



**Eastern Region  
Regional Council  
Thursday 14 December 2006 at 10.30 am  
at the Needham Market Office**

**Minutes**

**In attendance**

Adrian Axtell	Regional Secretary
Mark Peters	Aerospace
Alan Drury	Retired
Cid Gibbs	Branch
Les McDonald	Branch
Michael Kneller	Electrical Engineering, Elect & IT
Leonard Denbigh	Energy
Paul Brewster	Motor Components
Derek Clarke	FPA
Kevin Graham	General Industries
Geoff Leyshon	LGBT
Christine Berry	Womens
Eamon O'Brien	Servicing
John Scarola	BEM
Paul Stokes	Education
Allan Rutherford	Food, Drink & Tobacco
Eileen Woods	Finance
Richard Clifton	Motor Vehicles
Des O'Connell	Disabilities
Lorene Fabian	Women's
Martyn Reuby	GPM
Nigel Gawthrop	GPM
Gordon Whitman	NEC
Val Haslam	Minutes
Jackie Finn	Visitor – Moreland Street
Stella McCormack	Visitor – Moreland Street

**Introduction and Apologies**

The Regional Secretary welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained that Stella McCormack and Jackie Finn from Moreland Street were attending

to observe. He further explained that a new post of Senior Administrator for each region had been advertised.

Cid Gibbs informed the committee of the death of Ron Rouse who had been a Regional Officer with the AEEU. Alan Drury suggested that Mr Rouse's name should be placed on the Role of Honour, via his branch, and this was unanimously agreed.

Apologies were received from, Trevor Whitehead, Nick White, Pam Stacey, Dick Barker, Kevin Tricker, Paul Underwood, John Sterne, Chris Gold, and Lisa Maddy, Phil Gilbert.

Having received Trevor Whitehead's apologies, it was proposed by John Scarola, seconded by Geoff Leyshon and unanimously agreed that Mark Peters should chair the meeting.

## **Minutes from the Previous Meeting**

It was proposed by Eileen Woods, seconded by Richard Clifton that the minutes of the Regional Council meeting held on 9 October 2006 be accepted as a true record. This was unanimously agreed.

## **Matters Arising**

### ***East Anglian Air Ambulance***

The Regional Secretary informed the Committee that the visit to RAF Honington did not require the permission of the Station Commander and this could be actioned through the charity. Those who wished to attend should contact Val Haslam before Christmas. A Regional Council meeting would not be held at Honington it would merely be a visit to the air ambulance.

### ***Westminster Visit***

The Regional Secretary read out the names of those members who had informed the office of their attendance on Tuesday 6 February 2007. Nigel Gawthrop and Eileen Woods asked to be added to the list and delegates were reminded to let Val Haslam know if they wished to attend.

Alan Drury asked if a delegate from the Retired Members Forum could attend and this was agreed.

### ***Mayor of Cambridge Visit***

It was noted that this had been a very successful visit and that Mark Robinson; Regional Officer had attended in place of the Regional Secretary who attended the NHS Lobby in London.

### ***Inventory***

The inventory was circulated. It was noted that a gazebo and tables had been purchased and were stored at the Needham Market office, for use by reps when holding organising/recruitment activities.

### ***Website***

The Regional Secretary reported that the website had been updated with the Regional Council minutes. This had been tied in with the Central Communications department so as to keep this updated on a regular basis.

It was noted that the photographs of the Mayor of Cambridge's visit would be placed on the website.

### ***Appreciation Courses***

The Regional Secretary reported that Mike McCartney was trialling a course in the Energy Sector, which would take place on 15 January 2007. Depending on its success, a decision to widen this to other sectors would be made in due course.

### ***Alternative Oyster Feast***

A letter of thanks for the £100 donation was circulated.

### ***Battle of the Bands***

Two letters of thanks from Newmarket Town Council for the two donations of £180.45 and £500 were circulated

### ***NHS Lobby***

The Regional Secretary reported that this has been successful. Approximately, £149.70 in expenses had been received and would be paid.

### ***Finance***

The Regional Secretary reported to date that he had been unable to meet up with Christine Grant. He hoped to arrange this early in the New Year.

### ***Proposed dates for the Regional Council 2007***

As requested at the last Regional Council meeting, the Regional Secretary had investigated alternative venues in which to meet. He presented the details with approximate costs. After some discussion it was proposed by Paul Brewster, seconded by John Scarola and unanimously agreed that because of the costs, meetings would continue to be held at Needham Market. Although this would be reviewed in 2007.

Further suggestion was made to look at the costs of more appropriate furniture for these meetings.

### ***GM Plant in Portugal***

Richard Clifton reported that he had had a meeting with the National Officer who outlined the reason for this expenditure. This was noted.

### ***Officers Reports***

With regard to the selection process used at BPL, Alan Drury reported that this had now been sorted and there were no requests for an appeal. The Regional Secretary suggested that in future Alan contacts himself or the Officer concerned.

Eileen Woods reported that she had left a message for Sam Leigh with regard to the Lifelong Learning Report, Public Speaking Courses, and she would report back once she had some information.

## **Correspondence**

### ***Justice for Columbia***

A letter of thanks from Liam Craig-Best, Justice for Colombia for the £500 donation was circulated.

### ***Norwich Central Branch 1880***

A letter from Cid Gibbs, Secretary of the above branch was circulated requesting that the meeting night should change from the fourth Tuesday to the second Tuesday in each month. This was proposed by Les McDonald, seconded by Eileen Woods and unanimously agreed.

### ***The Music Fund for Cuba***

A letter of thanks from The Music Fund of Cuba for the £500 donation was circulated.

### ***Magazines and Newsletters***

Searchlight Magazine - this was circulated.  
Columbia Magazine - this was circulated.

### ***Hazards Campaign***

A letter of thanks from John Bamford for the £500 donation was circulated.

### ***Poppy Appeal***

A letter of thanks from Paul and Janice Middleton for the £150 donation was circulated. Alan Drury highlighted that £5,328 in total was raised.

### ***Richard Howitt MEP***

Correspondence had been received from Richard Howitt MEP highlighting the work that he had undertaken. It was agreed to circulate future correspondence to Regional Council delegates.

### ***Anti- Fascist Fortnight***

Information was circulated highlighting the Searchlight Antifascist fortnight in 2007. Because of the impact the rise of the BNP can have, it was proposed by Lorene Fabian, seconded by Cid Gibbs that a donation of £500 be made to this event. This was unanimously agreed.

### ***Thank you letters***

Eileen Woods suggested that thank you letters be duly noted and accepted and need not go into the packs. This was agreed.

## **Reports**

### ***Regional Secretary's Report***

#### ***General Secretary's Visit***

The Regional Secretary reported that the General Secretary's meeting with Activists on the evening of Thursday 16 November 2006 at Basildon had been well attended. The meeting went well and in particular, gave delegates an opportunity to discuss the proposed merger. Those Regional Council delegates who were in attendance stated how pleased they were with the visit.

### ***Branches***

#### ***Engineering Training Branch 9734M***

The Regional Secretary reported that the Engineering Training Branch 9734M was not active and it was suggested moving members into a branch more geographically disposed. Paul Brewster proposed, Richard Clifton seconded and it was unanimously agreed to support this proposal and to seek ratification from the NEC.

#### ***ESSA EA Branch***

The Regional Secretary reported that the ESSA EA Branch

was not active and it was suggested moving members into a branch more geographically disposed. Geoff Leyshon proposed, Richard Clifton seconded and it was unanimously agreed to support this proposal and to seek ratification from the NEC.

#### ***Watford 3334M 42/GH Craft Branch***

The Regional Secretary reported that the Watford 3334M 42/GH Craft Branch was not active and it was suggested moving members into a branch more geographically disposed. Cid Gibbs proposed, Paul Brewster seconded and it was unanimously agreed to support this proposal and to seek ratification from the NEC.

#### ***North Herts General 0084M***

The Regional Secretary reported that the North Herts General 0084M Branch was not active and it was suggested moving members into a branch more geographically disposed. Les McDonald proposed, John Scarola seconded and it was unanimously agreed to support this proposal and to seek ratification from the NEC.

#### ***Southend Craft Branch and Basildon Craft Branch Merger***

The Regional Secretary had received a request to merge the Southend Craft Branch and the Basildon Craft Branch. Richard Clifton proposed, Nigel Gawthrop seconded and it was unanimously agreed to support this proposal and to seek ratification from the NEC.

#### ***Chelmsford Craft Branch and Chelmsford Branch***

The Regional Secretary had received a request to merge the Chelmsford Craft Branch and the Chelmsford Branch. Les McDonald proposed, Paul Brewster seconded and it was unanimously agreed to this merge and to seek ratification from the NEC.

#### ***Petition: Defence of manufacturing jobs in the UK***

Because of the deplorable action taken by Peugeot at its Ryton plant in Coventry and the constant loss of jobs that are being outsourced from the UK, a petition was circulated to both the Regional Council delegates and workplace representatives. It was hoped that these could be completed and returned early in 2007 in readiness for the General Secretary to raise the matter with the Prime Minister.

The Regional Council requested an update on the success of the Peugeot campaign and asked the Regional Secretary to report back at the next meeting.

### ***Amicus Contribution Rates 2007***

The new subscription rates for 2007 were circulated. It was noted that these rates would also be publicised in the Amicus magazine.

### ***Public Sector Lobby***

Delegates were informed that an important rally in defence of the Public Sector was to be held at Central Hall, Westminster on 23 January 2007 commencing at 11.30 am. The Regional Secretary urged delegates to attend and to bring colleagues. It was hoped transport would be provided. The Regional Secretary will be discussing this with other Trade Unions.

### ***Trade Union Freedom Bill***

The Regional Council as a sponsor of the Trade Union Freedom Bill had been invited to send two delegates to the launch conference which was being held on Wednesday 31 January 2007 in London.

It was proposed by Lorene Fabian seconded by Eileen Woods and unanimously agreed that Martyn Rueby attends.

It was proposed by Lorene Fabian seconded by Les MacDonald and unanimously agreed that Richard Clifton also attends.

### ***Sertuc Conference***

It was noted that Paul Underwood and John Knight wished to attend the Sertuc ULR Conference in London in January 2007 and asked the Regional Council to cover their travel expenditure for the day which would amount to £130. This was proposed by Paul Brewster, seconded by John Scarola and unanimously agreed.

### ***Finance Report***

The Finance Report was circulated and noted.

### ***Health and Safety Report***

The Management Committee proposed to run a Health and Safety Conference for reps in the Eastern Region in 2007. To assist with this, Rob Miquel, Health and Safety Officer would be attending the Management Committee meeting in February 2007.

### ***Education***

#### ***IT Course Questionnaire***

It was noted that the IT Course questionnaire had been circulated at the Area Quarterly Meetings and representatives.

### ***Employment Age Regulations***

It was noted that the above course had been held in Luton on 6 December 2006 where 25 representatives were in attendance and at Needham Market on 13 December 2006, when 17 representatives had been in attendance. A further course was planned for 11 January 2007 at the Needham Market and possibly another course after that. It was noted from those who had attended that these had been excellent courses.

### ***Womens One Day Course***

This course had taken place on 1 December 2006 at the Needham Market office and had been very well attended. Gratitude was expressed to Siobhan Endean for an excellent day.

### ***Pension Workshop***

The Regional Secretary reported that Judith Jackson of the GFTU would be coming to speak about Pension Workshops at the Regional Council Meeting on 22 February 2007.

### ***Manual Handling Course***

The Regional Secretary reported that he was in the process of arranging this course with Mike McCartney.

### ***Courses for 2007***

It was noted that the Prospectus for 2007 was now available and had been widely circulated.

### ***Equalities***

As a result of the NEC's ratification of a National Equalities strategy, documents were circulated to Regional Council members seeking their views and input as to how this will be delivered on a regional basis. To assist in this process, Siobhan Endean, Head of Equalities will be in attendance at February's meeting.

### ***Retired Members***

Alan Drury reported on the visit to the Dunstable chapel of the GPMU. He further reported that the next meeting would be held on 20 February 2007.

### ***NEC Report***

Gordon Whitman reported that the NEC had been concentrating on the merger and finance.

### ***GBT Equalities in Blackpool***

Les McDonald had attended with Stuart Selby. It was noted that Stuart had been elected to the National Committee.

### ***Health Sector Regional Committee Minutes***

These were noted.

### ***ACTSA (Action for Southern Africa)***

A written report by Phil Hood (GPMU) of the Book Service was circulated re his visit to South Africa.

### ***Management Committee Meeting***

The Management Committee Meeting Minutes held on Monday 4 December 2006 were noted.

### **Officers' Reports**

The Officers Reports had been emailed to Regional Council prior to the meeting.

### **Merger**

The Regional Secretary provided delegates with "Vote Yes" Posters in relation to the proposed merger with the TGWU. He reported that these were to be sent to representatives within the region but also asked for their support in delivering a Yes vote.

He reported that he had spoken to the area conferences and had also been invited to several branches to speak on the merger. He had also spoken to representatives when attending courses. It was noted that a special publication of the Activist would shortly be circulated. The ballot would start in February 2007 and run through until March.

The Regional Secretary reiterated that he would be willing to go to any branches or meetings with members in order to make people aware of the importance of the merger.

Discussion took place re industrial autonomy and building up further ties with European Trade Unions.

### **Any other business**

Cid Gibbs raised the question of travel costs and the fact that the travel costs had not been increased since the formation of the Amicus. The Regional Secretary undertook to investigate.

Des O'Connell suggested that members car share and he asked for a list of Regional Council members and their addresses to be circulated.

Geoff reported that there were 70 redundancies being made at the MBDA in Stevenage and Bristol. Owen Granfield was aware and involved.

### ***Brussels Trip***

It was noted that this would be arranged sometime after the Westminster trip in February 2007.

The next meeting of the Regional Council would be held on Thursday 22 February 2007.

The meeting closed at 12.35 pm