a while. We feel this may happen sooner than we hope.</p> <p>Regional office organised care packages to be sent out to care workers. It was very successful, and we will be rolling this out to others.</p> <p>We have had more welfare referrals than normal.</p> <p>Need more Stewards/H&S reps.</p> <p>The authority has not dismissed anyone who has had covid yet, but we are not sure how long this will last for.</p> <p>SR thanks everyone for all their help as this last year has been very different and difficult to normal.</p> <p>FB thanked the branch for all their hard work.</p>	
7	<p>Other Branch Officer's Reports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Retired Members Secretary – b) Young Members c) Black Members d) Ifracombe Trades Council –It was agreed to affiliate for another year. 	
8	<p>Potential issues over the coming year –</p> <p>NJC update. We have asked for a substantial increase with a minimum of 10%. Council staff on 1 or 2 have dropped below the living wage. We have asked for their pay to rise. It might sound like 10% is a lot but over the last 10 years there has been a very large pay cut. We also have a campaign which we are promoting to all members to lobby their own councillors. We have a draft letter. We are encouraging members to lobby their councillors.</p> <p>AB has said how there has been a lot of pressure to attend meetings face to face. It is becoming an issue as education have said, they are back to work so</p>	

	<p>why can't we have meetings face to face. SR will send a branch letter.</p> <p>Not sure what other issues we may have this year as it will be the aftermath of covid.</p> <p>RF been busy on the pension fund. Managed to achieve the vote on the investment committee to get greener issues raised. AB added that the council have tried to put a cap on exit payments, government have abandoned this but it may come back in another form. AB has said if there are any pension issues to contact to the branch.</p>	
9	F&GP Recommendations for Ratification	
10	Motions:	
11	<p>Members Question & Answer Session:</p> <p>RB – Are we pushing for front line workers to get the vaccine? SR believes this might be this month. All adult residential homes have been vaccinated. Private homes, 75% of social care staff have had their vaccine. It is not clear if teaching assistants will get the vaccine sooner. SR said we should send an email to all members. DF to forward the details on. It was asked if there will be a problem if someone refuses to have the vaccine? An employer cannot push someone to have the vaccine if they will react to it or if it is against their religion. We have not had a test case yet. If an employer does start threatening staff, please contact the branch.</p>	
12	<p>Any other business notified prior to the meeting:</p> <p>No other business</p>	