



Richmond upon Thames Branch

Branch Committee Meeting
Thursday 3 September 2015 at 12.00-2pm
The Terrace Room, York House

Apologies: David Hodgson; Fiona Campbell

Present: Joanna McCoulough (JMCC) Branch Chair; John Holroyd (JH) Branch Secretary; Don Rainbow (DR) LGBT & Vice Chair; Mike Potts (MP) Treasurer; Bill Reed (BR) Welfare Officer; Ernie Hunt (EH) Retired Members; Herb Simms (HS) Black Members

Guest: Shirley Mills (SM) Regional Officer

Minutes: Maggie Fordham

Minutes and Matters Arising:

JMCC suggested peer support sessions run the last Thursday of every month am at the Unison Office to provide for discussion on cases.

Wandsworth

JH attended Cabinet Meeting and emphasised staff rejection of Appendix7 proposals, especially those concerning sickness. The leader of the council, Samuels affirmed that we are still very much at negotiation stage. Subsequent to this, an All Staff meeting held with Appendix7 only item for discussion. John went through each proposal briefly, confirming that sickness is the biggest issue. Leave proposals meant some staff would lose out. It looks like the Richmond model concerning redundancies will be adopted. Ian Stedman head of Richmond HR will oversee the negotiations.

A meeting has been arranged for Monday 7 Sept where all unions from Richmond and Wandsworth will meet with Ian Stedman. The purpose of the meeting will be to set terms for future meetings and negotiations.

John and Greta met with Wandsworth Unison on 29 July, where they met with their Branch and Regional Officer. Talks focused on issues facing both branches on proposed sharing of staff T&Cs. **JH & GF** spoke of rejecting Wandsworth's Sickness Policy at an All Staff Meeting on 9 July.

BR referred to an update from Gillian Norton that spoke of the possibility of a newly created shared body to be the new employer for both councils. He felt that recognition will be an issue and that we need to establish the new negotiating terms for trade unions. He said that they are looking at 25% of staff costs to be saved.

JH confirmed that when establishing the new employer AFC, the council agreed to the same T&Cs as the council.

JMCC confirmed that the same management structure and all T&C travelled with the staff, so it is likely to be the same.

SM added that many similar re-organisations have brought back national T&Cs.

JMCC stated that Unison will make a stand on T&Cs whereas GMB are more likely to accept the proposals.

DR reminded us that Gillian Norton's statement was only a suggestion.

SM added that several models exist and gave the example of Kingston College where a modification order was applied

JMcC confirmed that a modification order can apply continuous service for example

JH added that these are national issues .

DR urged John to set up the next meeting with Lord True

BR suggested we reject Appendix7 and state that our T&Cs are non-negotiable

JH said that winning the sickness issue may mean we concede some others.

BR suggested we ask for more information on Appendix7

JMcC was of the opinion that we don't need any more information.

DR asked if we have any info on sickness figures

JH replied that we do have sickness figures for all London boroughs and that Wandsworth's figures are a lot better than ours. He will report back from meeting on Monday.

Recruitment and Wellbeing Day

JH spoke on the Unison recruitment drive 21 Sept – 3 October. We were hoping that our proposed Wellbeing Day will fall into this time slot but we are now looking at 3 November for the Wellbeing Day. What we are arranging for however is a targeted recruitment drive at AFC. This will be 22 & 29 September and will be supported by regional officers.

DR thought that the Rugby World Cup might be a barrier to communication for any such events, finishing on 31 October.

JMcC had to leave at 12.50, **MP** took over Chair

DR suggested getting Public Health department involved in Wellbeing Day and that the council needs to follow up the event with all year support

BR agreed that we should explore working with the council and maybe ask Wandsworth Unison as well.

DR thought that Unison might explore having our own page on the Staff Newsletter 'Out of the RUT' which is distributed online quarterly. It would be an opportunity to promote Unison and can direct people to our own website.

Website

JMcC Informed the meeting that **BR** has offered his services to help with the website.

AOB

DR raised the thorny issue of a Christmas Party.

MP gave the meeting the benefit of his experience and commented that Unison social events have been in decline for many years. The venue and time of day/evening is always an issue and he called for some ideas.

BR suggested an all members meeting followed by a social event.

DR said that younger members might prefer a disco event and added that whatever we choose, we must think about booking a venue soon.

SM suggested a meal for Branch Officers and Stewards

EH said that parking is an issue

BR suggested posting a request for ideas on the website.

Meeting closed 1.12, date of next meeting tbc