



**Eastern Region
Regional Council
Thursday 22 February 2007 at 10.30 am
at the Needham Market Office**

Minutes

In attendance

Adrian Axtell	Regional Secretary
Trevor Whitehead	Chair
Mark Peters	Aerospace
Alan Drury	Retired
Cid Gibbs	Branch
Les McDonald	Branch
Phil Gilbert	Health
Leonard Denbigh	Energy
Paul Brewster	Motor Components
Derek Clarke	FPA
Eamon O'Brien	Servicing
John Scarola	BEM
Richard Clifton	Motor Vehicles
Des O'Connell	Disabilities
Lorene Fabian	Women's
Pam Stacey	Health
Paul Underwood	Construction
Chris Gold	Local Authorities
Nigel Gawthrop	GPM
Gordon Whitman	NEC
Val Haslam	Minutes
Tony Ellingford	Regional Officer - Luton
Ian Manborde	Visitor (Pensions)
Siobhan Endean	Visitor (Equalities)

Introduction and Apologies

Trevor Whitehead, Regional Council Chair welcomed delegates to the meeting.

Gordon Whitman, NEC member also raised the fact that Dick Barker had now resigned from the NEC as a result of work commitments. It was agreed that

the Regional Secretary would write on behalf of the Regional Council thanking Dick for all of his hard work and the support that he had given to the Region.

Apologies were received from: Geoff Leyshon, Eileen Woods, Nick White, Kevin Tricker, John Sterne, Lisa Maddy, Paul Stokes, Christine Berry, Alan Rutherford, Martin Rueby, Mike Knellor, Kevin Graham.

Minutes from the Previous Meeting

Phil Gilbert raised that he was listed as being in attendance at the meeting in December 2006 when in actual fact he had given his apologies. This would be changed and was noted. There being no other matters, the minutes were read and formally agreed.

Matters Arising

East Anglian Air Ambulance

The visit has been arranged for Wednesday 7 March 2007 at RAF Honington with Kevin Graham, Paul Brewster, Adrian Axtell and Val Haslam attending on behalf of the Regional Council.

Westminster Visit

The visit had taken place on Tuesday 6 February 2007 and was a resounding success. The chair gave a report, along with other delegates of the Regional Council who had been in attendance. It was hoped that the delegates would give a brief written report to be circulated amongst our activists and put on the website. The Regional Secretary was tasked with attempting to get regular meetings with the MP's so that the matters affecting our members within the region could be raised on a regular basis.

Website

The Eastern Regional website had been updated as requested.

Defence of Manufacturing jobs in the UK

Richard Clifton from IBC presented further completed petitions; the total number had now reached in the region of 1,500. Thanks were given to all delegates who had assisted in this activity.

Public Sector Lobby

The Lobby held at Westminster on 23 January 2007 had been a resounding success.

Travel Costs

The Regional Secretary reported that this was being reviewed by the NEC.

Correspondence

Institute of Employment Rights

Correspondence had been received from the IER in relation to a Right to Strike publication. Les McDonald proposed, Richard Clifton seconded and it was unanimously agreed that these would be purchased and those interested to let Val Haslam know by Friday 2 March 2007.

Institute of Employment Rights Membership

It was recommended by the Regional Council Management Committee that this document be circulated to branches where it would be more appropriate. This was proposed by John Scarola, seconded by Mark Peters and unanimously agreed.

The Music Fund for Cuba

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

Magazines and Newsletters

Searchlight Magazine	- this was circulated to delegates
Shelf Life	- this was circulated to delegates
Cuba SI	- this was circulated to delegates

TUC Congress 2007

Correspondence had been received in relation to the TUC Congress 2007 that was being held in Brighton between Sunday 9 and Thursday 13 September, 2007. The Regional Council was entitled to elect two delegates to attend the Congress. There were three nominations:-

Pam Stacey:	Proposed by Phil Gilbert, seconded by Mark Peters
Paul Underwood:	Proposed by Cid Gibbs, seconded by Chris Gold
Richard Clifton:	Proposed by Lorene Fabian, seconded by Les McDonald

After an election, both Pam Stacey and Paul Underwood were elected to attend the Congress on behalf of the Regional Council with Richard Clifton acting as the reserve delegate if required.

Strawberry Fair

Correspondence was circulated to delegates in relation to the Strawberry Fair that is held in Cambridge and is the largest free one-day festival of arts, crafts

and music in the country. The request was for a donation of £1,000 to assist with the running of the event. Amicus would also be able to set up a stall at the event of which three or four volunteers would be required to run. Provision would also be made for an Amicus banner to go across the front of the stage. It was proposed by Cid Gibbs, seconded by Chris Gold and was unanimously agreed to support this request.

RSI Awareness Day

Correspondence had been received from RSI Action seeking affiliation from the region and this would be at a cost of £100. This was agreed in principle so long as we were not obligated to abide by decisions taken by this organisation which would override Amicus policy. It was agreed the Regional Secretary would check this out prior to releasing the funds.

Policy Conference Compositing Delegate

Trevor Whitehead chair of the Regional Branch Committee was proposed by Lorene Fabian, seconded by John Scarola and he was unanimously elected to be the Eastern Region compositing delegate for the Policy Conference.

Trade Union Friends of Searchlight

Delegates were advised that a letter had been received thanking the region for their generous donation of £500 in support of the Anti-Fascist Fortnight.

Balls to Poverty

Information was distributed on this Amicus Campaign and the need to raise £25,000. It was therefore proposed by Chris Gold, seconded by Les MacDonald and unanimously agreed that the Regional Council donates £500 to this worthy cause. Alongside this, a sponsorship form from Martin Scanlon at Kings Street was circulated.

Rally for Dignity

Pamphlets were distributed with regard to the ACTSA Rally for Dignity which is being held on Saturday 10 March 2007 in Trafalgar Square from 1pm – 4pm. Delegates were urged to attend.

Branch Meeting Nights

Chelmsford Branch: Correspondence had been received from the Chelmsford Branch seeking to change their meeting night to the third Monday in the month from the third Tuesday and for the change to take place beginning in May 2007. This was proposed by Richard Clifton, seconded by John Scarola and unanimously agreed.

Norwich Central Branch: Correspondence had been received from the Norwich Central Branch requesting that due to administrative problems their

branch meetings be moved to the third Tuesday of each month. This was proposed by Chris Gold, seconded by Eamon O'Brien and unanimously agreed.

Roll of Honour

A nomination had been received for the Regional Roll of Honour from the Norwich Central Branch in respect of Brother P J Goldsmith. Information accompanying this request was read to delegates and it was unanimously agreed that his name be added to the Roll of Honour.

Reports

Finance

Delegates were presented with an updated report for 2007. Discussion was held with regard to funding for the year in relation to specific areas which were formally agreed.

Health and Safety Report

The Management Committee presented the Regional Council with information in relation to holding a Regional Health and Safety Conference in 2007. After much discussion the following was agreed:-

A one day conference would be held in the Region, where health and safety representatives and workplace representatives would be invited. It was proposed that this be held in October 2007 and the Regional Secretary was asked to liaise with Rob Miguel with regard to the necessary arrangements, not least, in finding a suitable venue.

Education

The Regional Secretary reported that 15 different one-day courses had been held throughout 2006, of which a total of 209 reps had attended. Currently this year a new reps course had been held on 18 January, of which 30 newly appointed representatives had attended. Also there were two further Age Employment Regulation Courses that had already been held in 2007 with a further one planned for 22 March 2007.

It was still intended to run IT courses for activists and we were awaiting information from the TUC. Whilst further investigations needed to take place regarding running a new reps course in the Cambridge area.

Finally, it was proposed to run two new one-day courses; one on financial awareness and the second course on making reps and activists more aware of what is involved in relation to personal injury claims. All of these initiatives were agreed by the Regional Council.

Organising recruitment

The Regional Council agreed to support future recruitment organising initiatives to purchase materials to the tune of £2,000. This was proposed by Les McDonald, seconded by Chris Gold and unanimously agreed.

It was also agreed to hold a meeting with Migrant and Agency workers who had shown interest in joining the Union and this would be arranged in the near future.

Retired Members Forum

Alan Drury reported on the recent Retired Members Forum meeting that had been held in January and also requested financial support to send two delegates to the National Pensioners Convention - Blackpool Parliament on 8 – 10 May 2007. Costs totalling £530 had been received and it was unanimously agreed that these delegates be supported. This was proposed by Cid Gibbs, seconded by Chris Gold and unanimously agreed.

Sector Committee Reports

Sector Committee Reports had been received from both the Motor Components Sector held on 27 November 2006 and the Health Sector Committee held on 8 January 2007. These were duly noted.

Trades Disputes Act

A written report was presented by Richard Clifton who had attended the inaugural conference of the Trades Disputes Acts to a Trade Union Freedom Bill in London which was supplemented verbally.

Officers' Reports

The officers' reports were circulated.

Women's Committee

A written report was presented by Lorene Fabian, of the Regional Women's Committee which covered such areas as the Policy Conference and the Women and Work Commission. It was also proposed that to celebrate International Women's Day on 8 March 2007 that the Regional Council purchase 50 limited edition enamel pin colours of the suffragette movement. This was proposed by Mark Peters, seconded by Richard Clifton and unanimously agreed.

Regional Secretary's Report

E-bulletin

Delegates were advised that the second edition of the new Ebulletion had been circulated and if delegates were not currently on the mailing list, advised them how to do so. Views were sought on this and also any future stories would be of immense benefit.

Agency Migrant Labour Lobby

Information was given out in relation to this National Lobby that was being organised on 28 March 2007 in London. Richard Clarke would be co-ordinating this on behalf of the Region. It was agreed that any expenditure in relation to travel would be supported by the Regional Council.

NHS Together – Regional Rally

In line with the National commitment to this campaign a Regional Rally had been set up for 3 March 2007 in Cambridge. Details were circulated and representatives would be advised of this through their regional officer. It was agreed that any expenditure in relation to travel would be supported by the Regional Council.

Love Music Hate Racism

Colleagues were advised that there would be a LMHR tour at Essex University in Colchester on Friday 2 and Saturday 3 March 2007 at the Students Union. Delegates were advised that Mark Walker, the organiser for the GPM Sector would be co-ordinating this on behalf of the region. This was duly noted.

Communications

As a result of recent initiatives through the Union in disseminating information it was agreed that Brian Gallagher and Ashraf Choudhry from the Communications Department be invited to attend the Regional Council Meeting in April 2007.

Blood Centre Protests, Cambridge

Newspaper article was circulated.

Branch Mergers

The Regional Secretary sought the ratification of the Regional Council on the following mergers:-

Stevenage 1208M Branch to close with members to be merged into the **Stevenage 1882 Branch**. The Regional Council agreed that provided no

substantial objections were raised this should be supported and passed onto the National Executive Committee for ratification.

Bedfordshire CPHVA Branch to close with members to be merged into the **Bedford Staff 0577M Branch**. The Regional Council agreed that provided no substantial objections were raised this should be supported and passed onto the National Executive Committee for ratification.

Refuge Field Staff Eastern Counties 1047M Branch to be closed with members being moved into a more geographically accessible branch. The Regional Council agreed that provided no substantial objections were raised this should be supported and passed onto the National Executive Committee for ratification.

Brussels Trip

A suggested timetable had been provided for delegates in relation to a visit to Brussels so that leading delegates can raise issues such as the protection of UK manufacturing jobs and the weak employment laws in the UK in relation to those in other European countries. The Regional Secretary was tasked with pulling this information together in readiness for the Regional Council meeting in April 2007. It was proposed by Les McDonald, seconded by Mark Peters and unanimously agreed in principle to support this initiative.

Sertuc Nominations

There was a requirement for the Regional Council to elect five delegates to represent Amicus on the Sertuc Regional Council. The following delegates were nominated and elected unopposed:-

Martin Gould, Kevin Graham, Pam Stacey, Mark Peters, Lorene Fabian.

There were a number of elections for the sub-groups; they were as follows:

Construction Campaign Task Group

Paul Underwood

Disability Network

Des O'Connell

International Affairs Committee

Paul Brewster

LGBT Network

Stuart Selby

Pensioners Network

Alan Drury

Public Services Committee

Chris Gold

Womens Rights Committee

Lorene Fabian

All of the above were elected unopposed.

Merger Update

The Regional Secretary reported on the recent General Secretary's visit to Stamford; this event was held jointly with the East Midlands Region with an excellent turnout with some sixty plus activists attending. Posters have been sent to every workplace and senior representative within the region and there have been a number Regional Officer visits as well as phone calls actively supporting the merger. The Regional Secretary went on to outline the ballot timetable. This was duly noted.

National Equalities Strategy

Siobhan Endean, Head of Equalities outlined the National Equality Strategy that had been adopted by the NEC in September 2006. She sought the views and input from delegates present, not least in how the Regional Council intended to implement the Strategy. The document was well received by delegates and a number of questions were raised.

Pension Information Workshops

Ian Manborde of the GFTU highlighted a comprehensive programme of awareness raising and training that were available to Trade Unions and their members in a number of areas; principally around understanding the basic issues of company pension schemes and the state pension scheme. This created much debate and it was hoped that delegates would take this on board and assist Ian in the delivery of this important project within the region.

Any other business

- ❖ Concern was raised as to the lack of Amicus information in the Regional phone books, particularly the Yellow Pages.

- ❖ Alan Drury from the Retired Members Section advised delegates that the Poppy Appeal had raised over £100,000 in Hertfordshire alone.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 3.00 pm