



Branch meeting minutes

Thursday 7 March 2024, 6.30pm in-person in Croydon Town Hall and by Zoom

- 1. Present:** Branch Secretary Pete Raven, Branch officers: Matthew Connolly, Megan Dobney & Jack Ryan; online: Branch Officers Charlaine Nkum & Jack Ryan; plus 13 Branch members in the room and online
- 2. Apologies:** Branch President Maggie Hughes, Branch officers Terry Douglas & Adam Hughes, members Oana Olaru-Holmes & Gary Rise
- 3. Introductions:** The Secretary welcomed members to the meeting whether in-person or online. He had hoped to have the region's legal officer Asha Wije at the meeting but she was unavailable. We hope to see her in the future for an update on Unionline, the union's legal service for members.
- 4. Minutes of last meeting 23 November 2023:** had been circulated to all Branch members and were agreed a true record.
- 5. Motions to GMB Congress 2025:** with the 2024 Congress imminent, Pete flagged up the procedure for the submission of motions for 2025. Motions begin in a branch and your suggestions are welcome.

Under this item Ray Eveleigh proposed an **Emergency Motion** for the attention of the **2024 Congress:**

“That this Congress calls for a complete ceasefire in Gaza, an increase in aid, and support for the South African ICJ action against genocide.

“This motion to be passed to the Trade Union Congress and all political parties.”

The motion was carried unanimously.

- 6. Branch promotional expense:** Pete requested the Branch's support for £3,000 to be spent on promotional materials and the provision of a camera and mic to support our online attendees at Branch meetings. He explained that he is looking to get the two Gatwick branches into K19 and that all expenditure over £300 must be approved by a Branch meeting and the Regional Secretary. The request was agreed unanimously.

7. Branch update: Pete reported:

- We are still going through the process with the Region regarding Branch funding – up from 7.5% to 8.5% but we don't think this is sufficient (it was 10%) and won't know until we have done a complete quarter at this rate. We desperately need another Accompanying Rep, possibly focussed on the south west of London. We have more employers than most branches, sometimes with only 2 or 3 members, and all Accompanying Reps are very busy with little capacity.
- We have 7,663 members and the two Gatwick branches would bring in another 350-400 members. Each month we lose 50-60 members and gain 60-70.

Members made the following points in discussion:

- I am not getting the service I am paying for – there are not sufficient members to provide a service. Pete will discuss this with him later. Matthew Connolly asked if he would be a rep. He replied he had been asked this before – his workplace moved from Brixton to Croydon so he had to change branches.
- I agree, we had an issue and got no support at all. Pete asked where she worked and she said Canterbury. Pete said this is not in our Branch area, please email him tomorrow and he will sort it out.
- Is Surrey Council in our Branch? No, they are under their own local authority branch.
- How is the decision going to appoint a rep in her workplace? Pete replied he is in the process of asking all members in the workplace which of the volunteers they would wish to support for the role.
- If I'm one minute late my company takes of 15 minutes. Is this OK? Pete replied it is not uncommon and she should check her contract.
- Jack Ryan reported one member's issue took 11 meetings, but with GMB help she won.
- I want to "big up" Maggie Hughes for the support in my workplace.
- A question about Private Property Management Centre – Pete asked for an email with the details so he can respond.
- Pete reminded members that having a recognition agreement means we can engage in collective bargaining, but all member will get individual support. Sometimes another union has recognition, but we can seek a joint agreement. A member said that at his previous workplace members were more impressed with GMB reps than Unison ones!
- At HCI (a care home business) we're doing well for the GMB. At Tower Bridge we have most workers and now have reps there.

8. Any other business

- A member asked what was happening with Unionline. Pete said it was started 7 or 8 years ago but GMB is constantly pumping money in. It's being wound down. In future all cases will go through the regional office for decision as to whether a positive outcome is likely and a case can go forward.
- A member won a case during the pandemic but hasn't received the promised money. Pete asked for the details to be emailed to him so he can advise.

9. **Date of next meeting** Thursday 13 June, 6.30 in Croydon Town Hall and on Zoom.

Other dates: 5 September and 28 November

10. The meeting closed at 19.18