

**SUCU Annual General Meeting Minutes, Thursday 6th June 2019
Council Room, Firth Court, 1pm**

**Chair: Jess Meacham, SUCU Branch Vice President
Minutes: Jane Rodger, Branch Administrator**

Jess Meacham welcomed all to the meeting. Our local member, and former SUCU Pensions Officer Jo Grady has been elected as UCU General Secretary. A short video message from Jo was played and this was followed by a round of applause from members present.

1. Minutes of previous General Meetings

1.1. The minutes of the last AGM held 7th June 2018 were agreed as a true record, and there were no matters arising. Minutes were also agreed for the General Meetings held on the 7th March and the 9th May 2019.

2. Local subscription for 2019/20

2.1. Annual changes to the local subs rates to reflect annual changes to the UCU national subs (as agreed at our 2013 AGM) were noted. The changes take effect from 1 September each year. The change from 2018/19 depends on the band, from +2.25% for those on £60k+ to -2.25% for those below £5k. This is to implement a more proportional and fairer system.

3. Update on local collective grievance

3.1. The current local USS strike monies grievance was initiated by a member-led motion in October 2018. The motion placed the fault of the dispute jointly with USS and the Employer. SUCU submitted a local grievance to University management in December 2018. This had three demands: for a letter of apology, University management to account transparently for how strike deduction monies were spent, and to make a one off pay award to members who took strike action. Negotiations between management and Branch Officers started in February 2019, and so far, the second demand has been agreed. Accounts of strike deduction money spending have now been published on the University webpage.

3.2. Management's draft statement to go to all staff was projected onto a screen. Members were asked for their views on the statement, and what next steps should be taken by Branch Officers on their behalf.

Questions and comments from the floor included:

- We should push for a stronger apology.
- We should make it clear that we are not happy with this statement and publicly say that we are disappointed that University management were not brave enough to apologize.
- We should escalate the local grievance by taking it to ACAS.
- The wording of the statement is baffling and certainly will be to students.
- There should be a more positive and prominent statement about SUCU.
- The first sentence of the fourth paragraph referring strike breaking is not good.

3.3. After much debate two options were put to the vote: to escalate the dispute to ACAS, or for Branch Officers to return to management to work on improving the letter of apology. A majority voted in favour of the second option.

3.4. Thanks were given to all those who have been involved in negotiating a resolution to the grievance, and to the members who brought the original Branch motion.

4. Reports - To acknowledge the Annual Report and take questions

4.1. The full SUCU report was distributed to all members present, and is in the appendix below. Jess Meacham presented the President’s report on behalf of Sam Marsh. Local successes over the last year include securing support for migrant staff, tackling casualisation, and work on USS pension. We have also done our best to hold back University restructures and reviews which are painful and disruptive to our members. Sam’s report acknowledged the huge contributions made by, and gave special thanks to Daragh O’Reilly, Jon Benson, Sam Morecroft and Jess Meacham who are stepping down from their SUCU roles this year. Increasing use of disciplinary procedures, bullying issues and representing members as a result of University restructures were highlighted in personal casework themes. Jess asked members to consider joining the SUCU team of Personal Caseworkers. Training is available and we have a team of casework buddies in support. Jess presented the Treasurer’s Report on behalf of Pablo Stern. The accounts are approved by external auditors. She highlighted the local strike hardship fund. When it became clear that SUCU would not be making use of the remainder in the hardship fund, the monies were given to striking colleagues at Bradford College and to the National UCU Fighting Fund. Finally, members were asked to check that their membership details on [My UCU](#) are up to date. This is important so that we can ballot our members accurately. A vote of thanks was given to Jess Meacham, Jon Benson, Daragh O’Reilly and Sam Morecroft.

5. Elections

5.1. SUCU Branch Officers 2019-20. This was overseen by Jane Rodger (Branch Administrator) who acted as Returning Officer. Jane read out the nominees to the Branch Officer positions. Only one eligible candidate was nominated to each Officer vacancy, including two candidates who wish to share the role of Anti-casualisation Officer. It was proposed that in order to accommodate the role share that one of the Ordinary Committee positions is struck out for this year. Jane asked if there were any objections, and none were raised. Jane declared each candidate for Branch Officer roles elected. Members were asked to get in touch if they were interested in the vacant role of Pensions Officer.

President	Sam Marsh	Maths
Senior Vice President	Craig Brandist	Russian And Slavonic Studies
Vice President × 2	Emma Nagouse	SIIBS/301 Student Skills and Development Centre
	Robyn Orfitelli	School of English
Branch Secretary	Sarah Staniland	Chemistry
Treasurer	Pablo Stern	Retired
Membership Secretary	Rob Stanton	CICS
Equalities & Diversity Officer	Mark Pendleton	East Asian Studies
Anti-casualisation Officer	Steffan Blayney (share)	History
	Eda Yazici (share)	Sociological Studies
Communications Officer	Katy Fox-Hodess	Management School
Education Officer	Simon Stevens	History
Health & Safety Officer	Mick Ashman	School of Nursing and Midwifery
Pensions Officer	Vacant	
Personal Cases Secretary	Gillian Brown	Law
Post Graduate Researcher Officer	Will Hornett	Philosophy
Policy and Governance Officer	Lauren Selfe	Faculty of Engineering

5.2. SUCU Ordinary Committee 2019-20. This was overseen by Jane Rodger (Branch Administrator) who acted as Returning Officer. There was only one eligible candidate for each of the five Ordinary Committee vacancies. Jane read out the list nominees to the Ordinary Committee member positions, and declared the candidates elected.

Miriam Miller	APSE
Edward Yates	Management School
Caroline Metz	SPERI
Vicky Crewe	APSE
James Cranch	Maths
Vacancy	

5.3. We received two late nominations for the position of Ordinary Committee Member. Branch rules allow the Annual General Meeting to co-opt up to five Ordinary Committee members. Jane Rodger asked if there were any objections to Grace Whitfield (from the Management School) and Jane Simm (a retired member) being co-opted. None were raised, so Grace and Jane were co-opted.

6. Report from UCU Congress 2019

- 6.1. Mark Pendleton, Robyn Orfitelli, Sam Marsh, Emma Nagouse and Jo Grady attended Congress as Branch delegates, and a record of their voting has been made. Jess Meacham, Sam Morecroft and Themasa Neckles also attended in their capacity as members of UCU national Committees
- 6.2. Many motions at Congress were passed unanimously. The mood was up beat. A local motion calling for the strengthening of regional and national organising was passed. A pay campaign motion calling for a consultative ballot was rejected. A USS dispute motion calling for a ballot in September unless there are substantial changes was passed. With regard to equality issues a motion calling for a formal structure within the union for migrant workers was passed. There were contentious discussions around one particular trans motion. This branch produced stickers to show support.
- 6.3. Sam Marsh was re-elected as a USS national negotiator and there are no results yet for the Pay negotiator election.
- 6.4. Jess Meacham reported back from the Academic Related Professional Staff Committee which took three motions to Congress: A motion in support of counselling staff in Universities, a motion to resist the trend towards “hubbing” professional services staff, and a motion about open source software.
- 6.5. Due to lack of time, much of the Democracy Commission business on the Congress agenda was remitted to a Special Sector Conference in November.

7. Any Other Business

- 7.1. It was announced that the first meeting of the local Palestine University collaboration working group is tomorrow 7th June at 15.00 in the Student Union.
- 7.2. Solidarity photos were taken in support of victimised trade unionists Lee Humber and Dave Muritu, and colleagues at Bradford College.

SUCU Annual Report 2019

President's Report

Sam Marsh

With the memories of the USS strikes lingering, sometimes uncomfortably, in the minds of many staff, it is becoming increasingly clear that something changed when we were forced to walk away from our jobs and into the snow a little over a year ago. The new links and bonds that were formed on the picket lines have solidified into increased camaraderie across the institution, and there are signs in many departments of a growing resistance to what previously seemed the inevitable march of heavy-handed managerialism. If 2017-18 was the year staff exploded, then 2018-19 was the year that they began to assert themselves in more subtle, but equally important, ways.

It's been a pleasure to serve on a committee with so many talented and committed branch officers. Our committee membership reached capacity for the first time we can remember, allowing us to make inroads in a large number of areas. We had huge successes in securing support for migrant staff (financial and otherwise). We negotiated a commitment to properly employ all those teaching at the university. Our work on USS has made Sheffield University one of the best informed and, consequently, one of the most outspoken institutions in the country. We have made significant progress in discussions over sexual harassment policies. An academic workload working group has been set up to report on the hugely problematic issues contributing to the dangerously unmanageable demands on many of our members.

We have also made progress in stemming the tide of the frenzied restructuring that was causing so much distress and harm to both individuals and the collective. We have tried our best to support those who found themselves in the midst of restructures and to keep a close eye on the after-effects, holding the university management to account where necessary to enable teams to get back on their feet. We have dealt with as many issues collectively as we can, but this hasn't prevented the need for individual representation, with over a hundred members approaching us for advice, many of whom subsequently being helped through difficult times by a dedicated caseworker.

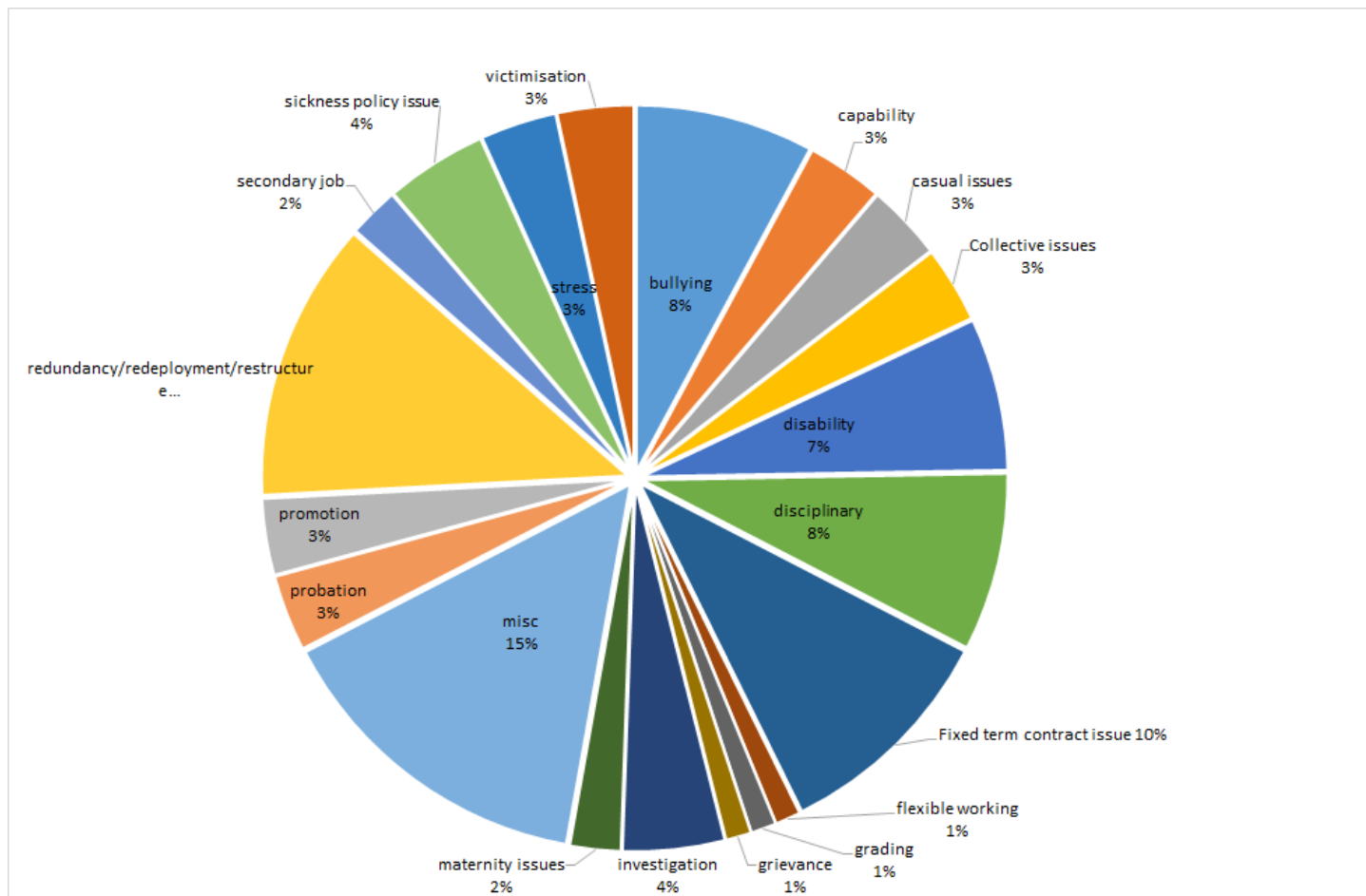
We have been increasingly active on the national stage, with representation on the Democracy Commission (which will complete its business this autumn with recommendations to changes for the union's structures), the National Dispute Committee (whose job it is to steer the USS dispute) and Superannuation Working Group (which heads up the negotiations with employers over USS). We also saw our pensions officer, Jo Grady, win the branch's first seat on the National Executive Committee before rendering that redundant with her sensational election to General Secretary.

The year ahead will require us to continue to build in strength as a branch, both in numbers and in voice, and all members will play a part in that. We aim to strengthen our departmental networks by enabling those contacts who are keen to enhance their status and visibility to become a formal representative of the members there. We will continue to meet regularly as a branch and encourage all to attend as much as they can to help us to navigate through the many twists and turns we will encounter.

Finally, I want to record my thanks to those who have committed so much time to keeping the branch running. We couldn't wish for a better administrator than Jane Rodger, who goes beyond the call of duty far too often. I also want to give a special mention to Jon Benson, our outgoing Branch Secretary, Jess Meacham, stepping down as Vice-President, Sam Morecroft, who leaves the Anti-Casualisation post, and Daragh O'Reilly, who has held many roles over the years, who have all devoted immense amounts of time and energy to this branch and deserve an easier life if they can find one, or even bigger challenges if that's what they seek.

I am honoured to be having another year in the chair for this branch and will try my best to do the job properly and conscientiously, making sure that we continue to be reactive to our members and sufficiently robust in our dealings with the university management.

Trends in casework from Sept 2018 to May 2019 are set out here:



Treasurer's Report

Pablo Stern

I am pleased to report that the branch finances continue to be healthy. Our income is from the 'local' element of your monthly subscription, graduated according to income (see below). Our funds continued on a sound financial footing, with a slowly increasing balance over the last year.

Our main expenditure is for our excellent Branch Administrator. Her pay is on the same scale as ours, so there was a (lamentably) small increase in August 2018.

For the coming year we can expect our normal income and expenditure to be again roughly balanced, depending of course on future events.

The Hardship Fund

There was a modest amount left in the Hardship Fund at the end of the last financial year, £745.07. We kept this for a number of months, but when it became clear that we here were not likely to be taking action soon SUCU Committee decided that the moneys should not lie dormant and would be best used to support our FE colleagues who have been taking extensive industrial action. We therefore donated all but £10 (to keep the account live) to Bradford College (£250) and the central UCU Fighting Fund for the FE dispute (£485.07). Please note these payments were made in the March to May quarter so do not show in the interim accounts below.

Reports

Below are:

1. UCU national and local subs rates from September 2019
2. Donations and subscriptions since the last AGM
3. Financial Reports
 - a. The accounts for the last UCU financial year, to 31 August 2018, approved by UCU head office. Please note that the Hardship Fund is rolled up into these reports, but clearly identified.
 - b. An interim financial statement for the first six months of 2018/19 (September to February).

1. UCU subscription rates 2019/20

The tables below set out the national subscription rates which will apply from September 2019. The change from 2018/19 depends on the band, from +2.25% for those on £60k+ to -2.25% for those below £5k.

The local subs change at the same rate as the national subs, as agreed at our 2013 AGM.

Subscription rates from Sept 2019			
	Monthly national subscriptions		SUCU local
	including political fund	excluding political fund	subscriptions
£60,000 & above	£26.55	£26.29	£3.54
£40,000-£59,999	£23.58	£23.35	£3.45
£30,000-39,999	£20.81	£20.61	£2.55
£20,000-29,999	£18.13	£17.96	£2.36
£15,000-19,999	£10.81	£10.71	£2.31
£5,000-14,999	£4.71	£4.67	NIL
Below £5,000	£1.00	£0.99	NIL
Retired/attached members	£2.85	£2.83	NIL

2. Donations and subscriptions June 2018 to date

18/09/2018	Sheffield Trades Council	Donation to BFAWU organiser fund	£1,000.00
10/10/2018	IWGB Uni of London	Donation to strike fund	£250.00
16/01/2019	Hazards magazine	Subscription	£15.00
16/01/2019	Campaign against climate change	Affiliation and subscription	£25.00

16/01/2019	Tamil Solidarity	Affiliation and subscription	£50.00
16/01/2019	National Shop Stewards Network	Affiliation and subscription	£50.00
28/01/2019	Stand up to Racism	Affiliation and subscription	£50.00
28/01/2019	CND	Affiliation	£25.00
28/01/2019	Sheffield Trades Council	Affiliation	£413.00
19/02/2019	Labour Research Department	Affiliation	£249.74
19/02/2019	Justice for Columbia	Affiliation	£90.00
20/03/2019	Sheffield People's Assembly	Affiliation and subscription	£20.00
20/03/2019	Pride in Sheffield	Donation	£250.00
21/03/2019	Bradford UCU	Donation to Bradford UCU strike fund	£250.00
09/05/2019	UCU Fighting Fund	Donation to national UCU fighting fund	£485.07

3. Financial reports

The accounts for the UCU financial year ending 31 August 2018 follow, together with the interim I&E report for the current financial year, September 2018 to February 2019.

- These accounts were prepared by the branch accounting service. We get quarterly summary accounts as well as the full end of year accounts.
- The year-end accounts for 2017-18 have been signed off by UCU head office.

3.a.1. Income & Expenditure Account 2017-18

September 2017 – August 2018

Income		<i>Totals</i>
Subscription Income	64,114	
Donations to Hardship Fund	6,356	
Charges on Income		
Subscriptions Payable to Head Office	19,433	
Subscription Collection Charges	540	
Total Effective Income:		50,498
Expenditure		
Travel	773	
Postage & Carriage	8	
Telephone/Internet	105	
Printing & Stationery	389	

Catering	4,583	
Donations	600	
Subscriptions/Affiliations	907	
Miscellaneous	375	
Clerical Assistance	21,805	
Pension	3,613	
Hardship Support	5,611	
Admin/Ins Cost	95	
Bank Charges	12	
Accountancy Fees	800	
Total Expenditure:		39,677
Net Income/(Expenditure):		10,821

3.a.2. Balance Sheet 2017-18

September 2017 – August 2018

		<i>Totals</i>
Fixed Assets	0	0
Current Assets		
Bank	59,645	
Bank – Hardship Fund	745	
Cash	25	
FX Card	239	
		60,654
Current Liabilities		
Creditors and accrued income	1,983	
		1,983
Total Assets less Current Liabilities:		58,671
Accumulated Funds		
B/fwd	47,850	
Surplus/(Deficit) for the year	10,821	
		58,671

3.b. Interim Income & Expenditure Account 2018-19

Year to date September 2018 – February 2019

Income		<i>Totals</i>
Subscription Income	35,095	
Charges on Income		
Subscriptions Payable to Head Office	9,096	
Subscription Collection Charges	263	
Total Effective Income:		25,736
Expenditure		
Travel	280	
Postage & Carriage	7	
Telephone/Internet	396	
Printing	32	
Catering	1,112	
Donations	1,290	
Subscriptions/Affiliations	968	
Miscellaneous	50	
Clerical Assistance	12,520	
Pension	2,064	
Hardship Support	0	
Admin/Ins Cost	48	
Bank Charges	0	
Accountancy Fees	400	
Total Expenditure:		19,167
Net Income/(Expenditure):		6,569

Membership Report

Rob Stanton

Branch Membership has stayed high this year after the substantial increase last year, indicating a sustained general perception of the value of the union's work.

Some years ago we introduced a new procedure for carrying out the annual branch membership audit. This involved sending out personal data we hold to members and asking them to correct any inaccuracies on the central UCU computer. This process has now been adopted by head office who have started sending out their own personalized data so the branch will no longer continue this practice.

In the past we have sent members individual google forms to record if they have responded to strike ballots which allowed us to direct our strike campaign towards those who had not. This process started to suffer from the tendency of members to use a non-university contact email address which could not be matched with the google reply. During the most recent pay strike ballot we subscribed to a commercial CRM system to enable us to overcome this problem and produce reports in a very timely manner.

Our large number of members requires an efficient method of keeping the membership mailing database up to date. Our new process involves downloading the list from head office into a local database. This can then be compared with the download from the previous week. It quickly highlights any records which need to be added, removed or changed. There are still some members who have not updated the central record with their current email address. At some time in the next year we will probably update the mailing list with all member's official email address. If anyone finds that they are no longer receiving branch membership emails it is likely that they need to update the central database with their latest email address.