



Branch meeting minutes

Thursday 7 September 2023, 6.30pm in-person in Croydon Town Hall and by Zoom

- 1. Present:** Branch Secretary Pete Raven, Branch officers: Matthew Connolly, Megan Dobney; online Branch President Maggie Hughes, Branch Officer Jack Ryan; plus 5 Branch members in the room and online
- 2. Apologies:** Branch officers Terry Douglas and Adam Hughes, members Bill Hyatt-Steel, Stoyan Kolev, Gracian McBean, Gary Rice
- 3. Introductions** The President welcomed members to the meeting whether in-person or online.
- 4. Minutes of last meeting 15 June 2023:** agreed a true record. Pete apologised for the late arrival of the notice of the meeting – due to technical problems at GMB national level.
- 5. Motions and delegates to Congress 2024:**
 - **Motions:** Pete outlined the purpose of Branch motions and said they can cover any topic to be voted on at GMB National Congress in Bournemouth 9-13 June next year. They will need to be agreed at the November Branch meeting and must be received by him by 9 November peter.raven@gmbactivist.org.uk
 - **Delegates:** Pete encouraged members to put themselves forward for election at the November meeting to represent the Branch at Congress. We can have two delegates and hope to continue our practice of ensuring a strong presence of women members on the delegation. Note that delegates must also attend two previous meetings with the other delegates from the Southern Region. All costs will be covered by the union. Members may also attend as visitors but must be self-funded.
- 6. Issues in the workplace:** Pete emphasised that any member with a workplace issue should contact the Branch immediately it arises to enable the Branch to advise and support. They should not delay if notified of a date for a grievance, disciplinary or sickness absence meeting and should not rearrange until they have spoken to the Branch so we can allocate a rep to support them. It is advisable to talk to us first before submitting a grievance – again, so we can advise. He reminded members that should an issue go to an Employment Tribunal there is a strict requirement for a claim to be submitted by three months less one day of the date of the “incident”. However, you can submit a grievance at work at any time – just call us! A member

asked if it was possible to submit a grievance on behalf of someone else? Pete replied on rare occasions, but it is better that it comes from the member.

- Jack said he may submit a motion to ban e-bikes and e-scooters from pavements
- A member asked if a motion to extend the 3 month submission period to Employment Tribunals would be possible – Pete said, yes and there is also the issue of having to wait for 2 years before the right to go to a Tribunal for unfair dismissal. Megan said employment rights from day 1 of employment is in the document agreed by the Labour Party (A New Deal for Working People <https://labour.org.uk/page/a-new-deal-for-working-people/>) and trade unions affiliated to the Labour Party – including the GMB – so it is already GMB policy.

A member said she had changed companies – how does she inform the union? Pete said she can either do it online through the MyGMB page <https://www.gmb.org.uk/> (Members tab, then Log in) or telephone the regional office 020 8397 8881 or if you can't get through, phone the branch 07419 981 545.

7. Branch update Pete reported a win in the dispute at Urbaser where around 70 members balloted for strike action but management caved in before industrial action was taken. There are ongoing issues with refuse collecting companies including Veolia in Arun.

- Branch membership has risen slightly to 7,481
- We want to rebuild workplace strength and get legal recognition for the union – this gives us more rights on a number of issues including consultation
- Because of GMB's unusual structure some members are contacting the London Region when they have an issue – please note that K19 South London General Branch is in the Southern Region.

8. Any other business

- Pete explained how the branch distributes members' cases to our Accompanying Reps.
- A member said she was really happy to attend her first GMB meeting. Pete thanked her and outlined some of the opportunities for involvement in the union – such as through the Region's Women's Conference
- Noted with thanks that a member is encouraging his colleagues at Mitie in Tulse Hill, Lambeth, to join the GMB. Pete asked to be kept informed and ask for assistance if need be.

9. Date of next meeting 6.30pm Thursday 23 November, at Croydon Town Hall and online.

- A reminder: any proposed motions must be in to Pete by 9 November

10. The meeting closed at 19.35