

## University of Bath UCU Branch meeting

Wednesday 24th January 2018 1.15 pm Room 5W 2.4.

### Agenda

**1 Welcome and apologies for absence.**

*Minute notes:* 43 attended, 15 apologies for absence.

**2 Minutes of Annual General Meeting held on 13 December 2017.**

*Minute notes:* to be made available soon.

**3 Vacant positions – nominations/volunteers welcome:**

*Minute notes:* None of the positions taken up –so Branch Secretaries will advertise wider.

Vice-President  
Green/Environment Rep  
BME Members Rep  
LGBTQ+ Members Rep  
International Members Reps  
Postgrad Rep  
Postdoc Rep

**4 USS Pension news.**

**Local Ballot result:** The turnout in Bath was 60.8% with 91.1% voting for strike action and 96.2% for action short of a strike. Well done to you all for voting despite HRs attempts to scupper the voting process.

**National result:** The turnout across all institutions averaged more than 58% (a record), with 88% voting for strike action and 93% for action short of a strike.

**The joint negotiating committee (JNC) on USS has concluded and the chair has ruled in favour of UUK's proposal. While UCU again expressed a willingness to negotiate, the employers simply refused to move at all from their original position of 100% defined contribution. This means we will have a strike.**

There is a local UCU pension's activists group and also a sign up list for members who want to help coordinate take place strike action.

- 14 days of escalating strikes likely to begin in 61 universities on or around 22 February if talks fail.
- Strikes to start with two days a week, rising incrementally to five days a week over an initial four week period.
- Members to be asked to work to contract, refuse to cover classes or reschedule those lost to strike action.

Minute notes: Michael Carley (UCU branch president) talked about the history of the USS pension dispute and the types of actions to take including picket line duties and action short of a strike. The support for Strike action locally and nationally was spectacular and challenged the government strike ballot rules.

Members expressed support for the strike action and discussed the need to prepare for a potentially long dispute in defence of their deferred pay. It was hoped our members, currently 599 members, would be on the picket line. We will aim to work in Unison and with the Students Union. It would be positive to have students involved and on picket lines. Chris Roche expressed solidarity and support from Unison. Some Unison members are under the USS scheme and also other University pension schemes will come under attack. Our VCs position on the USS board was mentioned and the University/VC will refuse as usual to mention her voting at the USS meeting.

The meeting noted that this was to be our most fervent strike, and some discussion revolved around strike/action short of a strike. It was felt that both actions would be needed. Discussion revolved around work to contract and boycotting external examining. Also it was noted using assessment boycott as well.

How much pay to be deducted due to strike action was discussed, whether it would be 1/365 or 1/260 of annual pay (260 being the number of week days in a calendar year). A recent law case see <http://reading.web.ucu.org.uk/2017/11/30/past-strike-pay-deductions-uss-and-pensions-action-group/> carried that 1/365 is the deduction to be made. This does not imply we have to work at weekends.

Concern was raised over hardship funds. Robert Scheichl suggested a crowd funding campaign to support members with hardship. Tim Barrett to look into the charitable/non-charitable nature of crowd funding and how our union's bank account will be used to collect donations. It was also felt that better off staff such as professors could donate to a hardship fund. Also it was suggested gift fund donations from other university staff and general public.

There was concern over non UCU members crossing the picket line. The position is: If a member of another union, or someone who's not a member of any union, wants to support us by staying away from work, you need to make it clear that if their employers decided to discipline them UCU wouldn't be able to support them. The practice is generally a loss of days wages. The individual must then make up their own mind. If they are eligible for UCU membership, their best course of action is to join there and then: they will then have the full protection afforded to any UCU member. Keep membership forms with you for this purpose. See <https://www.ucu.org.uk/article/5382/What-are-the-guidelines-on-picketing>

Also further information on strike action:  
See <https://www.ucu.org.uk/strikefaqs>

## 5 University Governance

Lets talk about the future When: Thursday, 25th January, 12.30-14.00 Where: The Edge

University-wide discussions about the kind of University we want to belong to and the reforms of governance and management that we need to support this. Open to EVERYONE. Wherever you work in the University, UCU members. please come along and have your say!

Minute notes: It was mention that Bath UCU members should try to attend, a useful forum for changing University governance. It was strongly felt that the VC should go immediately and the Governance structure, especially the Council, and Remuneration Committee should be changed.

## 6 Notices

- **UCU day of action against workplace racism:** 28 February 2018  
*Minute notes: It was noted this clashed with USS pensions strike action.*
- Annual meeting of academic related, professional staff: 1 March 2018 (representative needed)  
*Minute notes Tim Barrett noted that 2 representatives can go. Expenses will be paid.*
- Notice for the annual meeting of staff on actualised contracts: 9 March 2018 (Representative needed)
- Will send members further details of UCU notices.

## 7 Any other Business

Miranda Armstrong requested advertising “One Day Without you” on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> February 2018. A national day of action in solidarity with migrants from around the world who are living, working and studying in the UK.

Here are links to the national campaign web page and the Bath group Facebook page, to give you more of an idea of what we’re about:

<http://www.1daywithoutus.org/>

<https://www.facebook.com/1daywithoutusbath/>

Trade Union members are supporting Bath Welcomes Refugees Winter Calais Appeal. They are travelling to Calais with donated items during Inter-semester Break (31<sup>st</sup> January). For more information about what you can do to help:

<https://www.unisonatbath.org/2018/01/collection-for-refugees-in-calais/>

**8 Next meeting Date** Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> February 2018.

