



Richmond upon Thames Branch

**Branch Committee Meeting
Thursday 28 January 2016 12-1pm
The Salon, York House**

Apologies: Joanna McCoulough

Present: Greta Farian (Regional Officer); John Holroyd (Branch Secretary); Mike Potts (Treasurer); Don Rainbow (LGBT); Bill Read (Welfare Officer) Scott Herschell (Townmead Depot); Mike Opitz (AFC); David Hodgson (Libraries); Balinder Johal (RuTC)

Minutes: Maggie Fordham

JH began the meeting by congratulating Mike Potts on his 70th Birthday on 1st January and presenting him with an ancient and authentic gavel to commemorate his 50 years in public service unions.

MP chairing meeting began by reporting the absence of minutes from December 2015 as meeting was inquorate.

DR requested that in support of the event for LGBT History Month, we donate a sum in support of the charity The Albert Kennedy Trust. The event is the Pink Proms on Saturday 27 February at Normansfield Theatre, Langdon Park Teddington TW11 9PS.

He reported that there are no staff support groups in Wandsworth although Gillian Norton is very much in favour of them. They have not been part of the SSA discussions.

MP suggested a donation of £250, **JH** seconded.

SSA

JH reported that the two major areas of contention are still PRP and Sickness Policy.

PRP more of an issue for Wandsworth staff than Richmond; was sold to us as part of the package (Appendix7). Many of the responses/questions resulting from the Unison presentation on 13&14 January expressed concerns about the differentials between those on higher and lower pay scales and the amount of time & money that will be spent on administration. All were critical of the scheme. Further discussion to take place this coming Tuesday.

Sickness Policy

Biggest issue of concern reflected in responses. Wandsworth policy now on Rio. Management desperately clinging to this policy. A moratorium may be the only option at the moment. Need to consult members if no agreement reached, possibly a ballot. **A Section 188 has been issued by the management** which allows 45 days of further consultation. If no agreement reached by then, management will dismiss and re-engage staff. This risks a withdrawal of success gained in other areas of Appendix7 negotiations.

DR pointed out a precedent set 2 years ago when the Finance Dept for example accepted new T&Cs

BR Suggested the issuing of a 188 is a means of intimidating and threatening **JH** to force members to accept something they don't want. People are angry. He recommended an informal ballot to test the water.

JH said that although people may vote for industrial action, they are unwilling to actually take any.
GF reminded us that negotiations are not over yet and that to conduct a ballot too early could backfire on us if the response is not for IA.
MO said it looks like AFC is coming to Wandsworth. Social work is a stressful job with high levels of sickness. Wandsworth figures may be misleading as people will take leave or toil as an alternative.
DR said losing a day's pay for strike action does deter people, people may go for working to rule.
GF informed the meeting that most damage to employer can be done by those staff dealing with finance striking for a day – parking, cashiers, staff who raise money.
JH intends to cancel all members meeting planned for 4 Feb and delay it to 11 Feb to allow for all-day negotiation meeting at Wandsworth next Tuesday.
BR asked when the final decision will be made.
JH replied that a special meeting will be needed for this.
DR suggested one response – no redundancies.
DH informed the meeting that 4 redundancies are planned for the libraries.

Pay
GF stated that members will need to be consulted on the pay offer of 1% for this year and next. There will be more for staff on lower rates to bring pay up to National Living Wage. Consultative document will be issued shortly; deadline to consult members is 18 February.
JH stated it is not a priority for us at the moment.

Re-organisation
JH asked if any committee members had attended meetings or had feedback from staff who had. Reports were sketchy with conflicting information being reported. They were found to be ineffectual and there was no possibility of reply.

AOB
MF requested information on cases stewards had been involved in last year 2015. Just basic details, name, unison number, problem and outcome. Intends to compile statistics.
MO will be attending a Momentum meeting in Wandsworth where he intends to raise issue of Unison and local government problems.
MP asked him to report back next meeting.

Meeting closed 1.06

Next meeting will be **AGM Thursday March 24, the Salon 12-2pm**