

Branch Welfare Officer - Report to AGM 2017

I would like to start off with this report by mentioning the enormous support that Fiona Duff my predecessor as Branch Welfare Officer gave to Taught by Mohammad Food Bank organisation and would like to extend a huge congratulations to Fiona as she has done a remarkable job both raising the awareness of our Food Banks in Dundee and reaching the phenomenal goal of 1 ton within a short period of time.

Dundee Together (Celebrating Diversity 2016)

Dundee Together organised a large event which took place in October 2016, venue was City Square and Marryat Hall. It was a great success and the atmosphere was astounding, it was organised by the local community for the local community and to be a part of something that headlined INCLUSION it was something special to see, all ages taking part from infants to toddlers using walking aids. For that one day it brought Dundee people together, in unity, working to make it a great success. There were different events going on throughout the day and people could come and go as they pleased. Some people got involved while others were happy to watch. Taught by Mohammad had a stall to raise the profile of the Food Banks which was quite successful, they received food and money donations on the day. Hopefully this year we can get the local schools more involved and raise the bar again - to include Dundee Schools awareness of the effectiveness that the Food Banks can have on their lives, and hopefully it will work towards elevating some of the stigma around the use of Food Banks. In these times of cuts and redundancies it could simply mean the choice of either sitting down to a hot meal on a winter's night or a cold one, **that's** just the cold reality of the cuts that local/national government are forcing on the working person.

UNISON "There for You"

I would like to take this opportunity to raise awareness and promote UNISON "There for You" charity. I'm not sure if it is widely known but this is UNISON's own charity and we hold various fundraising events throughout the year. Like the one that is being held after our late AGM 17:30 to 19:00 the fundraising event will start at 19:30 till Midnight. With raffles, prizes galore and live entertainment.

UNISON "There for You" has always been an important part of the Union, but never more so than now with the vast amount of cuts and job losses that our members are experiencing. The stress levels are on the increase within local government due to staff leaving and not being replaced, more duties are expected for the same money, and no extra hours are allocated in which to carry out these extra duties. UNISON "There for You" has seen a huge rise in contact from members for all kinds of assistance, but there are still members who don't know that this service exists or, maybe you don't realise what services we can offer or even how to access it. I hope most of you, received the leaflet regarding the "WINTER FUEL GRANTS" which should have been applied for in February closing date being 17th February. There is also services that have been refreshed in the Wellbeing programme such as – New elements

that include therapeutic breaks, outings for low-income families. There is essential household goods – which give an end to end service for cookers, fridge-freezers, washing machines, beds, bedding, TV's and more. Here is a brief summary below of how “There for You” can support or assist you in these trying times.

- Financial Assistance – If you are in financial hardship due to any unforeseen circumstances.
- Links to Credit Unions – for loans/savings
- Small Grants – School Uniform May-July and Winter Fuel Dec-Feb
- Debt advice – Freephone 0800 389 3302
- Wellbeing Breaks – during illness / respite for carers
- Support & Information – listening support & sign posting.

We recognise that financial assistance on its own very rarely delivers a long-term solution, so with this in mind we are continuing to develop our advice and information programme.

This support extends to your family members as well as the individual member.

If you have any questions regarding any of the above please do not hesitate to get in touch and we shall see how we can support you. Or if you would like to put your name forward to organise fund raising events for the Charity “There for You” or volunteer some assistance I would be to ready to listen to your ideas and help make them happen.

Welfare Officer Rosalind Ronan