

MERRY CHRISTMAS



We know this year has been a very difficult one for many of us, but the hard work and determination of public services and the members of UNISON must be commended. You have all kept going and kept this city running throughout a very tough year and it is endlessly appreciated.

As a Union we are working hard to ensure that it is widely recognised that public services are vital and there is no going back to normal. The No Going Back to Normal campaign page can be found [here](#).

From all at Birmingham UNISON, we would like to wish you all a Merry Christmas and that you have a peaceful festive break.

REPORTING INCIDENTS



Across Birmingham City Council there have been a number of incidents in recent months of aggression from the public. If you have experienced these kinds of incidents it is very important to make sure to fill in incident reports, its not acceptable to feel threatened or attacked in work.

We understand some colleagues do not have access to people solutions, but those who do not must ensure that a manager completes this form so that these incidents are not underreported – they are serious and need to be logged. The level of aggression towards staff is unacceptable.

These are isolated incidents, but they must be reported so we can keep track of the real problem that is happening in Birmingham.



BRANCH ELECTIONS



Each year the Branch hold an election to elect our Branch officers. This is open to all members of the Branch to stand for positions. This deadline for nomination forms to be submitted is Friday 15th January 2021 at 12 noon.

The below roles are to be elected by members of the Branch – either at the AGM or if candidates run opposed it will be balloted.

The Assistant Branch Secretaries and Senior Stewards for the Directorates are elected at their respective Stewards committee meeting.

The roles to be elected:

- Branch Chair
- Vice Chair
- Branch Secretary
- Deputy Branch Secretary (Organisation and representation)
- Deputy Branch Secretary (Service Conditions)
- Treasurer
- Assistant Treasurer
- Communications Officer
- Education Officer
- Equalities Officer
- Health and Safety Officer
- International Officer
- Membership Officer
- Welfare Officer
- Young Members Officer (Under 27)

You can find the nomination form and job descriptions on the Branch website. Which needs to be emailed to info@birminghamunison.co.uk marked Elections. To stand for election you need nominations from two other Branch Members.



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NEW BRANCH LIFELONG LEARNING PROJECT 2021



Firstly, Christmas Greetings to people of all faith and no faith. May you and your families stay safe and well.

Lifelong Learning may not be the most important item on our/your agenda currently, but we have been trying to offer some of our learning programmes throughout this year, in spite of the obvious difficulties.

UNISON will continue with online courses via the West Midlands Region. Additionally, Birmingham Branch will be offering a unique accredited course in Personal Development and Wellbeing. This course is a blend of person-centred learning and action learning that is **free** to UNISON members. This is accredited by The Global University of Lifelong Learning, a not for profit International organisation.



What better way to start your learning journey in 2021?

This course has been developed so that it can be safely delivered at home. It does not involve any physical meetings.



How does it work?

For Certificate Level:



- Identify your own learning needs.
- Select one of these to develop (this does not have to be work related.)
- Commence action learning 'by doing' from home, in a way that you choose. This can involve practical activities.
- Work with a mentor of your choice.
- Keep a diary of your progress.
- Select a method of reporting that is accessible and suits you. e.g. script, video, mind map.
- Report your progress weekly and monthly for two months for completion at certificate level (about 10 weeks).



You may wish to progress to Diploma or Degree level.

To enrol please contact Donald McCombie UNISON Birmingham Branch Lifelong Learning Coordinator donald.mccombie@birminghamunison.co.uk or call 07584707253.

This course is unique to Birmingham Branch and entirely free.



SCHOOLS



A Multi Academy Trust are proposing to transfer all catering staff from in house to a private company from 1st January 2021 but following pressure from UNISON we have managed to get them to delay the process until 1st March 2021.

The Branch has also successfully managed to get another MAT to delay their cost saving exercise by one month (which will lead to support staff having their hours cut) and we are now meeting in the New Year to try to negotiate a further postponement until September 2021.



As a Branch we wanted to say how proud we all are of Support staff in schools – classroom based, cleaners, catering, lunch time supervisors, site staff and admin who have and continue to do an amazing job to keep schools open and keep children safe during these very difficult times. We hope you all have a very well deserved Christmas break in preparation for challenges in the new year – such as mass testing in schools beginning January.

- Carol Garfield, Assistant Branch Secretary – Schools.

LEARNING WORKSHOPS



The take up for online training this year has been very positive, with many courses oversubscribed which is great news and means that the union knows members want more courses of this type.

With online learning set to continue in 2021, its great to see members embracing technology to participate virtually. For members who struggle with attending online courses – the Regional Office are hoping to provide short support sessions in the new year prior to online courses starting to ensure members are ready and prepared for getting online when the course starts.

For more information on UNISON training, go to www.learninunisonwm.org.uk

