

Minutes of the Meeting of Amicus Goodmans Fields Branch Held on Tuesday, 31 October, 2006, Conference Room 1, A/2 Core

Meeting commenced at 12:30.

Present: Fourteen members.

Apologies for Absence: Received from five members plus Sue Lawrence (Regional Organiser).

Minutes of the Meeting 28 September, 2006. Agreed

Matters Arising. Newsletter. The Chair advised that the next edition had been put together and gone to print.

Pensions Changes. Details of the new 'Age Discrimination' legislation, introduced at the beginning of October and which impacts on pensions, were now available, together with Union comment, in a newsletter which had been produced by the NCC. Additionally the Branch Newsletter's lead was on the revised redundancy terms the Bank was bringing in as a result of the new legislation.

Treasurer. The Secretary apologised to the Treasurer for the delay in getting the job properly set up for him.

Severance Pay. The Membership Secretary spoke in detail about the situation arising from the new 'Age Discrimination' legislation and the way the Bank had said it would apply it. Many members, if involved in redundancy or early retirement, would now be significantly worse off in respect of the payments they received. The Union disagreed with the Bank's interpretation that the existing schemes, which contain enhanced, age related, benefits, are now unlawful following the changes the Government had introduced.

Pay 2007. The Chair advised the meeting that the NCC would be meeting the next day and that views and suggestions would be fed in to that meeting.

Main points from discussion included:

Last year numbers of staff had said that they felt their salaries were being squeezed.

There appeared to be a definite body of 'disappointed' staff in respect of a number of aspects of the remuneration package.

There was a noticeable difference between RBS and Government statistics relating to cost of living.

Bonuses linked to basic salaries, which only increased marginally, or stood still, while profits rose, meant that staff were sharing an increasingly smaller proportion of the Bank's success.

There were concerns over exactly how robust the Bank's market data in respect of pay is, is like being compared with like, are job titles rather than job content being compared?

There was concern over the length of time for which London Allowance had remained frozen. Additionally, it was understood that London Allowance had been consolidated into basic pay in Global Markets and that there were one or two areas within Group IT where this had also occurred.

There were still felt to be failings in the appraisal system, in particular the capping of the numbers who could be rated above average performers and, therefore, concern as to how fair the bonus system is in reality.

There was also discussion on the difficulties in securing promotion, the efficiency of the IT Promotion Board system and that it might take as much 4 / 5 years for even the best candidates to obtain promotion.

Childcare /Equality. The Chair said that he was waiting for news of the emergency childcare pilot being run in one part of the bank. We are considering having a speaker on equality issues as a guest speaker at Branch.

Membership and Recruitment. The Chair reminded the meeting again that Branch was participating in Recruitment Week by having a stand in Goodmans foyer on Tuesday, 7th November.

Any Other Business. The Chair advised the meeting that Branch had volunteered for a pilot exercise to make increased use of ICT which was to be run under the 'Union Modernisation Scheme' and would be co-funded by Amicus and the Government. Focus would be on better and speedier access to membership data and providing IT support to assist Secretaries.

Date of Next Meeting. Thursday, 23 November, 12:30 – 13:30, location to be confirmed.