Hull City Branch nominated John Burgess for General Secretary because of his impressive track record as Barnet Branch Secretary.

He has led sustained resistance against a hard-right Tory council. Under John’s leadership the branch has won concessions and dramatically slowed the pace of privatisation in opposition to politicians determined to see almost all jobs and services outsourced.

Our branch believes John is the candidate best placed to deliver the change our union desperately needs and to inspire UNISON members to fight back in the face of attacks on trade union rights and public service workers’ jobs, pay and conditions.

The General Secretary ballot will run from 9 November to 4 December 2015 and the ballot papers will be sent to members from UNISON headquarters to the member’s home address as shown on our membership system. Members who have not received ballot papers by the date set out in the timetable should contact the UNISON direct ballot helpline 0800 0 857 857. Text phone number is 0800 0 967 968.

Contact Your Branch

Address: Town Hall Chambers, 39 Alfred Gelder Street, Hull. HU1 2AG
Tel: 01482 318670
Fax: 01482 322720
Email: info@unisonhull.org.uk
Website: www.hullcity-unison.org.uk

Fight to defend you democratic rights for trade union representation

Your employer is effectively proposing to deny you, our members, the right to representation by cutting the Trade Unions in half.

The trade unions posts that the Council plan to axe do not belong to any individual they belong to the trade unions and their members.

They are tax payer funded posts as are the Councillors, Chief Executive, Human Resources and every other position in the council.

The one difference for the trade union posts are that they are there for one reason to defend and support member’s rights!

Is it any coincidence that the Management are attacking the unions in advance of the Tory anti-trade union bill and at a time when they announce a further 7 million in cuts to services AND the trade unions understand that the Management plan to attack what is left of your terms and conditions?

The answer is NO! This is not a coincidence; this is a planned attack by senior management who continue to recruit to senior posts and protect themselves at the expense of the wider workforce.

The Joint Trade Unions will ballot the membership over the attacks on the trade unions, we will also ballot over any changes to terms and conditions including any attempt to alter the national agreement on sickness benefits.

We know how difficult it is for our members, we have faced an onslaught of cuts and the endless restructures and the worst is still to come! Government austerity is here for at least another 5 years and the Local Government Association reports concerns that the next round of cuts will result in a fatal blow for Local Council services.

Enough is enough let’s get organising and prepare a fight back, let’s build a campaign and let the powers that be, locally and nationally, know we will not just sit back and accept their cuts!

Please sign the petition on line or ask your steward for a form, please read the information that will be circulated and remember that if they haven’t come for you yet they will. If we stand collectively we can make a change and let the council know they will not get an easy ride attacking union members and implementing cuts whilst sat on millions in reserves and borrowing millions for projects whilst cutting vital services.

https://you.38degrees.org.uk/petitions/attacks-on-trade-union-facilities
**Housing Update**

**It is a busy time within the City Neighbourhoods and Housing Directorate with many policy changes imposed (or due to be imposed) by central government that have both a direct and indirect effect on the organisation such as bedroom tax, benefit caps, changes to a variety of welfare benefits, Universal Credit, benefit sanctions, tax credits, etc.**

Discussions have taken place over the last few months in respect to the Housing Review with the Trade Unions awaiting proposals that will potentially impact on all staff within the department.

The chancellor’s recent budget announcements including a 1% rent reduction in the social housing section could result in Hull City Council losing a potential 33 million from the Housing Revenue Account over the next 4 years has meant that any plans made before the budget are no longer valid and as a consequence had a major impact upon business planning and resulted in a subsequent delays in discussions around the Housing Review.

As a consequence the Senior Housing Management Team have had to go back to the drawing board and start looking at potentially more radical options for the future of the Housing Service. As yet UNISON and the other Trade Unions have yet to see any proposals so are unable to start negotiating or consult further at this moment in time.

Needless to say as soon as we receive them we will be contacting members within Housing with further information. Mark McEgan, Assistant Head of Service has reassured us that staff will be kept fully informed and consulted in any changes that will impact on staff.

**A safe environment to work in**

On a more positive note, UNISON representatives have been working proactively in a joint Health and Safety Group with GMB, Unite and senior management to tackle issues such as incident reporting, stress in the workplace, lone working and office moves and accommodation and will continue to do so with the view of providing a safe environment for staff to work in.

If you have any Health and Safety issues you would like us to tackle please do not hesitate to contact us via the branch office.

Traci Alderson is the Senior UNISON Rep in the area and will be happy to discuss any issues members have.

**Adult Social Care - share your concerns**

Adult Social Care is facing an onslaught of cuts to services and jobs, entire services are being axed which provide much needed and wanted services to the most vulnerable in our community.

The Trade Unions have faced obstacles at every turn when trying to represent their members, the consultation, the information being used is poor and lacks substance. We want members to know we will continue to fight on your behalf and on behalf of those service users in desperate need who face being ejected from their homes and having services removed.

If any members want to have a meeting to discuss your concerns please contact the branch.
New Labour Leader

Jeremy Corbyn has now been elected as Labour Leader.

As UNISON supported Jeremy, we would encourage members to check if they are paying the Labour affiliation contribution of their subscriptions. If you are unsure please contact the branch and we can check and amend, if you wish, to pay a contribution of your subscriptions to the affiliated political fund.

We would also encourage members to join the Labour party as a trade union member, this is at a reduced rate and will allow you to attend Constituency Labour party meetings in your ward and help shape future Labour Policy.

The new Labour Leader and Chancellor have made it clear their opposition to needless austerity and the need for a fairer, more caring society, something I am sure we would all agree with.

Jeremy Corbyn for Labour Leader has transformed into Momentum - a network of people and organisations that will continue the energy and enthusiasm of Jeremy’s campaign.

For more information please go to www.peoplesmomentum.com

UNISON’s Recruit-a-Friend Scheme

UNISON Hull City branch have a Recruit-a-Friend scheme for members. For every new member that a current member recruits, the ‘recruiter’ earns themselves a £10 voucher.

There is no limit and the only criteria is that the new member remains in membership for 3 months and joins using the special application form. We will have these available at the branch office.

A copy of the form is also on the back page.

Hull Help for Refugees

As a result of the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Syria, a group was set up in Hull called Hull Help for Refugees.

The branch committee agreed to support the group and we opened up our doors to donations. To date the group has sent four loads of food, clothing and shelter to France and is now working with groups in Greece to get a container of provisions to Greece.

The group meets every Wednesday at 6pm in the UNISON building. Donations of food, tents, sleeping bags or clothes are still needed and any cash donations are very welcome. Please make cheques payable to UNISON Refugee Fund.

The group also works with local groups helping the homeless in the city. The group aims to raise awareness of the issue of refugees and the link between austerity and the lack of service provision for all of our community.
UNISON is campaigning against the Trade Union Bill because we believe MPs should be focusing on the real problems our country faces and working with everyone, including trade unions, to solve them. We believe this is the priority rather than taking away people's right to be supported at work.

This Bill heaps red tape and bureaucracy on to trade unions, proposing to use agency workers to break strikes and bringing in voting thresholds for industrial action ballots – all of which will undermine the fundamental right to strike.

It also has a damaging effect on the ability of trade unions to organise, bargain and negotiate in the workplace through its attack on facility time in the public sector.

Facility time enables trade union representatives to represent individual union members, engage in collective bargaining, work closely with employers to promote positive employment relations, keep members informed, challenge discrimination, keep workplaces safe and support workplace learning and education.

The value of facility time
Research by NatCen has highlighted the valuable role trade union representatives play in public services, enabling meaningful consultation and negotiation within workplaces, improving workplace relations and employers’ reputations, early interventions to prevent grievances escalating into more serious problems and saving jobs during restructuring and redundancy processes. Facility time pays dividends for both employers and workers.

UNISON believes this attack will damage workplace productivity, employee well being and constructive relationships in the workplace. It will shift the balance of power away from all employees, whether in a union or not and reduce the ability of working people to have a voice in the workplace. Trade union activity provides staff with a way to voice their experiences and mechanisms for resolving grievances and disputes whether informally or through collective bargaining.

Restrictions on facility time for local reps and the damage to social partnership will erode the work done by trade unions to improve equal opportunities practices and remove one
of the best protections employees currently have from discriminatory treatment.

**Increased red tape and bureaucracy for unions**

Coupled with attacks on facility time, the excessive levels of red tape and bureaucracy now heaped on trade unions will further divert trade union resources away from core workplace activities. Unions already have to comply with highly complex legislation, including onerous notice and balloting requirements. The complexity of current legislation means that unions are at risk of legal challenge, with employers able to win injunctions for minor administrative errors and thereby preventing industrial action from taking place.

The Trade Union Bill will simply exacerbate this, with the introduction of additional legal hurdles for trade unions: The rules on who is covered by the 40% yes vote requirement are highly complex and the responsibility placed on trade unions is likely to place a huge bureaucratic demand on any sector where multiple employers and service users are involved.

Unions will find it difficult to gather sufficient accurate information from members who work in the service sector who might, as part of their job, provide ancillary services to those public services covered by the 40% threshold.

Unions would have to ask these members how much of their working time is allocated to different contracts. Many union members may not be able to answer such questions accurately. As a result unions will find it very difficult to comply with the legislation.

**The attack on facility time**

Unions will be required to re-ballot members if industrial action will last for more than four months. This will include the costs of preparing additional complex ballot and industrial action notices for employers, scrutineers’ fees, postage costs, legal fees, and officer time overseeing the ballot.

Unions may be required to prepare detailed notices setting out plans for any pickets or protests associated with industrial disputes.

Unions would have to give 14 days’ notice of any plans for protests associated with their industrial action, including what will be written on websites and in Facebook posts and tweets. If they do not provide details, or fail to provide updates of materials, unions will face financial penalties.

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**Pride in Hull**

In the summer the branch sponsored the Pride In Hull event. It was a great day and a real opportunity for the Branch to raise our profile with the LGBT community in the city.
This is notice that you are invited to attend one of the Aggregate Annual General Meetings of Hull City Branch of UNISON to be held at the UNISON Branch Office, Conference Suite, (Ground floor), 39, Alfred Gelder Street, Hull HU1 2AG as detailed below:

1) Thursday 10 March 2015 from 4.00 pm to 5.00 pm.
2) Tuesday 15 March 2015 from 12.00 to 1.00 pm.
3) Wednesday 16 March 2015 from 5.00 pm to 6.00 pm.

Timetable
1. Nomination forms for Branch Officer/Convenors/Steward posts are available at the Branch Office or on the Branch Web Site and must be returned to the Branch Office by 4.00 pm Thursday 14 January 2016. Elections for these posts will be by a ballot paper at the AAGMs.
2. Motions/Rule Changes must be returned to the Branch Office by 4.00 pm Thursday 11 February 2016 and will be published on the branch website.
3. Details of any proposed motion/rule changes will be notified to members via the branch web site by 4.00 pm Tuesday 23 February 2016.
4. The final agenda and any motions for debate and proposed rule changes together with any amendments shall be published to all members on the branch web site no later than 4.00 pm Thursday 25 February 2016 and papers will be circulated at the AAGMs.

Please circulate within your workplace and display on your notice boards. There will be refreshments and a buffet from 3.30 pm on 10 March 2016 and 11.30 am on 15 March 2016 and 4.30 pm on 16 March 2016 there is also a free raffle for every member attending which will be drawn at the end of each meeting.

The following positions for Branch Officers, Representatives, Health and Safety Representative, Learner Representative and Convenors (1 general post and 1 female post) are up for election:

- a) Chairperson
- b) Vice Chairperson
- c) Branch Secretary
- d) Deputy Branch Secretary
- e) Branch Treasurer
- f) Membership Officer
- g) Education Co-Ordinator
- h) Sports and Social Secretary
- i) Life-Long Learning Co-Ordinator
- j) Young Members Officer
- k) Communications Officer
- l) International Officer
- m) Equality Officer
- n) Health and Safety Officer
- o) Welfare Officer
- p) Auditors (2 posts)
- q) Convenor (General Post)
- r) Convenor (Female Post)
- t) 2 Labour Link Officer
- u) Retired Members Secretary

a) Labour Link Officer and b) Retired Members Secretary will be elected by their relevant membership.

ALL BRANCH OFFICERS POSTS ARE OPEN FOR JOB SHARE BUT THE BRANCH SECRETARY AND TREASURER CANNOT HOLD BOTH POSITIONS PLEASE SEE THE BRANCH WEBSITE FOR FURTHER DETAILS.

The Branch is keen that all members should be able to attend one of the AAG Meetings, if you would like further information, including details of disabled access and provision for dependent care, please contact me at the Branch Office. I look forward to seeing you.

Yours sincerely
Adrian Kennett
Branch Secretary
Tax Credit cut due to changes in threshold and taper

Using official figures published by HM Revenue & Customs – that showed that government cuts to tax credits will leave more than 2.7 million low to middle income working families across the UK (and their 5.2 million children) significantly worse off. Two in five of all working families with dependent children could lose as much as £3,000 a year next April.

With many UNISON members – for example, teaching assistants, hospital cleaners, home care workers, healthcare assistants, nurses, PCSOs and street cleaners – set to be affected by the changes, the union has developed a calculator so people can work out how the tax credit changes are likely to affect them and their families in local government.

If you are affected and wish to join in a local campaign to highlight the issues and raise awareness please contact the Branch.

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Join UNISON

If you are applying to join UNISON just fill in the form below.

Return to: Hull City UNISON, Town Hall Chambers, 39 Alfred Gelder Street, Hull, HU1 2AG

1 Tell us about you

Title

Surname/family name

First name

Date of birth

Home address

Postcode

Email

Phone number (please indicate if home, work or mobile)

National insurance number (from your payslip)

Please give your ethnic origin: (tick one box)

- Bangladeshi
- Pakistani
- Black African
- Black UK
- White UK
- Chinese
- Asian UK
- Black
- Black other
- Irish
- Indian
- Asian other
- Caribbean
- White other

2 Tell us about your job

Employer’s name

Your job title/occupation

Workplace name and address

Postcode

Payroll number (from your payslip)

3 What you will pay each month

Please tick the appropriate box for your earnings before deductions.

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4 Choose your political fund

One of the ways UNISON works on your behalf is through political campaigning. Your subscription includes a political fund payment so you won’t pay any extra, but in UNISON you choose how you want that money to be used.

Please tick one box only.

- Our Affiliated Political Fund takes UNISON members’ views directly into the Labour Party, working to promote UNISON policies.
- The General Political Fund is used to pay for branch, regional and national campaigns but is independent of any political party.

5 Choose how you wish to pay

Please tick ONE box only

EITHER
deduct from salary:

- I wish to join UNISON and authorise deduction of subscriptions from my pay by my employer.

OR pay by direct debit:

- I wish to join UNISON and authorise deduction of subscriptions by direct debit

Choose your political fund

Please go to unison.org.uk/privacy-policy to see how we will protect and use your personal information

Instruction to your bank or building society to pay by Direct Debit

Please fill in the form and send to UNISON, 130 Euston Road London NW1 2AY

Name and full postal address of your bank or building society

To: The Manager

Bank/building society

Address

Postcode

Name(s) of Account holder(s)

Bank/building society account number

Branch sort code

Reference number (for office use only do not complete)

Signature(s)

Date

Service User Number

9 7 0 0 5 0

Please go to unison.org.uk/privacy-policy to see how we will protect and use your personal information

Banks and building societies may not accept Direct Debit instructions for some types of account.