



CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY BRANCH NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2012

It is imperative that Unite members who have changed their place of work, job title, home address or contact details inform the Branch Secretary of their new situation.

The Branch are calling an extraordinary meeting open to both members and non-members, on Tuesday 23rd October, to commence at 1.00PM, upstairs in the University Social Club (USC).

The topic will be the proposal put forward to the University by Branch to change contribution points to incremental points across all grades.

The greater the support, the stronger the case.

Below is a communication from Mike Robinson, National Officer, Higher Education, outlining Unites response to the latest pay ballot result:

Colleagues

Please find attached the result of the strike ballot vote for Unite members working in UK Universities and part of the University and Colleges Employers Association national negotiations. I know a number of people have asked for a detailed breakdown of the result but the attached notice is the official result and no further details will be supplied.

Thank you to all who assisted with ensuring as many Unite members as possible voted in the ballot.

The ballot was called by your National Education Committee following a full consultative ballot of Unite members earlier in the summer. That consultative ballot was an indicative ballot as to how members wanted to proceed. The indicative ballot result was that over 87% of members voting had rejected the 1% offer from UCEA of a pay increase for 2012.

During August and September other unions had also rejected the offer and were also proceeding to a formal strike ballot.

Just before the Unite strike ballot result was announced last week some other unions declared their results. These are given below.

UCU achieved a mandate for action short of strike but did not achieve a mandate for strike action. Unison achieved a narrow result with 50.3% in favour of strike action and 49.7% against. EIS achieved a result 56% in favour of strike action. The GMB result is 57% in favour of strike action however in view of Unison and UCU decision not to strike, GMB have decided not to call on their members to strike either.

The joint union basis for pursuing action was to ensure all unions were taking strike action against UCEA subscribing institutions for the low 1% offer.

UCU have now advised they will not be taking any action in relation to the 2012 offer. Unison have also agreed not to take any action as has GMB. EIS which operates only in Scotland has advised it will be taking action on 23rd October.

Your National Education Committee considered all these facts at its meeting last Friday 12th October. It decided overwhelmingly because all unions were supposed to be in dispute together to ask local groups to hold workplace meetings or electronic or paper ballots or any other form of workplace consultation with members as urgently as possible to decide because of the changed circumstances whether members still wished to pursue strike action on the 1% offer with the knowledge that in England, Wales and Northern Ireland Unite currently would be the only union pursuing strike action. In Scotland Unite and EIS would be the only unions pursuing strike action.

Unite is technically still in dispute on the 0.5% offer made in 2011 by UCEA. Unite balloted members on that offer at the time and members also rejected the 0.5% offer but it was subsequently imposed. Unite members balloted for action short of strike namely working to contract and members have been working to contract since 2011.

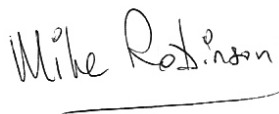
The National Committee also agreed to ask members at the same time as consulting further on the 2012 strike ballot result whether members still wished to apply the 2011 action mandate as well.

I would be grateful if local groups can consider these two items, the 2012 1% offer and the 2011 0.5% imposed increase together and advise, as a single question, whether Unite members wish to apply the strike action mandate and wish to continue the action short of strike mandate.

I need a response from your University or College membership as a single result from each HEI, for and against pursuing the mandates, direct to my office by noon on Monday 29th October at the latest. This is so the National Committee can consider whether to give sufficient time for 7 days notice to Employers of any action to call a strike of members before our existing strike ballot mandate expires on 8th November.

You are asked to pose a question to members that : "In view of the decision by UCU, Unison and GMB not to strike whether Unite members should continue with their proposed strike action and action short of strike?"

Yours sincerely



Mike Robinson
National Officer— Education

Please take time to cast your vote and support the efforts of our Union negotiators.

If any of you are worried about Cambridge's finances, this from the Guardian, 10th October :

Cambridge University is issuing its first ever bond, more than eight centuries after being founded.

The university is raising £350m through a 40-year security bond, which was priced in the City on Wednesday. The university is tapping the capital markets a week after being handed a top-notch AAA rating with a stable outlook by Moody's— a better credit rating than the Bank of England or the government.

The bond will yield about 0.6% more than a British government 40-year gilt, suggesting an effective interest rate of 3.85% over the lifetime of the loan.

Professor Sir Leszek Borysiewicz, vice-chancellor, said he was "delighted by the success" of the issue. Proceeds of the sale will be used to fund "general corporate purposes", including investing "in teaching and research at the highest international levels".

Last month Cambridge was ranked as the second-best university in the world, behind MIT.

Cambridge University is said to hold total assets of £4bn, after swelling its coffers during its 800 anniversary celebrations in 2009.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/business/2012/oct/10/cambridge-university-issues-first-bond>

On a happier note, below is a piece written by Mark Hurn, Unite Workplace Rep in Astronomy, recalling his visit to this years Burston Rally

The Burston Strike School Rally 2012

I went to this years rally on the coach provided free by the Cambridge Trades Council. Burston is a small village in Norfolk, which is famous for having the longest strike in history. The strike was by the teachers and pupils of the school and it lasted from 1914 to 1939. The dispute arose when the teachers of the village school were unjustly dismissed, victimized for their support of the local agricultural workers union. Because the children still needed an education, a small school house was built with subscriptions by sympathisers, mostly Union and Labour Party branches. The little school house is something you can see on your visit to Burston.

The village green is packed with stalls representing different unions (often with nice freebies on offer) and left-wing political parties and causes, all very colourful. There is also a stage with music and speakers, we heard a folk group called the Red Flags, a girl singer called Maddy Carty and a folk-rock group called The Bleeding Hearts. Bob Crow, a well-known leader of the rail union RMT gave a stirring anti-cuts and pro-socialism speech. He also arranged for an airplane towing a RMT banner to fly overhead!

It was then time for the march, a march along the country lanes which the school children used to march with the call of "We want our Teachers back!" As the weather was sunny and warm it was a pleasant stroll, to the music of two brass bands the RMT and the NASUWT (teachers union). There were lots of colourful flags and banners from union branches all around the East of England.

There were an estimated one thousand people on the march.

When we got back to the village, I was gasping for a pint of beer, a craving I was soon to satisfy from the beer tent on the green. There was also plenty of food on offer, with teas and cakes. I then went for a look round the second-hand book stalls (another vice of mine). The coach picked us up at 4.30pm and took us back to Cambridge, everyone said how much they enjoyed the day out.

I certainly want to return next year, and it would be nice to get our branch banner up there one year too. 2014 will be the centenary of the Burston strike and they are hoping to make that an extra big celebration. If you can't wait for next years Burston, don't forget the TUC march and rally against austerity in London on Saturday 20 October 2012.

Mark Hurn

Diary Dates

Extraordinary meeting:

Tuesday 23rd November, 1.00 PM, upstairs in the USC, Mill Lane.

**Proposal for conversion of contribution points to incremental points.
All welcome.**

Branch meeting:

**Monday November 5th @ 12.45 ,
Bramwell Lounge, USC, Mill Lane.**

National Officer for Education Sector: Mike Robinson

London & Eastern Region, Regional Officer:

Ian Maidlow

Transport House, 101 Madingley Road
Cambridge CB3 0EL

tel: 01223 353 048 fax: 01223 311 081

Acting Regional Secretary: Peter Kavanagh

“Woodberry”, 218 Green Lanes, London N4 2HB

tel: 020 8800 4281 fax: 020 8809 6501

For national news and issues please visit
the *Unite the Union* website at:

<http://www.unitheunion.com/>

More information and links

Information on the branch including details of working groups, branch structure and Minutes of monthly branch meetings can be found at:

www.unite.cam.ac.uk

It is imperative that Unite members who have changed their place of work, job title, home address or contact details inform the Branch Secretary of their new situation.

UNITE Cambridge Website

The Unite web pages are
available at: <http://www.unite.cam.ac.uk>

Website coordinator : Cathy Salkield.

Items for inclusion - please contact:

webmaster@amicus.cam.ac.uk

Use your website: copies of draft Minutes from monthly Branch meetings can be downloaded from the website and taken along to Branch meetings: this will help cut down on photocopying costs for the Branch.

You can also find details of Unite representation on Partnership Working Group (PWG) and University and Assistants Joint Board (UAJB) meetings.

Branch Newsletter

Please display a copy of the Newsletter in your workplace. If you need additional copies please contact Will. Please pass copies of your Newsletter to colleagues who may not be Union members to show them what Unite can do for them. Any items for inclusion in the Newsletter to Will Smith at:

newsletter@unite.cam.ac.uk

Branch Meetings

Branch meetings take place on the first Monday of the month (except when a Bank Holiday occurs) at 12.45 in the Bramwell Lounge, University Social Club (USC), Mill Lane.

Branch Officials and Organisation: contact details

Name		Email
Will Smith	<i>Branch Secretary, Individual Cases</i>	secretary@unite.cam.ac.uk ws103@cam.ac.uk
Andrew Moss	<i>Branch Chair Training Officer</i>	chair@unite.cam.ac.uk rep.training@unite.cam.ac.uk
Paul Stokes	<i>Branch Treasurer Pensions</i>	treasurer@unite.cam.ac.uk
Roger Tattersall	<i>Recruitment & Organisation Newsletter</i>	rft20@cam.ac.uk newsletter@unite.cam.ac.uk
Nik Zolman	<i>Job Evaluation Individual Cases</i>	job-evaluation@unite.cam.ac.uk
Dennis Appleby	<i>Retired Members Vice-Chair</i>	dja24@cam.ac.uk
Theresa Jones Haydeh Kordi	<i>Equality & Diversity</i>	dignity-equality@unite.cam.ac.uk
Vacant	<i>Student Liaison</i>	
Vacant	<i>Health & Safety</i>	health-safety@unite.cam.ac.uk