

DRAFT Minutes of General meeting on the 25th of January 2024, held remotely.

Attendees: NK,VM,SF,CG,DC,AM,ME,GC, AB,NC,AG

Apologies: KJ,SM,R O'H, KK,

ITEM 1. Minutes of meeting on the 5th of October 2023, and matters arising: –

Minutes approved as draft circulated

ITEM 2. Matters Arising the meeting approved the following actions:

List of judges not yet available.

The onus is on us all to ensure that people are represented as some people have reported that they are not being notified of meetings. Some invitations had ended up in spam folders, but clearly some members have remained in their local region rather than being transferred to the south east .We need to ask for permission for us to be able to check the list. We need to ask each member to write to the GMB to say that they should be in the judges branch. We suggest that Stuart writes to members they know and asked permission to give their details to Claire and Victoria and they put a notice on the digital noticeboard.

Action:

- a) SF to put a notice on web site.
- b) DS to email DJs/DDJs
- c) SF to do twitter account for judges branch so that we can use to get message out.
- d) SF to write to members to ask to give details to VM and CG

ITEM 3. Appointment of officers

Claire Gilham CG's advice was confirmed that new officers can be appointed at any general meeting, and it is for the Branch to decide what Officer posts to carry once the core posts provided for in the Rules have been filled, as they have currently .

In the event no new nominations were put forward today.

ITEM 4. Branch Secretary's report

Representation

Victoria McCloud VM gave an oral report supplemented by Stuart Fegan on Branch activity since the last meeting There is lots going on behind the scenes SF is involved in a number of individuals on an individual basis With very productive Union representation at members' formal meetings with

leadership judges including Natalie Leiven about a members reasonable adjustments.

VM gave an update re meet and greet including dialogue with previous shadow Justice secretary and also met the shadow minister for prison.

A JCIO report concerning VM's GMB membership had been dismissed following her report that CG had met with the former LCJ, who had confirmed it is not judicial misconduct to be a member of the union

Meeting Frequency

VM asked SF about meeting frequency as her view was the Committee would meet quarterly and the Branch annually SF confirmed CGs view that it is for the committee to make decisions as to the frequency of its meetings, but Branch meetings are required under Rules to be at least quarterly. It was agreed that we would stick to this unless/ until the branch has authority to do differently . VM suggested the committee can propose a different schedule of meeting.

Health and welfare.

VM attended the all party group on asbestos which is relevant for judges, because of the buildings.

VM:.

The branch has also requested for the union to be included on the judges council but has had no response

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ITEM 5 Security issues

Following the Milton Keynes attack the branch wrote to LCJ, re-security and safety and the widespread concerns over court safety citing numerous incidents and similar experiences of Members. It was pleasing to note that at Justice Committee the LCJ gave the confirmation we had requested and notified to all judges that they are not obliged to sit if they feel unsafe, this has been put into the public domain

ITEM 6 Elections to GMB CEC

Nominations were made for Central Executive Council nationally elected Race Reserved,(NK) Disabled (David Chrimes) and LGBT (Victoria McCloud) seats. CG advised that confidentiality of identity could not be

maintained in these roles, but until election it might be expected identity of candidates might not attract much public notice.

SF explained that the executive committee meet five times per year at Euston and there are also sub meetings. They are not huge meetings but they take a position on all motions. there is no political element and you can leave without notice

Action: CG and VM to fill in the forms for nominations

ITEM 7 Branch Development Plan

CG apologised that she had not circulated the Draft Rule 35 development plan required to be presented to this meeting and approved in January each year. VM concurred that this had been misunderstood. The meeting agreed that many of the points required could be distilled from today's debate . The development plan will identify: recruitment plan; schedule of branch meetings including dates and venue(s); union democracy activity; branch servicing and retention; branch organising; branch resources; communication; training
A branch recruitment plan will identify: the local areas and workplaces in which the branch will make the most effort to recruit new members; the opportunities the branch has to increase the number of members; the resources the branch considers necessary to carry out the recruitment campaign;

The meeting agreed that paper prepared by Abbas and others for the EHRC could be put forward

VM and GC to do a recruitment policy. Debbie to contact Abbas , Ashok and Kate

Action VM circulate draft development plan for debate/adoption at next meeting

ITEM 8 Communications

David Chrimes said that in respect of communications we could have a judicial branch, Twitter, Stuart Fegan said this can be sorted and we can be assisted with a newsletter on the website.

Nadine commented that we need to make sure that people are held accountable. AB asked why we can't contact members. VM confirmed that we need to move from regional branch to the south east SF stated that there were 64 members that we can communicate with.

Abbas Mithani agreed that we should have a newsletter on our own website and the union should be able to be involved. For example, it was not acceptable the way DS was treated, when others had been represented in meetings by GMB . (DS was told presider coming to see her with clerk and HR but she wasn't told why and was told couldn't have a union rep present.)

Abbas also stated that we owe a debt of gratitude to Kate Thomas, from whom a letter had been sent round this afternoon as she has single-handedly taken on the JAAC. The publicity is very important, and it needs to be reported more accurately. Kate takes on huge risk and she reports that she 's had very little contact from the union which is very upsetting as she does not feel supported. SF confirmed he had not been contacted by KT since 2022 and would need more time to look into the issues raised

AB reported that Kate, wished to personally thank Vicky for helping arrange representation for her, and we should also thank Ashok for taking on the JAC.

It was agreed that it's important that we have a policy in respect of recruitment and that Kate did not have notice of this meeting and she cannot attend. We know that there's a problem with communication and we know we can have a GMB noticeboard. Stuart Fegan confirm that Kate is not in the correct regional branch and that he will also contact KT to see what support she can be offered going forward.

Action: Committee asked to advise KT to put a motion to the next general meeting so that the issues raised in her letter can be investigated and put on the Agenda for informed debate at the next meeting. SF will then investigate and report to next meeting on response to KT's complaint that the union have not supported her in this case, in particular did not attend the hearing in London in December, did not comply with court orders and were then struck out.

Action: need to notify members of the availability of support that can be provided by union: newsletter? Twitter

ITEM 9 Branch Policy Proposals

The Chair reported no proposals had been received in time for the Agenda. Andy Brody, however reported that he had drafted and submitted proposals

for aHealth and Safety policy statement but they had not been received and he will resend them for inclusion on the next Agenda

The meeting agreed that Abbas' JSN submission to the EHRC could form the basis for a policy statement of the Branch

Action Andy and Abbas submit Policy proposals on Health and safety and judicial recruitment/ the JAC in time for inclusion on the April Agenda

ITEM 10 Schedule of Meetings

Amending the previously circulated Schedule of Meetings for 2024
Quarterly Branch Meeting 25 April 2024; AGM Branch Meeting 25 July 2024; Quarterly Branch Meeting 24 October 2024

ACTION Committee to determine frequency and timing of any separate Branch Committee meetings VM, Committee

ITEM 11 PART B

Branch Confidential

1. Members AGREEING to be publicly known as being GMB committee members:

A paper and motion had been duly submitted from Kyrie James in relation to this item on the circulated Agenda expressing concern over due process of debate and the difficulties for Members where Officers had submitted themselves for posts with the intention of remaining anonymous. Ill-health prevents Kyrie's attendance today .

Unfortunately in the absence of an e-mail circulation list available to the Branch President and Secretariat it had not proved possible to distribute the papers for this motion except on short notice and by WhatsApp, which is not acceptable as that group is only Committee plus a few Members.

There are two distribution problems, firstly the email list kept at the central office for the Branch is incomplete; secondly the office cannot release it to Branch Officers without each individual's authority

SF advised that several Branches have this issue where Members wish to remain anonymous, sometimes only the Branch Secretary is named and

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distribution is handled only centrally, but both sides of the issue can be looked at .

Action: Kyrie's motion is deferred and held over to the next Agenda . Papers will be circulated with that Agenda to members and debated fully SF to advise as to the rules re: naming of committee members (by 7 days before next meeting)