



**Eastern Region  
Regional Council  
Thursday 24 August 2006 at 10.30 am  
at the Needham Market Office**

**Minutes**

**Those in attendance**

Adrian Axtell	Regional Secretary
Mark Peters	Aerospace
Trevor Whitehead	Branch
Alan Drury	Retired
Chris Gold	Local Authorities
Cid Gibbs	Branch
Les McDonald	Branch
Phil Gilbert	Health
Paul Underwood	Construction
Michael Kneller	Electrical Engineering, Elect & IT
Leonard Denbigh	Energy
Paul Brewster	Motor Components
Derek Clarke	FPA &CMA
Kevin Graham	General Industries
Geoff Leyshon	LGBT
Christine Berry	Womens
Eamon O'Brien	Servicing
John Scarola	BEM
Pam Stacey	Branch
Martin Rueby	GPM
Nigel Gawthorpe	GPM
Simon Keane	Finance
Eileen Woods	Finance
Nick White	MOD
Richard Clifton	Motor Vehicles
Lisa Maddy	Womens
John Sterne	CAT
Des O'Connell	Disabilities
Dick Barker	NEC

Val Haslam                      Minutes

## **Introduction and apologies**

Trevor Whitehead welcomed all delegates to their second Regional Council meeting of the current cycle. He also said he was extremely pleased with the high turn out of delegates.

Apologies were received from Lorene Fabian, Gordon Whitman, Paul Stokes and Alan Rutherford.

## **Minutes from the Previous Meeting**

These were read and agreed with one change to the second sentence of the Construction Safety Campaign minute on page 4 to read: Jennie **reported** on this letter...

## **Matters Arising**

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

The Committee agreed to visit RAF Honington, but not on a Regional Council day. Nick White to speak to the Station Commander re the details of the visit and to find out a day suitable to the RAF. Les McDonald proposed and Geoff Leyshon seconded and it was unanimously agreed that a cheque for £2,000 be donated to the East Anglian Air Ambulance. Publicity for the event to go on the website.

### ***East of England Development Agency***

The Regional Secretary reported that Karen Livingstone had been appointed to the position of Special Advisor to the Secretary of State of Health and as a consequence it was agreed that he would write to the EEDA seeking another speaker.

### ***Westminster Visit***

Names of those who wish to attend were reported to the Regional Council. The Regional Secretary advised that there were still some places available. It was agreed that attendees would make their own travel arrangements to Westminster, although, of course, travel costs would be met by the Regional Council. Details of the names will then be passed to Alf Brewer, Regional Political Officer to conclude arrangements.

### ***Labour Research Department Website LRD***

Information was distributed with regard to accessing this web-site.

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

Adrian updated the Council on this event which is to be held in September. The Amicus banner would be in a prominent position behind the bands and there would also be an Amicus stall. It was noted there was to be an Ultimate Event in December when the winning band from each area would be competing and that we had been asked to sponsor the wrist bands for this event. Adrian had asked the organisers for more information with regard to this request and would report back to the Regional Council.

### ***Construction Safety Campaign***

This item had been referred back to the Management Committee by the Regional Council, where it was agreed that a donation of £100 be made.

### ***CPHVA Annual Conference***

It was noted that 3 tickets at £105 each for the Suffolk region had been applied for. Two tickets for the South end branch would be applied for once cheque details had been received. Adrian reported that the situation with regard to staff having to take holiday for this conference had been raised with the National Officer.

### ***Apprentice Recruitment Drive***

This item had been referred back to the Management Committee by the Regional Council, where it was agreed to purchase the books to a maximum cost of £2,000. Richard Clarke to report on the success of this to the Regional Council next year.

## **Correspondence**

### ***Gerry Hicks Demonstration***

It was noted that a letter of thanks from Stan Crooke acknowledging the £100 donation had been received and circulated.

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

The Regional Council Management Committee recommended a donation of £500 be made to this organisation. Consequently, this was unanimously agreed by the Regional Council having been proposed by Les McDonald and seconded by Geoff Leyshon.

### ***SERTUC Trade Union Disability Network***

The Regional Secretary reported that there were three places available for delegates in the Eastern Region to attend this network. It was proposed by John Scarola, seconded by Les McDonald that Geoff Leyshon, Derek Clarke and Des O'Connell be elected to attend; and this was unanimously agreed.

The Regional Secretary was also asked to check whether a further place was available, and if so, then John Scarola to become the fourth delegate.

### ***Magazines***

The Searchlife and Shelf Life magazines were circulated to the Council.

### ***Womens' Rights Committee***

The Regional Secretary reported that he had been advised that there was a further place available on the Womens' Rights Committee of Sertuc. It was proposed by Cid Gibbs, seconded by Eamon O'Brien and unanimously agreed that Eileen Woods should be elected to this Committee on behalf of The Eastern Region.

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

A donation of £100 was recommended by the Regional Council Management Committee. This was proposed by Les McDonald, seconded by Mark Peters and unanimously agreed.

### ***Cuba Solidarity Campaign***

The Council agreed to re-affiliate to this campaign at a cost of £40. This was proposed by Geoff Leyshon, seconded by Eamon O'Brien and unanimously agreed.

Pam Stacey gave a short talk on the work of the Cuba Solidarity Campaign. It was recommended that a donation of £500 be made to the Miramar Theatre Restoration Project. This was proposed by Pam Stacey, seconded by Simon Keane and unanimously agreed.

### ***Budgets***

The Regional Secretary updated the Council on the current financial position. He also advised the Regional Council that Christine Grant had recently been appointed the Head of Finance. He hoped to report back with further details at the next Regional Council Meeting.

### ***Nick Burdon and Denis Blockley Memorial Trust Fund***

A letter of thanks was received from the Trust Fund Treasurer for the £500 donation and circulated to the Council.

### ***Bob Dryden***

The Regional Secretary reported that Bob Dryden had been elected as Mayor of Cambridge for the coming year, making him the 800<sup>th</sup> Mayor for Cambridge. This was Bob's second time in office. Bob had extended an invitation to a few members of the Regional Council to visit him during his

term in office. It was agreed that Pam Stacey, Geoff Leyshon and Nigel Gawthorpe be the delegates from the Regional Council to visit Bob. The Regional Secretary was also asked to send a letter of congratulations on their behalf.

### **The Travel Club**

Mr John Duffy from the Travel Club was introduced to the Regional Council. John explained the workings of the Travel Club, which came under the umbrella of Harry Weeks Travel Services situated in Orpington, Kent. An email came out every month with details of last minute deals and offers etc, which one could receive if they registered their email address on the Amicus Holiday Club website. He asked those present if they could circulate details of the Travel Club and its benefits to the membership of Amicus.

### **Motion – Southend Branch**

The Southend Branch had re-submitted the motion regarding the House of Lords Barker Judgement. Since this decision, Royal Assent had been given that amended the Compensation Bill consequently reversing the decision. As the status quo had been restored, the Regional Council declined to discuss the motion and it was remitted back to the Southend Branch with a letter of thanks.

### **Burston Strike Rally**

The event was taking place on Sunday 3 September 2006 at Diss. The Regional Secretary advised members that the General Secretary, Derek Simpson was one of the main speakers at this event and asked them to circulate details of this amongst their members. The Regional Council was also advised that there would be an Amicus stand at the rally and it was therefore proposed by Nigel Gawthorpe and seconded by Geoff Leyshon that the Regional Secretary purchase a gazebo for this event and future events in case of inclement weather. Also £1,000 worth of merchandise be purchased for the rally. This was unanimously agreed.

The Regional Council asked that a list be made of all of the items purchased by the Council.

## **Reports**

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

#### ***Merger update***

It was reported that discussions on the merger were ongoing and it was hopeful that the General Secretary would be visiting all regions later on in the year. Details of this would be circulated as soon as possible.

## ***Area Conferences***

These were taking place as follows: -

Cambs/Beds	Thursday	7 September 2006 at 7.30 pm - Baldock
Norfolk/Suffolk	Tuesday	12 September 2006 at 7.30 pm - Diss
Essex/Herts	Thursday	14 September 2006 at 6.30 pm – Harlow

The Regional Secretary informed the Council of the format and content of these meetings.

## ***Newmarket office***

It was reported that the GPM office at Newmarket had now closed and that officers and staff had relocated to the Needham Market office. All delegates thought this was a benefit to Amicus in facilitating closer working relationships.

## ***IBC Luton***

The Regional Secretary reported that the General Secretary, Derek Simpson had visited the IBC site at Luton to meet up with our representatives. He had a tour of the facilities and had the opportunity to discuss some of the major issues facing the sector with senior management.

## ***Peugeot***

Adrian reported on the Peugeot Day of Action when three sites in our region had been targeted; namely, Basildon, Norwich and Peterborough.

## **Officers' Reports**

The Officers' Reports were circulated. Eileen Woods asked that the reports in future be circulated prior to the meeting. The Regional Secretary advised all delegates that he would attempt to do this.

## **Branches**

The Regional Secretary had received a request from the Branch Secretary of the Basildon and Brentwood Branch who were seeking to merge with another branch in the locality as there was a lack of activity within the branch. It was agreed that Adrian would facilitate a meeting with relevant branch officials in the geographical area in an attempt to find a solution.

Discussions had been held with the Norfolk EA06 Branch who was seeking to merge with the Norwich Central Branch in the hope that it would create more activity. It was agreed that discussions would take place between officers and if agreed, members would be written to in the normal fashion. The Regional Council unanimously agreed that if there were no overwhelming objections they would support this merger.

The Regional Secretary went on to explain to all Regional Council delegates the process for merging branches ensuring that all members had an opportunity to air their views. Clearly, this would also need to go to the National Executive for their ratification.

### **Courses for 2007**

Details of education courses for 2007 were circulated and discussed.

### **Finance Report**

This was circulated.

### **Health and Safety Issue**

It was reported that The Metalworking Fluids Workshop was being held at the Holiday Express Inn at Luton on 9 October 2006 from 10.00 am to 12.30 pm. The room, buffet lunch, tea and coffee would cost in the region of £650. It was proposed by Mark Peters, seconded by Les McDonald and unanimously agreed that a £650 payment be made to support this event.

### **Recruitment**

#### ***University Student Recruitment – Freshers’ Fairs 2006***

The Regional Council Management Committee had recommended that a donation of £500 be made to support this event. After some discussion this figure was proposed by Les McDonald, seconded by Derek Clarke and unanimously agreed by the Regional Council.

#### ***Cambridge University***

The letter and invoice for £215.85 received from Will Smith had been raised at the Regional Council Management Committee. After much discussion it was agreed that because of the cost and the reasons for it, that this should be paid by the Regional Council on this occasion. The Regional Secretary was asked to write to Mr Smith clearly advising that requests for funding should be made prior to the events and that in the future if the same thing occurred the Regional Council would not pay. This was proposed by Kevin Graham, seconded by Eamon O’Brien and unanimously agreed.

#### ***Equalities***

The Trade Union Studies Centre at Norwich was keen to run a pilot project that engaged with migrant workers to facilitate a “Know Your Rights” event. As it was intended to hold the event in Great Yarmouth, the Regional Council proposed that Barry Stewart, the Great Yarmouth Branch Secretary sit on the Steering Group for this event.

## ***Education***

It was reported that the Regional Council had so far run 9 one-day courses with a total 105 delegates attending; with at least 2 further courses planned for this year.

Concern was raised with regard to representatives not turning up to these events but also not letting the office know which then denied other reps a place.

The Regional Secretary advised delegates that there was an intention to hold IT courses for activists and we would probably be working alongside the TUC in the Norwich area with regard to their delivery. He also advised that he was attending a meeting with Mike McCartney, Head of Education and these providers in September to discuss details and delivery.

It was noted that the Employee Age Regulations would come into effect on 6 October 2006 and it was important that representatives were advised of this new legislation. It was unanimously agreed that as and when the courses come onto line that the Regional Council would provide the funding.

The Regional Secretary was asked if he could provide details of future Regional Council educational courses to branches within the region and this was agreed.

## **NEC Report**

Dick Barker reported on a number of senior officer changes that had taken place recently. He also advised colleagues in line with previous statements that a new finance director had been appointed and that things looked very positive.

He further highlighted the fact that officers had now been provided with blackberrys and that training had been undertaken and that this could only be of benefit to our members.

Further discussion took place with regard to the election of a Regional Secretary in the Yorkshire region as well as discussions that had taken place with the Transport and General Workers' Union.

## ***Retired Members Report***

Alan Drury reported that the Pensioners Forum had grown in strength and that the next Forum was to be held on Saturday 30 September at 10.30 am 2006 at Needham Market.

### ***Hazards Conference Report***

Pam Stacey circulated her report from the Hazards Conference which Mark Peters and she had attended.

### ***Equalities Committee Report***

Des O'Connell circulated the minutes of his last National meeting.

### **Any other business**

It was reported that Siobhan Endean would be attending the next Regional Council meeting on Thursday 19 October 2006.

It was suggested that Regional Council minutes and information should be placed on the website. The Regional Secretary agreed to investigate this.

Paul Underwood reported that he was attending the H & S Ceramics Conference and asked whether the Regional Council would kindly consider paying his £50 expenses. It was proposed to support this request by Chris Gold, seconded by Eamon O'Brien and unanimously agreed.

The Regional Secretary undertook to look at alternative venues in which to hold future Regional Council meetings.

Concern was expressed about the flow of information to branches particularly with regard to large scale redundancies in their geographical area. It was suggested that this was one of the reasons for setting up the Area Quarterly Conferences so that information could be shared amongst activists.

It was noted that the dedication of the British Legion Baldock Branch Standard was being held on 8 October 2006.

The Council was updated on the situation with regard to civil air transport amidst its recent problems.

It was reported that the lease at Jarrolds, Norwich was not being extended, which could cause 300 members losing their jobs. A day of action was being proposed.

It was suggested that the Union puts on an appreciation course so that those interested could find out what was actually involved in becoming a workplace rep.

With no further business, the meeting closed at 2.50 pm.

