



Branch meeting minutes

Thursday 28 November 2024, 6.30pm in-person in Croydon Town Hall and by Zoom

- 1. Present:** there were 6 people in the room and 10 who tried to participate via Zoom. Unfortunately there were issues with the Zoom connection and although the names of those in the Waiting Room could be seen they could not be admitted to the meeting for reasons unknown. *In the room:* Branch Secretary Pete Raven, Branch Officers Matthew Connolly and Megan Dobney, plus 3 Branch members.
- 2. Introductions:** after trying (and failing) to sort out the technology problems the Branch Secretary welcomed members in the room to the meeting.
- 3. Apologies:** Branch President Maggie Hughes, Branch Officers Terry Douglas and Andrea Gilbert.
- 4. Minutes of last meeting 12 September 2024:** were noted but approval was deferred as there were insufficient members in the room who had been at the meeting to approve them. Pete reported on the following Action Points:
 - **Update on new accompanying reps:** welcome one new rep – Andrea Gilbert
 - **Labour Research Department Employment Law Books to be sent to Accompanying Reps:** Pete reported this resource was now available online and not in hard copy. Access codes will be circulated to Accompanying and Workplace Reps
 - **Team meeting for Accompanying Reps:** one took place on 14 November and another will be held on 18 December
 - **Unionline update:** no concrete news and business as usual for the moment
 - **Members interested in being Congress 2025 delegates to contact Branch Secretary and attend November Branch meeting:** see item 5 below
 - **Members wishing to submit motions to Congress 2025 to send to Branch Secretary ahead of Branch meeting:** see item 6 below

5. Congress 2025 Branch delegates: Pete reported 2 members had indicated their interest and had attempted to attend online. Both had committed to attend Congress and all necessary pre-meetings if elected. Another member was in the room and would be checking her availability for the dates. Agreed: main delegate Lisa Edwards, 2nd delegate Chris Wongsoputro, 3rd delegate (if availability confirmed) Yvonne Prendergast.

It was confirmed that delegates will be required to submit written reports for the Branch after Congress. Pete will remind them of this.

6. Motions to Congress 2025:

- Andrea Gilbert had mistakenly submitted a motion to regional equalities officer Michelle Gordon (rather than Branch Secretary). Pete will obtain it and circulate to Branch Officers for views.
- Leroy Powell – see report below under Any Other Business

7. Complaint against Branch Secretary: Branch member Steve Haggart submitted a complaint against Pete Raven regarding his support during an issue with his employer. It was proposed (Megan Dobney) and seconded (Matthew Connolly) and agreed that this would be better and fairer to both if it is dealt with by the Regional Committee rather than at a Branch meeting and so the matter will be referred to them with a request that it be expedited.

8. Branch update: Pete reported

- At 18 November membership was 8,280 – there has been a slow increase
- We have about 335 members working via various platforms (Bolt, Uber, Deliveroo etc). Because of the nature of their contracts we don't have the facilities to properly service them and want to see them transferred to the Uber Branch in Southampton and this is being taken up with the national union
- We are losing one of our team – we are sorry that Terry Douglas is leaving us in February. He does most of the telephone response and it will be a big loss. Pete will consider options in the new year
- This has been a difficult few months with almost half the team off sick or otherwise unavailable and the rest trying to pick up the slack. We have mostly succeeded but some members have had to be referred to regional officers for support

9. **Any other business:**

- **NHS Covid payments:** Branch member Leroy Powell from ISS Kingston reported that during recent visits he is coming across more and more hospital staff, particularly those in the lower paid and outsourced jobs, who have not had the Covid payments announced by the government at the time. He raised this a year ago with regional officer Helen O'Connor but she has been very busy. It was suggested that this is an important issue for our low paid members and should be sent to Congress as a motion (it doesn't only affect members in our branch). This was agreed and Leroy will draft a motion and email it to Pete who will share it with Branch Officers.
- **Amazon:** Matthew Connolly reported that he has been made aware that a building site in Mitcham Junction (the groundwork has started) is intended to be a new Amazon warehouse/fulfilment centre. Pete will report this to the regional office.
- **Regional Secretary:** Pete reported that regional secretary Justin Bowden is retiring and a new person will be appointed in the next 2 weeks.

10. **Branch meetings 2025:** dates will be agreed at the team meeting in December and circulated to members. We will try and have some meetings out of Croydon to enable wider geographical attendance – perhaps Guildford, Bromley etc

11. The meeting closed at 19.25