



**BRISTOL TRADES UNION COUNCIL**  
(founded 1873)

**ANNUAL REPORT**

**2018**

**PRESENTED TO THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**WEDNESDAY, 27 FEBRUARY 2019**

**OFFICERS**

**PRESIDENT  
VICE PRESIDENT  
SECRETARY  
TREASURER  
COMMUNICATIONS**

**SIMON CREW  
HUGH KIRKBRIDE  
ANDY ROBERTSON  
LES WILLETT  
ALEX KEMPSHALL**

**UNITE  
UNITE  
RMT  
UNITE  
UNITE**

**EXECUTIVE**

**SIMON CREW  
ROGER THOMAS  
ALEX KEMPSHALL  
HUGH KIRKBRIDE  
ANDY ROBERTSON**

**AFFILIATED UNIONS AND BRANCHES**

ASLEF BRISTOL  
CWU BRISTOL & DISTRICT AMALGAMATED  
FBU  
GMB AVON AND WESSEX, SW REGION  
NUJ BRISTOL  
NUT BRISTOL TEACHERS ASSOCIATION  
PCS PINS  
PCS DSG SOUTH WEST  
PCS ASSOCIATE RET.  
RMT BRISTOL  
RMT RETIRED MEMBERS  
UNITE 8071, 1401  
BRISTOL HEALTH,  
UCU RETIRED MEMBERS  
UCU UNIVERSITY OF BRISTOL  
UNITE BRISTOL & GLOS COMMUNITY,  
UNITE INDESIT,  
UNITE UNIVERSITY OF BRISTOL,  
UNITE FIRST BUS,  
UNITE GPM & IT,  
UNITE BRISTOL RETIRED,  
UNITE CPHVA,  
UNITE 1403  
UNITE UK 178 (UCATT) BRISTOL  
UNISON UWE  
UNISON ENVIRONMENT AGENCY  
USDAW BRISTOL WEST P/T A038

These 29 Branches cover approximately 19,000 members and were represented by 57 delegates.

**ATTENDANCE AT BRISTOL TRADES UNION COUNCIL MEETINGS 2018**

	ATTENDEES	APOLOGIES
JAN	10	9
FEB	11	4
MARCH	11	4
APRIL	15	6
MAY	11	6
JUNE	16	4
JULY	16	5
SEPT	12	5
OCT	9	5
NOV	13	8
DEC	9	10

## SECRETARY'S REPORT

1. Bristol Trades Union Council has met 11 times during the year with an average attendance of 12 delegates where current issues affecting the Trades Union movement and the Bristol community are widely discussed and acted upon accordingly.

Bristol TUC Delegates continue to support local and National Demonstrations and campaigns including the TUC's "Love Unions" 2 Weeks of Action in February and again in October where we supported the Bakers Union and Unite's Campaign for recognition and pay at McDonalds, TGI Friday and Wetherspoon etc. We supported 2 CWU Demos against the closure of Crown Post Offices, including the one situated in the Galleries, Bristol. We also supported the UCU at a massive Rally at the University of Bristol in their Pension campaign.

Reports were given by PCS delegates regarding their fight to overturn the Government's 1% pay Cap on Public Sector Workers, NEU (NUT) delegates with regard to the expansion of Academies and UCU delegates on the Pensions and Pay Disputes. A motion was passed in support of workers at Bristol Waste with regard to their Pay Dispute.

We celebrated the 150<sup>th</sup>. Anniversary of the TUC in June with an open meeting on the theme "Future of Trades Unions".

Simon Crew, President spoke of the history of the TUC from its main base of Craft Unions and its growth to a peak of some 13 million with a mix of Craft and General Unions and its present membership of approximately 6 million mainly due to the loss of Trade Union organised industries such as mining, construction, docks, steel, manufacturing and the increase in new technology.

Delegates were reminded of the changes in current workplaces and the types of jobs available which should be seen as an opportunity to organise.

One of our two main Speakers, Bernard Kennedy, ASLE&F, spoke of how his trade union has maximised membership at the Bristol Depot which stands at 100% for example;

- Support and promote Social and Welfare issues
- Approach new starts, eg. at their induction and Training Courses
- Support local officials, Local Representatives and H&S Representatives
- Maintain Collective Bargaining and Machinery of Negotiations
- Support Women's, Young Persons and LGBT Committees
- Encourage Members involvement in ASLE&F's Charter of Aspirations which from 1995 prioritised Salaries, Pensions, Retirement at 55, Safe Working Environment and a Shorter Working Week.

Bernard said he is encouraged by the McDonalds and TGI Campaigns which require support from Trades Union Councils and established Trades Unions. Young people are encouraged by successes of Trade unions which should be publicised more widely.

Roger Thomas, PCS then highlighted the following issues for consideration;

- Future workplaces
- Austerity

- Cuts
- Precarious work
- Lessons should be learned from history when Trades Union were first established
- Effects of de industrialisation
- Although there are less number of strikes being recorded they are more lengthy eg. UCU and RMT Guard's safety Disputes
- American Trades Unions' \$15 per hour Campaigns being adopted by British Workers, particularly in London by low paid cleaners, including the Ministry of Justice cleaners, Harrods, Top Shop and Sotherby staff and the Bakers', Food and Allied Workers Union (BFAWU) campaign at McDonalds
- Role of Trades union Council to assist in organising and providing support

## 2. Representation

Our Representative on the **Bristol Airport Consultative Committee**, Hugh Kirkbride, continues to report back to us and the SWTUC on the actions of this committee.

3 Delegates, Sheila Caffrey, Roger Thomas and Simon Crew attended and participated in the March **Annual Meeting of South West Local Trades Union Councils** held in Bridgwater and the subsequent Autumn Meeting where Simon chaired the meeting. This meeting was also attended by Roger and Sheila.

We are ably represented at the **South West Regional TUC** by Simon Crew who was joined by a second Bristol Trades Union Council delegate elected at the Annual Meeting of South West Local Trades Union Councils, Sheila Caffrey, to the SW Regional Council. For the first time in a number of years Bristol Trades Council did not have a Representative on the South West TUC Executive Committee during 2018.

Sheila Cafferty represented us at the **National Annual Conference of Trades Union Councils** held in Manchester during June 2018. Sheila gave a comprehensive report and in her opinion this was a very positive conference. Apart from a number of motions being discussed and guest speakers, there were two workshop sessions delegates could choose from and Sheila chose one about "Building Trades Councils" and one about the campaign "Sheffield needs a Pay Rise".

We agreed the Executive meet to formulate a programme encompassing the suggestions within the written Report and those arising during the discussion. The following actions were recommended to form our Programme of Work;

Improving and developing Trades Unions participation.

- Invite a speaker from 2 Trades Unions to each meeting to address Council on current issues affecting them.
- Identify TUs who are not affiliated or there is little participation from affiliated unions and meet with FTO's in an attempt to reverse the situation.
- Invite Convenors/Leading Representatives from various Industrial/Public Services Sectors.
- Secretary to send regular short reports of meetings to Trades Unions

## Campaigns

- Refugee Rights. An Annual Festival is held regarding refugees in Bristol and we should seek to have a Stall at that Festival.
- Recommend we prioritise Housing and Pay.
- Set up a Stall in various neighborhoods around the City commencing in Bedminster on Saturday, 15<sup>th</sup>. December 2018 regarding St. Catherine's Development.
- Meet with Bristol CC Housing spokesperson
- Publicity
- Set up web page re Young people.
- Explore costs of light weight Bristol Trades Council flags.

8 Delegates distributed "Bristol's Housing Crisis" leaflets in Bedminster on 15<sup>th</sup>. December 2018.

At the time of writing we send delegates to the **University of Bristol's Court**. Hugh Kirkbride, Simon Crew, Simon Chapman and Sue Milestone attended this meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup>. December 2018 on behalf of Bristol Trades Union Council.

Unfortunately, a proposal to drastically reduce the number of Representatives, which we opposed at the 2017 Court, was carried. Simon opened the debate in opposition to the proposals stressing that within the Court's Statutes Bristol Trades Union Council is guaranteed places on the Court as Representatives of the working people of Bristol.

The result of the vote means that 20 seats will be allocated for unions and business but there was no indication of how those seats would be allocated and nominees from those bodies would be *appointed to Court by the Chancellor*. Further Consultations are to take place during the first 6 months in 2019.

### **Meeting with Bristol Mayor, December 2018**

We were advised on 7<sup>th</sup>. December of a meeting with Marvin Rees to be held on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2018 and although it was to be a "South West TUC delegation only" it was suggested by the TUCJCC Representative at the SWRTUC Exec that it would be good to have Bristol Trades Council represented if possible.

Hugh Kirkbride, on behalf of Bristol TUC attended the meeting with the Mayor along with Nigel Costley (TUC), Ines Lage (TUC), Karen Cole (Unite), Kevin Beazer (CWU), Nick Ireland (USDAW). Matters discussed included;

*Living Wage* where the Bristol Trades Council point about enshrining collective bargaining into the Bristol Living Wage process was agreed at the TU side pre-meeting and that Hugh could raise it as a potential mechanism. Marvin Rees and Kevin Slocombe agreed and asked Nigel Costley to re-write the couple of drafts he had done to include references to collective bargaining, *City Gathering*: The TU side to this meeting were all invited to this event which is being held on Friday, 11 January 2019 in City Hall, *Apprenticeships*, *Adult Skills*, *Dying to Work Charter*, *Night Economy* Board where Hugh raised the issue of health, and specifically mental health, impacts of night working, and Nick Ireland spoke about the assaults and threats to night

workers and *Relations with Full Council* where it was agreed that Bristol TUC would look at putting forward questions. This would fit with a Spring 2019 campaign on the Living Wage.

### **3. Annual International Worker's Memorial Day, 28<sup>th</sup>. April.**

The Wreath laying and rally took place at the Workers Memorial Plaque in Castle Park following a march from the UNITE offices, Tony Benn House in Victoria Street. Speakers included Brendan Kelly RMT Regional Organiser, Sheila Cafferty, NEU (NUT), Bruce Robin, Thompson Solicitors and Simon Crew, President Bristol Trades Union Council.

### **4. May Day March & Rally - Bristol**

The 1<sup>st</sup> May fell on a working day during 2018 however the March and Rally attracted a good turnout for a Tuesday, especially in terms of banners. The MU Band had contributed to the March.

The Rally in Castle Park was opened by Simon Crew, President of Bristol Trades Union Council. Simon introduced the speakers Brendan Kelly from RMT, James Davies from PCS, Lucy Langley-Palmer from the UCU, Kev Terry Unite Regional Chair and South West TUC Regional Chair and Evangelia Mitsiakou from the Communist Party of Greece (KKE).

The speakers gave updates on;

- the ongoing dispute with the train operators to protect the guards on the trains.
- the recent success in the universities in the fight against the bosses intention to destroy the pension scheme;
- the civil servants union PCS intention to recommend a national ballot for a fully funded above inflation pay rise
- Greece and the eastern Mediterranean;
- the dangers the workers face by the proposed merger of Sainsbury and Asda.

There was a consensus that we should hold the next event on Wednesday, 1<sup>st</sup>. May 2019.

### **Wells May Day**

Delegates from Bristol Trades Union Council reported there had been an excellent turnout for probably the first ever Wells May Day March, and that the Bristol TUC banner had been part of the parade. The recent formation of a Mendip Trades Union Council helped the Wells Labour Party mount a successful March and Rally which would put the Trade Unions in a leading role in the organisation of next year's event.

### **5. Brexit**

Debates are continuing between Brexit and Remain supporters but for Trades Unionists the main task still remains to be to fight off any attacks on workers' jobs and rights and to continue to fight to improve terms and conditions of employment.

- 6. International** Bristol Trades Council has a tradition of supporting workers in struggle throughout the world.

We affiliate to Cuba Solidarity Campaign, Palestine Solidarity Campaign, Committee for Defence of the Iranian Peoples Rights (CODIR) and ACTSA (formerly known as the Anti-Apartheid Movement).

We hope to support events during 2019 celebrating the 60<sup>th</sup>. Anniversary of the Cuban revolution and the 80th. Anniversary of the formation of the Cuban Trade Union Federation (CTC).

Donald Trump, President of the United States of America continues to cause a great deal of consternation worldwide due to his racist, sexist, anti-union and divisive views added to which is his attacks on the elected President of Venezuela thus creating the possibility of a Civil War, the ramping up of tension between the USA and Iran and the build-up of USA military capabilities in the Pacific.

Finally, I would like to thank Simon Crew, President (Unite) for the competent manner in which he has conducted our meetings and to our Delegates for their valuable input into the business of the Council.

Thanks to Unite who provide us with accommodation to hold our meetings and to the RMT who provide photocopying facilities.

Thanks to Alex Kempshall, Communications who maintains the Bristol Trades Union Council Website and Facebook page which assists in raising our profile.

**<http://bristoltradesunioncouncil.wordpress.com/>**

Andy Robertson  
**Secretary**