



Insight

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE EAST MIDLANDS UNISON POLICE AND JUSTICE BRANCHES

Region in drive to increase membership and raise profile

The UNISON East Midlands Region for the police and justice sector has launched a big drive to increase membership numbers and raise the union's profile in the area.

With a significant number of its members becoming police officers in the last few months, regional organiser Rachel Hancorn said some innovative work was being done to attract new members.

"The year started really well for police branches and it was only down to a significant number of police staff becoming police officers that not all branches have shown an increase in membership," she explained in her annual report.

"All branches are showing innovative ideas and getting out there and raising UNISON's profile though.

"Nottinghamshire Police, for example,

have been impressing members and non-members alike with a UNISON-liveried caravan serving bacon and sausage cobs. It was a real hit and one week they recruited 18 new members and counting.

"We are about to start a concerted recruitment campaign across the region and by the time of annual conference we hope to have new members and more activists."

Award winners

It has also been a successful period in terms of winning awards for the police and justice branches.

Leicestershire Police's Lesley Panton won the caseworker of the year award and Northamptonshire Police branch won both branch of the year and education branch of the year giving the police and justice branch three of the four awards on offer.

In addition, a first 24-hour event was held for all branches in July. The event was held centrally in the region at the Yew Lodge Hotel, Kegworth, Leicestershire with Ben Priestley, UNISON's national officer for police and justice, as guest speaker.

The evening allowed participants to work, plan and network with each other and it is intended to be repeated next year.

The issues of pay and shift patterns are high on the UNISON agenda.

"Nearly all police branches have faced a plethora of shift pattern changes which have been understandably concerning for our members," said Rachel.

"The branches have successfully assisted these members and continue to do so for those who have ongoing issues."

PIM training: ensuring the best support for members

Officials from three of the five police UNISON branches in the East Midlands have passed a Post-Incident Management (PIM) training course designed to enable them to better support members.

The course, provided at UNISON HQ in London, is offered to branch officials and stewards in recognition of the fact that more police staff are now involved in Post-Incident Procedures.

"It was a very intensive course," says Lyndsay Smith, secretary of Northamptonshire Police UNISON who attended the course with Marie Davey, the Derbyshire Police UNISON branch secretary, and Debbie Parker, their Lincolnshire Police counterpart.

"At the end there was an exam, with a simple pass or fail grading and I am pleased to say we all passed."

The three union officials feel the course will be of great benefit as it will mean police staff, who have often felt isolated during the PIM process, have support on hand.

In the past, police officers have had their PIM trained Federation officials available in the PIM suite but police staff have not had access to the same support from their own union.

"Thanks to the training we have received, our members will now have much better protection in these situations," Lyndsay explained.

More regional branch staff will undergo the PIM training in the New Year.



The course group.

Delegates attend Police and Justice Conference



East Midlands members at conference (left to right) Kam Pandya, Lesley Panton, Rob Lester, Vicki Booth and Pat Earnshaw.

Representatives from the six regional branches of UNISON attended the union's annual Police and Justice Conference in Llandudno, Wales.

The region's delegate at conference was Lesley Panton from Leicestershire and regional organiser Rachel Hancorn

was also in attendance along with other branch representatives.

Five motions were put forward by the East Midlands branches with all but one – which related to Post-Incident Management – being backed by conference and all provoking lively debate



Chelsea Skervin, assistant branch secretary of the probation branch, with regional organiser Rachel Hancorn.

including inputs from the East Midlands delegates.

In addition to the main conference sessions, regional representatives were able to choose to attend a wide range of workshops according to their individual interests.

Delegates' feedback

"This was my first Police and Justice Conference and I had a mixture of nerves and adrenaline.

"It may be an idea for future conferences to create a kind of video guide. This would allow first-time attendees to actually see what the conference hall looks like (not the gigantic stadium type venue I was dreading!) and what is meant by the rostrum control and traffic light systems. This may then encourage first-time attendees to get more involved on the first day of conference, rather than spending time assessing how things work.

"I attended three of the workshop sessions held on the second day of conference. I found these to be interesting and they did spark lively debate.

"It was good to get an insight into future issues which may affect our members and for us to provide constructive feedback on such issues, at least I hope the College of Policing took the feedback as constructive.

"It was also evident that the most concerning issue of the whole conference, which came up in each workshop discussion and throughout breaks, was the subject of Post-Incident Procedures.

"The overall opinion was that branches should be representing members by means of properly trained and accredited representatives as a priority, rather than using stewards with no accredited training."

Robert Lester
ERA Accredited UNISON workplace steward
(Derbyshire)

"It was my first time attending the Police and Justice Conference but I had been to the national and women's conferences before.

"I took with me a fairly new rep who had never been to conference before and was nervous about attending on her own. It's a great conference to go to as a first-timer as it is smaller than national and women's. Because it is police and justice you feel among colleagues who make you feel safe and willing to answer questions and guide you along the way.

"I very much took a back seat and let my colleague take the hot seat where she loved listening to the debates and voting; it gave her the confidence to attend one on her own.

"The regional meeting the night before was great, it gave us the opportunity to meet people in our area and get to know them a bit before the conference so when you went to find your seat you knew you

Regional motions secure backing

Four motions put forward by the East Midlands regional branches won the backing of conference and will now be taken forward.

The motions were:

Police staff vetting double jeopardy

Conference instructed the Service Group Executive (SGE) to:

- Develop a negotiating strategy in relation to staff vetting
- Make representations to the Police Staff Council, the National Police Chiefs' Council Vetting Group and the College of Policing with a view to negotiating a fair process for members
- Negotiate, as far as is reasonably practicable, a fair and transparent appeals procedure for members who are subject to loss of vetting status
- Develop guidance for branches on vetting once negotiations are concluded.

UNISON is concerned at the way in which national vetting procedures are affecting members. There are numerous examples of staff going through misconduct procedures where the outcome has been short of dismissal.

But this often triggers a vetting review

which will see vetting status diminished due to the outcome of the misconduct process.

A change in vetting status as result of the misconduct process will very often result in dismissal, which was clearly not the wish of the employer, and leads to double jeopardy for members.

The effects of austerity on our members and the service they provide

Conference called on the SGE to work in partnership with other unions and police staff associations to raise awareness of the effects of austerity on the police service and their respective members, maximising media opportunities and encouraging branches to raise awareness with the public.

The motion stated: "Our members have lived with austerity for seven long years and as such we have seen the service to the public diminish and the consequences on our members' health."

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) come clean about cuts to policing

Conference instructed the SGE to:

- Enter dialogue with HMICFRS to determine what areas of its inspection

are concerned with the impact of austerity

- Discuss with HMICFRS the potential and tangible impact that austerity is having on the police staff workforce
- Where possible, identify with HMICFRS areas where inspections can be improved to better identify the issues facing our members because of austerity
- Encourage HMICFRS to put these findings into inspection reports.

Police staff and the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC)

Since the introduction of the Police Reform Act 2002, police staff have been prevented from raising complaints about the level of service they have received from the police as private citizens. The act specifically prevents them making a complaint when they receive a poor service from the police in their own force area.

They are encouraged instead to use internal grievance procedures to resolve complaints that should be dealt with under the police complaints procedure.

The motion stated: "All we are asking is for the same consideration that any other citizen has in raising legitimate complaints with the appropriate authority."

Conference instructed the SGE to raise the issue with the Home Office, police minister, shadow police minister, IPCC and the Home Affairs Select Committee and then report developments to next year's conference.

“ALL WE ARE ASKING IS FOR THE SAME CONSIDERATION THAT ANY OTHER CITIZEN HAS IN RAISING LEGITIMATE COMPLAINTS WITH THE APPROPRIATE AUTHORITY.

were in the right area as you recognised their faces. They were also useful in answering any questions as they were conference veterans!

"The conference was well organised and the debates and motions relevant to the industry we work in, they were kept on track and we finished on time. It is useful to talk and listen to people from other forces talking about the same difficulties that we are facing and it makes you feel like you aren't alone and it is reassuring to know everyone is experiencing the same thing."

Rachel Head, Northamptonshire Police

"Police and Justice Conference was attended this year by four of our representatives from Lincolnshire Police and G4S staff. For two of us it was a completely new experience but I can certainly say it was not wasted on any of us. The

opportunity to circulate among members of our service group and compare our experiences to theirs was great.

"Conference was well organised and many of the motions brought were presented clearly and comprehensively and were passed with little opposition. There were a wide variety of topics covered by police and probation staff but ultimately the main direction and consideration was for the wellbeing of our members.

"One area of contention was around the need for representatives to have Post-Incident Procedures (PIP) training, or guidance notes if they had not yet completed the training. The topic was debated extensively. The value of this training is widely acknowledged as we all feel the responsibility to advise and support our members during times of great stress, but it was decided that

guidance notes should not be issued to anyone who had not passed the training, simply because of the complexity and legalities of the issues involved. It is more desirable that PIP training and accreditation is provided for those representatives who wish to have it, although it is recognised that this may take some time to complete.

"The over-riding feeling I got from conference was that everyone there cared about their jobs, the people they work with and the effect their work has on the general public. They are good people and they deserve to be recognised for their good work. Thanks for a great conference and we will see you again next year."

Clare Heyes-Bowden, Lincolnshire UNISON rep

Chief's message to PCSOs

The Chief Constable has reassured Derbyshire's PCSOs that he has no plans to do away with the role.

Peter Goodman issued a message to staff after his Norfolk counterpart, Simon Bailey, announced in October that he would be removing the role of PCSO in his own force.

Mr Goodman said: "PCSOs are a vital part of our neighbourhood policing effort."

Enjoy a family day out courtesy of UNISON

Members of Derbyshire Police UNISON are being invited to take advantage of corporate tickets the branch has bought for several local attractions.

They are available to all Derbyshire Police UNISON members on a first come, first served basis.

"We appreciate how expensive it can be to take children for a day out so by offering these free tickets we hope we can help families enjoy some of the fabulous attractions we have right on our doorstep without breaking the bank," says Marie Davey, branch secretary.

"The tickets have proved to be very popular with members and are being used most weekends but if you are planning a day out why not see if any are available? You could save yourself a lot of money."

The branch has:

- **One ticket, which admits up to six people, for Chatsworth House**
- **Six tickets, two adults and four children, for Twycross Zoo in Leicestershire**
- **One ticket for White Post Farm in Mansfield, which admits two adults and three children**
- **Tickets for Crich Tramway Museum (two adults, two children)**
- **Midland Railway (two adults, three children)**
- **Tickets for Haddon Hall (two adults, two children)**
- **Tickets for the Tropical Butterfly Farm in Sheffield (two adults, two children).**

To try to gauge the popularity of the corporate tickets, the branch welcomes any feedback.

All cards can be booked through either Marie Davey or Susan Guest.

The tickets are very popular so book yours as soon as possible to avoid disappointment.

Force first with Dying to Work Charter



At the signing of the charter are (left to right) Adam Galley, secretary of Derbyshire Police Federation, Debbie Bowlzer, health and safety officer for Derbyshire Police UNISON branch, Hardyal Dhindsa, Derbyshire Police and Crime Commissioner, Jacqui Woodcock, patron of the campaign, Deputy Chief Constable Gary Knighton and Lee Barron, Midlands TUC regional secretary.

Derbyshire Police was the first force to sign the Dying to Work Voluntary Charter which seeks to achieve greater security for terminally ill workers.

The move has been welcomed by Deborah Bowlzer, health and safety officer at the UNISON Derbyshire Police branch, with the branch executive also praising Deborah and the health and safety reps for their hard work across the Force.

"We are pleased that Derbyshire Police have signed up to charter. The Force already does a great deal to support its employees, this shows their continued commitment in supporting and protecting those diagnosed with a terminal illness," Deborah explained.

"It will provide employees with the security of work and peace of mind for themselves and their families helping them through this difficult period."

The Dying to Work Campaign was taken forward by the TUC after Jacqui Woodcock, a 59-year-old sales manager from Derbyshire, was forced out of her job after being diagnosed with terminal breast cancer.

As part of the wider campaign, the TUC is asking employers to sign up to the charter

to prevent others being treated in the same way.

Jacqui, now a patron of the Dying to Work campaign, said: "I am both very proud and happy that the Derbyshire Police have signed our Dying to Work Voluntary Charter.

"After the awful experience I went through with my uncaring company, I feel very passionate about protecting all workers who may receive a terminal diagnosis. The campaign is vastly important and I am absolutely delighted with the positive support it is receiving across the UK."

Police and Crime Commissioner Hardyal Dhindsa has said he strongly believes that someone diagnosed with a terminal illness should not have the added stress of worrying about losing their job.

"By signing up to this charter, we are saying to all our employees that if you ever find yourself in that situation we will support your right to work. I am proud that Derbyshire is the first police force to sign this charter and I hope others will follow," he explained.

Northamptonshire Police has since also signed the charter.

Fancy learning a new skill?

Whether you fancy limbering up with a yoga course or brushing up on your IT skills, then UNISON could be able to help you on your way.

Derbyshire Police UNISON – through its UNISON Learning Representatives (ULRs) - offers its members learning grants of up to £250 to pursue courses of their choice – and they don't have to be career-related.

"Our aim is help members with the cost of learning," says Marie Davey, branch secretary, "So if you are considering embarking on a new course then it's worth getting in touch to see if we can help.

"The scheme is not limited to academic education or courses linked to your role within the Force. Members can apply for funding for any sort of learning on any subject. In the past we've helped people pay for an Open University course but we've also given a grant to a member who wanted to improve her cake decorating skills."

To apply for a grant, you must:

- Be a current paying member of Derbyshire Police UNISON
- Be intending to complete the course in full
- Not have received funding from the scheme in the current calendar year
- Not have received funding for the same course from the scheme.

The course must be provided by a university, college or legitimate company or charity offering courses available to the public, must start within three months of an application for funding being made and must have already been paid for.

To find out more and obtain an application, please contact the branch office or visit <http://vsintranet/index.asp?docID=820ww>

Festive fun in York

For the sixth year running, coach loads of police staff headed to York with their families thanks to a free trip organised by the Derbyshire Police branch of UNISON.

The branch lined up seven 49-seater coaches to take members to the city for Christmas shopping and sightseeing on 2 December.

"This annual trip has proved to be an extremely popular highlight of members' year," says Marie Davey, branch secretary.

"We first started organising these trips as a way of giving back something to members and we have been delighted to see so many colleagues taking advantage of this offer and enjoying a day out with their families."

Coach travel for the trip is paid with branch funds and was open to all members on a first come, first served basis.

Pay Up Now – campaign sparks Commons debate

More than 140,000 people have signed the UNISON backed Pay Up Now petition calling on the Government to scrap the pay cap and give public servants a meaningful pay rise.

This has now triggered a debate in the House of Commons.

"This UNISON petition states that every single person who works in public services needs, and deserves, a pay rise and therefore demands that the Government finds extra funding for public sector pay so that employers can put workers' pay up now," says Chris Hanrahan, Leicestershire Police UNISON branch secretary.

Nevertheless, the Treasury's response to the petition, posted on the UK Government Parliament and Petitions website, states: "Public sector workers deserve to have fulfilling jobs that are fairly rewarded. On 12 September we announced a move away from the one per cent public sector pay policy towards a more flexible approach on pay.

"We still need to deal with our country's debts to ensure we have a strong economy to enable us to invest in our public services. This means that we will continue to take a balanced approach to public spending.

"The Government will consider each specific workforce to ensure pay is set so that we can continue to both attract and hold on to the excellent staff that support our world-leading public services.

"Before we make final decisions on pay awards, we will seek the views of the eight

independent pay review bodies, which will consider the evidence on how we ensure we attract and retain the very best people within our public services, like giving people more flexibility over their working hours.

"They will report in Spring 2018, at which point we will consider their recommendations and announce public sector pay awards for each of those workforces."

UNISON has pledged to keep up the pressure until it gets:

- An end to the pay cap
- Government money made available for an immediate pay rise for all public sector workers
- An end to Government interference in bargaining arrangements for all public sector pay.

Dave Prentis, UNISON general secretary, believes the tide may be turning.

He explains: "The Government is now under real pressure to scrap the one per cent cap on public sector wages and UNISON is leading the fight to get you the pay rise you deserve. More and more people are listening and supporting our Pay Up Now campaign.

"We can't miss this opportunity. They won't pay up if we don't all speak up. So, please get involved in our campaign and help us win. Together we can do it."

You can sign the petition here:

<https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/200032>

“ THE GOVERNMENT IS NOW UNDER REAL PRESSURE TO SCRAP THE ONE PER CENT CAP ON PUBLIC SECTOR WAGES AND UNISON IS LEADING THE FIGHT TO GET YOU THE PAY RISE YOU DESERVE. MORE AND MORE PEOPLE ARE LISTENING AND SUPPORTING OUR PAY UP NOW CAMPAIGN.

Praise for CMD as calls hit peak

Staff in Leicestershire Police's CMD have been commended for their efforts to maintain high performance on both 999 and 101 calls on Halloween when the Force experienced its busiest day for four years.

The praise came just days after the Force launched the new Neighbourhood Investigation Units (NIUs) as part of the re-organisation under Operation Darwin.

The NIUs bring together the Managed Appointment Unit and the Force Investigation Units, moving these previously centralised functions out to eight neighbourhood locations.

On 23 October the new teams were up and running and a few days later, Assistant Chief Constable Rob Nixon said: "The changes have been designed to streamline investigations and improve working practices between investigative of cers and local neighbourhood teams, while also generating a more consistent service to

victims.

"We're now five days into the new model and there is already a very positive picture emerging. All incoming crime is being allocated to an OIC within 24 hours and 95 per cent of victims have been contacted within 24 hours of reporting – the remaining five per cent narrowly missed that 24-hour target by just minutes."

He added: "The early success of the new investigative model is testament to the hard work and effort that everyone across the Force. From the research and planning delivered by the Darwin team and those involved in ensuring the infrastructure is in place, to the officers and staff in both the neighbourhood teams and the new NIUs, everyone has played a key role in achieving a smooth transition."

The Force will continue to monitor the impact of the changes and will seek staff and officers' views on what could be improved.

Maternity pay success



A number of women who submitted grievances over maternity pay have now received settlements from Leicestershire Police after receiving advice from UNISON.

However, the UNISON branch believes the Force should have settled with all those affected not just those who submitted grievances.

"This is an issue we will continue to tackle on behalf of those members affected," says Chris Hanrahan, the Leicestershire Police UNISON branch secretary.

As part of the negotiated pay and conditions package included in the Police Staff Council Handbook, a number of improvements relating to maternity leave came into effect:

- **Maternity leave increased from 12 months to 15 months**
- **A new entitlement to take annual leave during a break in maternity leave was introduced**
- **An ability to carry forward annual leave if unable to take during maternity leave**
- **Maternity pay increased from the equivalent of 12 weeks at full pay to 18 weeks at full pay (for employees with 26 weeks' service).**

But it appeared forces were only applying the new provisions to those with an expected week of confinement (EWC) which began on or after 1 April 2017 meaning that those not within that restricted period would miss out.

UNISON argued the new maternity entitlements apply to any woman who was on maternity leave on 1 April 2017, regardless of when that maternity leave started or finished.

It therefore advised women affected to submit a grievance to the Force and provided a template for a letter to this effect.

Women whose maternity leave ended on or before 31 March 2017 and who returned to work on, or before, 1 April 2017 are not eligible for the new provisions.

Celebrating Black History Month

Leicestershire Police UNISON joined the wider UNISON family in marking Black History Month.

In a series of Facebook posts throughout October, UNISON members, alongside police staff and officers, shared the sentiment "Never Forget" to acknowledge the 30th year of Black History Month in the UK.

The event honours "inspirational individuals" within the black and minority ethnic communities.

Chris Hanrahan, Leicestershire Police UNISON branch secretary, said: "It's important to state that here at Leicestershire Police UNISON we place incredible emphasis on acknowledging the history of all our employees and ensuring the contributions of individuals in the past are recognised today and always.

"Black History Month is an event that we encourage everyone in the wider community to get involved with, and like our posters said, to 'never forget' the contributions of black and minority ethnic communities. Most importantly reminding them, we are one UNISON."

Branch appoints first training co-ordinator

Paul Gurney has been appointed as Leicestershire Police UNISON's first training co-ordinator.

Paul will spend his time co-ordinating educational courses, developing personal strategies for members and working closely with other UNISON branches across the UK.

"I have been involved in training and development throughout my career, from arranging and delivering courses to leading, tutoring and mentoring individuals. I am incredibly passionate about getting the best from people," said Paul (pictured right).

"With training and development at the forefront of UNISON's work, it is important to give members the opportunity to learn new skills so that they can overcome any challenges they face with the relevant skills."



Police staff to benefit from greater protection under assaults bill

MPs have supported a new bill that will bring better protection for police staff, police officers and emergency service workers.

The Assaults on Emergency Workers (Offences) Private Members' Bill, introduced by Labour MP Chris Bryant, received unanimous support from MPs during its second reading in the House of Commons in October.

And Lincolnshire MP for Boston and Skegness Matt Warman (Cons) spoke during the reading to put a case forward for the bill to be extended to other public care workers too.

"This is huge step forward for this bill," said UNISON branch secretary, Debbie Parker. "Everyone associated with it wants to ensure that those who attack emergency service workers feel the full weight of the law.

"Both those in the police service and our colleagues in the other emergency services, should be grateful to Mr Bryant for taking on this issue in Parliament.

"We should also thank Halifax Labour MP Holly Lynch who first offered her support and got fully behind us.

"It has appeared, in recent years, that assaults on emergency service workers have just been accepted as being part of the job. That cannot be allowed to continue.

"This bill will hopefully continue to progress through Parliament."

The bill will:

- **Introduce new offences including wounding or assault when perpetrated against an emergency worker in the performance of their duties**
- **Compel those suspected of assault - including spitting - who may pose a health risk to undergo blood tests**
- **Make it an offence to refuse to undergo such tests, and**
- **Lay down tough sentences for those convicted of these new offences.**

During the debate in the House of Commons, cross-party support and messages of thanks to Labour colleagues Ms Lynch and Mr Bryant were overwhelming.

MPs recounted some traumatic personal accounts of attacks on people working in the emergency services.

Mr Warman said that the scope of the proposed bill could be extended to cover other professions that offer emergency care.

"Much has been said about the definition of an emergency worker, and I would like to chip in a couple of extra suggestions," he said.

"I agree with a lot of what has been said about social workers. I would add — not simply because my Mum was a nurse

and I am married to a doctor — that our general practitioners are often at their most vulnerable when they are alone in a room with a patient who may be seeking emergency treatment with an on-the-day appointment.

"I urge the Hon. Member for Rhondda (Chris Bryant) and the Minister to consider whether workers in the NHS more broadly, who are often also providing emergency care, should be considered in this. I think, having declared my interest, that particular consideration should be given to GPs, because they are often particularly vulnerable.

"It is extremely good news to see the inclusion of prison officers such as those serving at North Sea Camp Prison in my constituency, and the RNLI, which does hugely valuable work on a voluntary basis.

"In Lincolnshire, we are lucky to have an RNLI that thrives and does exceptional work. Apart from having to deal with prank calls, they often find that the people who benefit from their work, in sometimes extraordinary circumstances, do not always appreciate it as much as they should."

The bill has now been scrutinised and amended by MPs during the Committee Stage and will proceed to the next stage, progressing to statute, hopefully, by Easter 2018.

Force increasing PCSOs

Lincolnshire Police has just had a new intake of 24 PCSOs who are now going through training.

Budget restrictions had seen the Force's PCSOs fall from a total of 149 to 118 through natural wastage but funding has now been allocated to allow more recruitment and a return to previous establishment figures.

"We welcome the fact that the Force is taking on more PCSOs," says Debbie Parker, the Lincolnshire Police UNISON branch secretary. "PCSOs are an important part of the policing family, supporting police officers and helping provide an invaluable visible presence in our communities.

"At a time when Norfolk's Chief Constable is turning his back on PCSOs I am pleased that our own chief officer team recognise their worth."



PCSO Billy Spence who is the branch Young Members' Officer and Communications officer.

CSIs: shift pattern under consultation

Lincolnshire's Crime Scene Investigators (CSIs) who are now going to be employed locally but work more regionally are being consulted over shift patterns.

The change in working arrangements is due to come into effect on 1 April next year so the shift consultation needs to be completed over the coming weeks.

Debbie Parker, branch secretary at Lincolnshire Police UNISON branch, explains: "We are working with members and the Force to get the best possible arrangements for staff but also meet the operational needs of the Force.

"Some staff will need to move their base station but no-one will be asked to travel for more than an hour or 45 miles to reach their base. We are encouraging members to consider the shift patterns being suggested but also put forward their own needs and considerations."

The Force has 21 CSIs.

Lincs

Focus on learning for branch

Learning has been a key focus for the Lincolnshire Police branch of UNISON with a number of initiatives proving successful.

The branch, through learning co-ordinator Nigel Wass and learning representative Gavin McCann, has been heavily involved in the joint UNISON Learning Lincs Project and hosted meetings of the network at Police HQ.

"We attended meetings and networked on the subject of learning at various locations through the county," says Nigel, who also spoke at national conference on the benefits of learning within a branch for members, "This has been of benefit to all involved and learning opportunities have increased for members across the county because of this partnership."

Members from different branches across Lincolnshire have attended many different courses as part of this partnership. These have included Power To Be You, Stress Awareness and Dementia Friends.

“ This has been of benefit to all involved and learning opportunities have increased for members across the county because of this partnership.

The branch has created links with Lincoln College and has advertised courses – including languages - to members which has led to learners being able to empower themselves at work to help the communities they serve.

UNISON Learning Representatives (ULRs) from the branch heavily advertised the union's regional course guide for 2017 and have actively attended as many work places as possible to get people interested in learning and the opportunities UNISON can bring. This included encouraging more members to get more involved with the branch by becoming a ULR or branch steward themselves.

A branch learning newsletter is well received with members giving feedback about what learning opportunities they would like to see.

The learning team co-ordinates new staff inductions for people joining G4S/Lincolnshire Police and actively use the benefits of learning as one of the key points of joining UNISON. This initiative, led by PCSO Billy Spence, has achieved an 80 per cent success rate in signing new members from these inductions.

"It has been a busy but very productive year with learning at the forefront," says Nigel.

Northamptonshire

County MP supports assaults bill

A Northamptonshire MP has given unequivocal support in Parliament to a new bill aimed at increasing the punishment dealt out to those who assault police staff, police officers and other emergency service workers.

Tom Pursglove, the Conservative MP for Corby, addressed the House of Commons during the debate which saw the Assaults on Emergency Workers (Offences) Private Members' Bill progress through a second reading.

He said that everything possible should be done to try to get the Bill on the statute book and sympathised with those have to reassure their families after being assaulted at work.

"Both my parents were police officers," said Mr Pursglove. "My Dad did 30 years' service and my Mum was a front-line officer until she had me, at which point she gave that up and went to work on the administrative side of the police service.

"I cannot imagine how I would have felt, when I was growing up, if my Mum or Dad had come home and told me that they had been assaulted at work.

"I cannot imagine the sense of anger, upset, bemusement and concern that I would have felt if we had had that discussion at the dinner table on an evening while I was growing up.

"It is just horrendous that anybody should feel that they have to go home after work and try to cover up what has happened so that their children will not be concerned about what Mummy or Daddy does at work every day.

"We have to get the bill on the statute book."

The bill has now progressed through the Committee Stage after being scrutinised line by line by MPs. It is expected to go forward for a third reading before becoming statute in April 2018.

Agreement will ensure consistent approach

A new learning agreement now formalises the support offered by chief officers for staff learning and development.

The agreement, signed by Deputy Chief Constable Rachel Swann and Lyndsay Smith, Northamptonshire Police UNISON secretary, also offers managers guidance on when they should approve time off for courses.

The branch negotiated improvements to the previous learning agreement and the new document will form the basis of a similar initiative in Leicestershire.

The agreement clearly sets out that time off should be granted following the below principles so there is consistency within the Force.

Functional skills

It is recognised that achieving functional skills qualifications in ICT, maths or English will equip staff with the practical skills

needed to live, learn and work successfully.

With this in mind, time off should be granted to attend such courses if organised by UNISON without the need to use TOIL or annual leave – unless there is an operational need which dictates the member of staff cannot be absent from their role.

Job-related learning

This will generally be provided by the Force and time off should be granted. If UNISON provides an opportunity which is job-related and complements the Force programme, time off should be granted without the need to use TOIL or annual leave – unless there is an operational need which dictates the member of staff cannot be absent from their role.

Career development

Where a member of staff will be gaining knowledge and skills that will aid their career development, it should be recognised that

Branch signs up to Dying to Work Charter

Northamptonshire Police has signed the Dying to Work Charter, joining a growing list of employers across the public and private sector in supporting the initiative.

Lyndsay Smith, the UNISON branch secretary, encouraged the Force and Police and Crime Commissioner Stephen Mold to sign up to the voluntary charter and was on hand when Deputy Chief Constable Rachel Swann did so, giving added protection to more than 1,900 people working for the Force.

The charter was established to protect and support terminally ill employees, preventing them being dismissed by employers purely because of their diagnosis.

"I am incredibly pleased to see the Force sign up to a charter which could one day be invaluable to so many of our employees," says Lyndsay.

"Anyone who has received a terminal diagnosis will be going through an incredibly tough and stressful time, their wellbeing is of paramount importance to us and it is essential they are in control of what is best for them when it comes to their employment. We are proud to commit to such a cause."

The charter states:

- We recognise that terminal illness requires support and understanding and not additional and avoidable stress and worry.



- Terminally ill workers will be secure in the knowledge that we will support them following their diagnosis and we recognise that safe and reasonable work can help maintain dignity, offer a valuable distraction and can be therapeutic in itself.
- We will provide our employees with the security of work, peace of mind and the right to choose the best course of action for themselves and their families, which helps them through this challenging period with dignity and without undue financial loss.
- We support the TUC's Dying to Work campaign so that all employees battling terminal illness have adequate employment protection and have their death in service benefits protected for the loved ones they leave behind.

Access to staff training

building skills and confidence will have a beneficial effect on them and, in turn, the organisation.

Where possible line managers should be supportive of this and time off should be granted without the need to use TOIL or annual leave – unless there is an operational need which dictates the member of staff cannot be absent from their role.

Non job-related learning

For initiatives that are for personal development only, line managers should be supportive but are not required to grant time off during work time for staff to attend. Staff could use TOIL and/or annual leave to enable them to attend.

UNISON will, where possible, arrange such initiatives outside of normal office hours and also try to accommodate shift workers so time off is not required.

Operation Balance – department reviews ongoing

Officials from the UNISON branch are involved in the current reviews of 13 departments as part of Operation Balance.

The reviews are part of the Force's commitment to further modernise and also ensure it works as efficiently as possible.

"While we can see that there may be reductions to staff numbers in some departments, it currently looks like new police staff posts may be created in other areas," says Lyndsay Smith, branch secretary at Northamptonshire UNISON.

"I am cautiously optimistic but, of course, we are never 100 per cent sure what is going to happen until a final decision is made. We appreciate that this is a very difficult and worrying time for our members but would like to assure them all that we are

doing all we can to ensure that there is no reduction in police staff numbers. We will keep everyone informed as these reviews continue."

“ We appreciate that this is a very difficult and worrying time for our members but would like to assure them all that we are doing all we can to ensure that there is no reduction in police staff numbers.

Nottinghamshire

Branch speaks from experience in offering support to Norfolk PCSOs



Just two years ago, the Nottinghamshire Police branch of UNISON led a campaign to try to prevent the Force cutting its PCSO numbers to 76.

So, when Norfolk's Chief Constable Simon Bailey announced that he wanted to axe all 150 of his own force's PCSOs, Nottinghamshire Police UNISON was quick to respond.

"During 2015 Nottinghamshire Police reduced PCSO numbers by 76 with UNISON Nottinghamshire Police branch leading a campaign to stop these cuts," says Chris Berry, branch secretary.

"Unfortunately, the then Chief Constable, Chris Eyre, still went ahead with the cuts to the Nottinghamshire PCSO establishment. But thanks to the UNISON campaign #PCSOSOS local communities from all over the county came out to support PCSOs

speaking out to the Chief Constable and Police and Crime Commissioner about PCSOs, providing an invaluable uniformed presence in the communities of Nottinghamshire.

"Due to our branch's campaign, we believe PCC Paddy Tipping said the following 'I know how much our local communities appreciate their presence on our streets and in our neighbourhood policing teams!'"

Nottinghamshire Police branch and other branches in the region, have sent a letter to the UNISON Norfolk branch secretary and PCSOs offering support. Nottinghamshire branch has also offered to share the campaign materials used in its 2015 PCSO campaign.

Norfolk Chief Constable Mr Bailey is arguing that abolishing the role of PCSO will save the force around £1.6 million, money he says would fund 81 extra police officers

and 16 police staff. Norfolk is also planning to close seven public counters and withdraw officers based in some county schools as it seeks to save money.

Other forces, including Nottinghamshire, have issued assurances to their own PCSOs.

Nottinghamshire Chief Constable Craig Guildford has said: "Nottinghamshire Police hugely values the role PCSOs play as part of our team I have no plans whatsoever to change that position as we recruit up to 200."

The PCC echoed the Chief's comments: "We will maintain the number of PCSOs in Nottinghamshire at 200 and we have recently carried out a recruitment campaign to help us do that. PCSOs are valuable members of our policing family in Nottinghamshire and I know how much our local communities appreciate their presence on our streets and in our neighbourhood policing teams."

Day trippers enjoy York visit

A number of members took part in the branch's yearly free day trip with the destination this time being the beautiful city of York.

The weather was in their favour and remained dry and sunny throughout the September day.

An exceptionally enjoyable day was had by all and planning will soon start for the next adventure in 2018.



Christmas draw

With Christmas almost upon us and back by popular demand, UNISON Nottinghamshire Police are organising the free members' prize draw with a variety of gifts up for grabs.

The draw will take place on 15 December at FHQ where members can go along for a hot drink and hot mince pies and cream.

"We have also planned to attend a number of locations around the Force from week commencing 11 December through to 22 December so look out for a location near you," says branch secretary Chris Berry.

Branch reaches out to members



Over the past three months the Nottinghamshire Police branch has managed to set up events at various locations around the county giving union officials and representatives the opportunity to interact with staff and give away a selection of goodies.

In the upcoming months, the branch hopes to visit more locations so if you would like the team to come to where you work, please send an email to UNISON Nottinghamshire Police.

The branch has also successfully recruited new staff from many sectors around the Force.

"We would like to take this opportunity to welcome all our new members to the branch. We look forward to meeting you all at some point on our travels," says branch secretary Chris Berry.

As part of its efforts to reach out to members, the branch held an education event at Phoenix House with Gavin McCann, UNISON East Midlands regional education co-ordinator.

Chris explains: "This gave members the opportunity to come along and discuss a variety of courses available to them free of charge in connection with Leicestershire College. We have received excellent feedback if you would like more information on courses again contact the office."



Branch hosts trans remembrance service



Deputy Chief Constable Rachel Barber was among those to attend the Nottinghamshire Police UNISON Branch's Trans Remembrance Service.

DCC Barber thanked everyone at the well-attended service for taking the time to remember those people who have been killed this year by murder or suicide as a result of their perceived trans identity. Their lives were ended because they did not conform to the gender roles that other people expected of them.

Transgender Day of Remembrance is held in November to honour Rita Hester, whose murder in America on 28 November 1998 led to the "Remembering Our Dead" web project and a San Francisco candlelit vigil in 1999. Rita Hester's murder - like most anti-transgender murder cases - has yet to be solved.

Chris Berry, Nottinghamshire Police UNISON branch secretary, explained: "Transgender Day of Remembrance raises awareness of hate crimes against trans people while offering an opportunity to show our respect to those who have died by anti-transgender violence. It also enables us to show our support to colleagues who may identify under the trans umbrella and to show our unity with the larger trans community."

Chris read the Lord's prayer for transgender awareness during the memorial service.

The event closed after those attending had observed two minutes' silence giving colleagues the opportunity to reflect on the nearly 300 people who had lost their lives because of transphobia across the world. You can find more details at <https://tdor.info/>

Don't miss out on all UNISON Living has to offer

As a member of UNISON, you don't just get support within the workplace but can also access a wide range of discounts and exclusive offers on everything from holidays and travel insurance to motoring and health and wellbeing.



UNISON Living provides members great deals for: travel, motoring, health and wellbeing, money and family.

Travel

UNISON's Croyde Bay Resort, Devon, offers members 15 per cent off holidays for hotel, self-catering and summer bed and breakfast accommodation.

The UNISON Travel Club gives members access to exclusive holidays and cruises.

UNISON Living also offers a 10 per cent discount on travel insurance, with single trip and multi-trip policies.

Motoring

Membership discounts are available for LV car insurance while LV=Britannia Rescue allows members to choose from three levels of cover with a comprehensive policy costing as little as £72 per year.

UNISON Drive can supply members with any car, new or used, from any manufacturer while Vauxhall Partners provide exclusive discounts on their vehicles for members and their family members.

Health and wellbeing

Under the health and dental plans available through UNISON Living, you can get cover for everyday expenses such as trips to the dentist, optician or physiotherapist.

Money

UNISON Living aims to help you get the most out of your money with low-cost home insurance, pre-paid cash back cards, financial advice and Union Energy's free and 100 per cent impartial price comparison service.

Family

UNISON members can shop online with **UNISONrewards.com** and earn cash back savings. Retailers supporting the scheme include B & Q, Tesco and Argos.

UNISON Protect offers a number of insurance products including accidental death cover, an accident protection plan, income protection, female cancer cover and life cover.*

To find out more about UNISON Living and how you could benefit, please visit <https://benefits.unison.org.uk/>

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UNISON Police Branch Office contact details:

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Lincolnshire Police branch: Tel: 01522 558375

Northamptonshire Police branch: Tel: 01604 703149
Nottinghamshire Police branch: Tel: 0115 9670 999 and either ask for UNISON or dial extension 3189833
Probation branch: Tel: 01

Support your union and let your union support you

With police staff and Probation Service jobs on the line due to funding cuts and limited pay rises, UNISON is busier than ever but is all encouraging all members of staff to join the union.

"Now is the time for anyone who is not a member to join up. By everyone working together we are stronger," says Rachel Hancorn, regional organiser for the East Midlands UNISON police and justice branches.

"We are also calling on more people to become union representatives so that they can offer support to colleagues and help us collect and spread information among the membership."

Please fill out the form below if you can spare a little time to help UNISON, and other staff and return it to your branch office.

Or sign up online by visiting www.joinunison.org.uk

Title:
First name:
Surname:
Contact number:
Email address:

Please tick this box if you are interested in finding out more about becoming a representative.

Member benefits:

UNISON membership gives you essential cover. The full range of benefits includes:

- Advice, support and help when you need it at work
- A helpline that is open until midnight during the week and 4pm on Saturdays
- Legal help for you at work and your family at home, subject to certain criteria
- Financial assistance and debt advice in times of need
- Compensation for accidents and injuries at work
- A range of exclusive member discounts that can save you and your family money when you are shopping, buying insurance or going on holiday
- Education and training advice and courses, leading to vocational and professional qualifications.