



**MINUTES OF SECAMB UNISON BRANCH
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
held on 9 February 2015
at the East Court Mansion, East Grinstead**

Present: Eamonn Bell, Hazel Brown, Kevin Hedges, Bryan Hopperton, Roger Laxton, Neil Martin, Torben Rybner, Amanda Sands, Peter Steventon (Branch Secretary) Nigel Sweet, Dave Wallace (Branch Chair)

In attendance: Mick Moriarty (Regional Area Organiser)
Ann Sephton (Minute Taker)

Guest Speaker: Alan Lofthouse, National Officer

DAVE WALLACE IN THE CHAIR

ITEM	AGENDA	ACTION
1.	The Chair welcomed those present to the Annual General Meeting and thanked everyone for attending and giving up their time. Apologies: James Apps, Kevin Long (Treasurer), Graeme Pidgeon and Jenny Young.	
2.	Ratification of Stewards and Officer Posts Branch Secretary – Peter Steventon proposed by Hazel Brown and seconded by Mark Bailey Branch Chair – Dave Wallace proposed by John Vivian and seconded by D Phillips Senior Representative 111 – Bryan Hopperton proposed by Dominic Delorgy and seconded by E Brooker Welfare West – Jenny Young proposed by James Burgess and seconded by H Saarepera Treasurer – Kevin Long agreed at the meeting Senior Rep East Sussex and Kent - Neil Martin agreed at the meeting.	

	<p>Welfare East – James Apps agreed at meeting Equalities Officer – Torben Rybner proposed by Colin Hall and seconded by Maureen Farmer. Stewards – Eamonn Bell, Amanda Sands, Torben Rybner (111), Kevin Hedges, Nigel Sweet and Roger Laxton were welcomed to continue as Stewards. Those not present – Graeme Pidgeon, Colin Payne, Nigel Coles, Scott Robinson, Greg David, Stephen Hearson and Chris Blewett were ratified as Stewards.</p> <p>It was NOTED that Mark Young has stood down as UNISON Infection Control Officer for the West and he was thanked for his work and support on our behalf. He would be welcomed back at any time in the future.</p>	
3.	<p>OFFICERS' REPORTS The Reports tabled were read out and the Chair asked if there were any questions. There were none put forward.</p> <p>Bryan Hopperton for 111 summarised his Report. Reporting there was a big increase in the number of calls and the Contract is coming up for renewal in 18 months and there is a difference between a Private Company and the Trust.</p> <p>Bryan thanked the Chair and Branch Secretary for all their help in what has been a tough year.</p> <p>Torben also 111 also summarised his report and thanked Roger for standing in when he has not been able to deal with cases.</p> <p>Welfare Report – the Chair said that Jenny and James did a fantastic job in this respect and that a number of staff took advantage of their assistance where necessary.</p> <p>The Branch Secretary reported on the Caseworkers' Reports and gave the background to why they were part of SECamb Branch and they are autonomous.</p> <p>All Reports were accepted and ratified.</p>	
4.	<p>FINANCIAL REPORT</p> <p>The Treasurer was unable to attend and the report was given by Roger New, Auditor for the Branch. The report was tabled.</p> <p>He reported that were some reserves as we had been trying to bring stability into the accounts and was pleased that this had been managed. If we go above £15 per member then UNISON HQ claw back. There had been a nominal amount set aside for the hardship fund and education in the proposed</p>	

	<p>budget. The budget is set out to about the same amount as last year but excludes this nominal amount which can usefully be drawn down to the benefit of the branch. The expenditure is budgeted as for last year and the branch functioned satisfactorily. It was a successful year last year and we got the branch funds stable. The level of the budget is built to consider some expenditure which might not be budgeted for.</p> <p>Roger reported that the HMRC are tightening up and no claims will be paid without receipts attached. As far as allowances are concerned the Union has decided that £40 for an overnight but you will only be paid £38 in that £30 is non-taxable and £10 is taxable. The funds are paid by the IMPS team and they will want full information of those people who have a claim that is taxable. UNISON HQ is discussing this with the Inland Revenue and you may be required to go through a self-assessment. Anyone wishing to not pay this tax will only claim £30. It is important to emphasise that everything we claim must covered by a receipt. This does not cover mileage claims. The Branch Treasurer will be issuing guidance once the full information from the HMRC is known. This new arrangement came into effect from October last year and potentially any claim will be re-examined which is taxable then HQ will send an invoice. This will be further discussed at the forthcoming Branch Executive.</p> <p>The Chair thanked Roger for his very comprehensive report.</p> <p>There was a formal motion to approve and ratify the accounts which was accepted</p> <p>One question was raised as to whether Unity Bank was working out. Roger reported that even after all this time the Natwest Account is still not closed. This puts us in jeopardy with UNISON Rules but HQ is aware of the situation. The account has been run down to the minimum. Unity Trust does a good service for Unions.</p>	
4.	<p>MINUTES OF 2014 AGM</p> <p>The Minutes were recorded as a true and valid report. Proposed by Branch Secretary and seconded by Neil Martin.</p>	
5.	<p>ANY QUESTIONS - no further questions were raised and the Chair introduced our Speaker for the evening.</p>	

6.

GUEST SPEAKER – ALAN LOFTHOUSE, NATIONAL OFFICER.

PAY – 2 x 4 hour strikes have taken place and there were 2 further strikes planned. The Government then came back to the table and thrashed out a deal.

He summarized what was on the table.

Key points

- Most people under pay point 42 and who are not at the top of their band, would be better off under the proposed pay offer
- The 1% consolidated offer applies to all bands whereas the existing NHS pay policy applies only to those at the top of their bands
- For members, who are at the top of their band, earnings could be less under the proposed offer (1% instead of 2%)
- As the 1% is consolidated, basic pay would increase and therefore so would hourly rate
- Overtime is worth more because overtime (time and a half) would be calculated on the increased hourly rate
- Unsocial hours would be worked out on the new increased basic salary
- Any future pay rises would apply to the new consolidated basic salary

This is doing quite a lot for those on Band 1-8 and getting rid of A4C bottom rung and it is a whisker within the living wage. Also those on pay Bands 3-8 a further £200 consolidated amount and weighted towards the lower staff. Pay Band 34 and upwards incrementally there would be a freeze for one year.

There is changes to redundancy the lower paid will do better out of this. At the other end if one is on £80,000 then the redundancy would be £160,000.

There are 4 things for Ambulance Staff:-

- USH is off the table at the moment
- Keep Annex E and not in the pay review
- Pension Scheme is being looked at
- Retirement Age – it is the uniform service and Ambulance Staff who are not included in this. We are looking further into this and recognise that there is a retention problem with Paramedics and the pressures are building. (This is not only for Paramedics there are other areas as well where retention is difficult). Employers are looking into a retention premium. It was the industrial action that caused all this to happen.

Ambulance staff if you are top of your Band 3-7 you will be a little worse off by £350.

It is therefore up to our members to decide. It does not deliver the living wage. It is the best that can be achieved by negotiations and if accepted will be through by 1 April. If rejected we will continue with industrial action in March. Difficult to get across what is unconsolidated but people will be getting 1% consolidated.

The members present commented what is needed is an upgrade for PPs which would go a long way to retention.

Big message is that we need the members to vote.

It is for all NHS Staff all over the country. The other Unions are recommending to accept but UNISON is asking the members to respond.

Pay Review Body mandated by the Government to come up with a revised deal after speaking with Unions and other Bodies. Pay Body said 1% consolidated. Unsocial Hours they will be asking Trusts to make Saturday an ordinary day and are looking at different pay structures over 7 days a week. Also Consultants to be available at weekends. This will all be looked at around March time. The USH system works well and we should not just ditch it. The Government can ignore it or accept it. The Campaign is still on-going for 1% is not acceptable for the last years. The Government does not like A4C but we have a clear policy to keep A4C.

It was reported that the PTS community could be made into a private company within SECamb and they will come away from A4C. It would appear to be a VAT loophole. It would be a PTS transport company rather than a Healthcare Company.

Alan reported UNISON can produce lots of Campaign material quickly if this becomes necessary.

He also reported on the changes to response times. The Chief Executives are working with NH England to set proposals around emergencies which fit into red and green response times. NH England has two pilots running in LAS and SCAS giving a much longer time to respond. It is quite an assurance about patient care. UNISON sees it as positive and looking forward to the valuation being done.

	<p>Recruitment and Retention Issues – these are putting a strain on those left. There is a project being done by the Universities of Bath and Leicester regarding working longer in Ambulances. They are also looking at the barriers of working to 68. This is a 3 year project and it is one year into it.</p> <p>Threats on the Agenda – cost pressure is biting and no matter what Government gets in it won't go away. Alan asked if there was down banding in our Trust. There appears to be some in PTS, EOC and 111.</p> <p>Discussion took place around the banding in 111 which was evaluated at Band 3 but we were told that it could not be afforded and it had to be a Band 2. The Branch is to appeal against the decision for Band 2. The Branch Secretary to formulate a letter to the Trust on behalf of our members in 111 and ask for the Banding to be re-evaluated.</p> <p>The Chair thanked Alan for coming along and giving us an insight into what is happening in the NHS and giving answers.</p> <p>The Chair also thanked Mick for giving up his time to attend and his input.</p> <p>The meeting closed at 20.18</p>	<p>PS</p>
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