



Richmond upon Thames

**Branch Committee Meeting
Thursday 4 December 2014 at 12.00pm
The Terrace Room, York House**

Apologies: David Hodgson, Tracy de Rose, Ernie Hunt, Greta Farian, Mike Opitz, Fiona Campbell.

Present: Joanna McCoulough (Chair), John Holroyd, Mike Potts, Don Rainbow, Steve Cunningham, Balinder Johal, Maggie Fordham (minute taker)

Matters arising from meeting 23 October 2014

Mf asked to leave room, JMc took over note taking. With reference to appointment of MF as Branch Administrator, a query had been received about the appointment. It was accepted that a paper might have been circulated prior to the meeting, detailing the proposal to appoint MF. It did not affect the outcome however and it was agreed unanimously that MF's appointment be confirmed. MF returned.

Thames Agreement

JH & DR met with Lord True and Gillian Norton. JH reported that Lord True was bemused by the lack of progress on operations thus far. It is likely there will be significant cuts at senior level.

It was GN's view that there would be one Chief Executive for Richmond and Kingston councils.

JH reinforced that the process is not a merger but rather an agreement to share services and operations. He added that there is the possibility for departments to remain separate if a good case is presented.

DR questioned the inclusiveness of the consultation when invitations to staff to attend meetings is selective.

SC has not been invited to any meetings.

JH proposed setting up groups to discuss the issues. He added that there will be cuts to HR in Kingston which serves both boroughs, ie only one senior post serving both. This seems very short sighted as there will be a need for max staff in HR to see through the changes and that maybe this cut should be delayed until the end of the process.

JMc asked how Lord True responded to this information.

DR replied that he was surprised and not aware of this. DR asked how sovereignty was to be maintained with only one Chief Executive for example.

DR feared that Richmond council will be disadvantaged. JH observed that this is a concern as some Kingston departments are less efficient.

**Action – JH to take concerns to next JCC
And to set up Thames Agreement
members’ groups**

Web site

JMc reported that there has been positive feedback. Further development is needed however and she requested articles and photos.

**Action - Committee members to provide
photos and articles for web**

Facilities Agreement

JH circulated a draft document outlining new rules for Trade Union facility time in Richmond & Kingston boroughs. Content mostly standard, but time off to attend conferences is contentious. Our current agreement allows paid time off to attend if conference falls on working days. The new agreement however proposes that only one day be paid time off. JH asserted that each borough needs their own agreement. JMc urged all cttee members read the document and send in comments.

MP referred to number 7 in the document and asked for clarification that JH has 5 days and JMc has .05 days and that this constitutes our 5.5 allocation.

JMc queried if H&S should warrant additional time.

JMc stated that she would send an electronic copy to cttee members.

JH suggested she hold off until the imminent revised edition is received.

SC asked how this affects AFC.

JMc replied that it has been devised by defining hours for different companies.

DR referred to number 5 in the document and suggested that staff should be allowed paid time off to attend AGM for example.

**Action – JMc & JH will raise issues at
next JCC**

Branch Reps & Training

JMc asked cttee members the date of their last training. Re-accreditation needs to be undertaken every 5 years to meet legal requirements when representing members. JH, DR, JMc, BJ need to attend. BJ asked if that could be during summer hols to enable him to attend. JMc said it would be good if they could all attend together.

**Action – MF to contact all cttee members
to check the need for re-accreditation**

Recruitment

DR suggested that we conduct a recruitment drive among borough social workers before AGM (18 March). Stalls could be held in offices at Sheen, Teddington & Whitton.

JH confirmed that papers had been sent out this week re AGM on 18 March. He asked DR who to contact in social worker offices.

DR said he could provide. He also suggested targeting depots and some 'break out areas' in civic centre in Feb before AGM.

There followed discussion on specific workplace issues.

JH to request details and dates of next JCC at RuTC.

MF reported that she and Alice Dawney are holding a stall at RuTC on 11 December. Thompsons will be attending. It was suggested that Frizzel Insurance attend too.

<p>DR to provide contact details for social work offices in Sheen, Teddington, Whitton.</p> <p>JH to contact RuTC re date of next JCC.</p> <p>MF to contact Frizzel</p>
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Wishes for a Happy Christmas were shared, meeting closed at 1.00pm.

Next Committee Meeting Thursday 5 February 2015