

## **Minutes of the Meeting of Amicus Goodmans Fields Branch Held on 27 March, 2007, Conference Room 1, A/2 Core.**

### **Present.**

Thirteen members, Sue Lawrence (Regional Officer) and Alison Maclean (Negotiating Officer).

### **Apologies for Absence.**

One apology received

### **Minutes of the Meeting 27 February, 2007.**

Speakers. The Secretary advised the meeting that he was still awaiting a response to his e-mail to Professor Phil Taylor. He undertook to report back to April Branch as to whether or not Professor Taylor would be accepting Branch's invitation.

Branch Budget. The Secretary apologised that he had not clarified whether or not Branch was allowed to roll over unspent budget from one quarter to the next and would report back to April Branch.

### **NCC Report.**

A verbal report, covering the main items of interest to Branch, including Appraisal Guideline changes, Retail job cuts, Bank's letter re current accounts, last year's age discrimination legislation and Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures changes was given.

Appraisal Guideline Changes. The Bank's attitude towards one of the Union's main concerns was basically that peer group comparison happened anyway so it was alright to include this as part of the official guidelines. The Union's view remained that this practice was generally damaging to team working and that those who met agreed targets should not then be told, at the end of the appraisal year, that they had underperformed in relation to their peers, something difficult to challenge, and that they were, therefore, being marked down on their performance.

Communication by the Bank to the Businesses regarding the changes appeared to have been poor and interpretation effectively left to each reporting officer.

Retail Job Cuts. The latest round of job cuts had put considerable pressure on the Seconded Representatives who had received an overwhelming volume of resulting phone calls to the Helpline.

RBS Group Account. The Bank was to return to the Union on the matter of the letter it had sent out to a significant number of staff telling them they had to hold an account with the Group for receipt of salary or face disciplinary action though for some staff this was not

something new. Additionally, it was not clear if all those signing RBS Group contracts were made aware of the requirement. The situation would be monitored.

Age Discrimination Legislation / Pensions. Another run of the national newsletter detailing the Union's concerns regarding the Bank's interpretation of the legislation had been produced. The advice to members remained the same: those individuals who stood to be adversely affected by the changes the Bank would be introducing in June should put their objections in writing. Those who had already done so and received a reply from the Bank should re-submit their objections.

A template letter for objecting was still available from the Membership Secretary, as were copies of the spreadsheet providing a guideline to pensions values. .

Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures. Revised procedures had been agreed with the Bank but a significant point of disagreement remains, the scrapping of the Formal Fact Finding Interview in the case of disciplinary proceedings. This means that any Fact Finding Interview is classed as informal, denying the member the right to representation. In addition to this, there was the concern that there can be no such thing as an 'Informal' Fact Finding Interview and also that the first stage of the Disciplinary Procedure could follow it immediately, denying the member time to prepare and restricting representation. If the change is implemented, the Union will seek a six month review of its working.

### **Alison Maclean – Guest Speaker**

Alison started by saying how tough she found negotiating with the Bank. She had been with Amicus for ten years and had had RBS responsibilities for a little over two years. She felt that her experiences with other employers had been better than with RBS. She was glad to have had the invitation to attend Branch and to hear what members had had to say on the range of current issues. *(Alison is due to make a return visit to Branch in September)*

Alison went on to give a full resume of the Pay 2007 settlement, bringing out what had been achieved, including the long held objective of consolidating territorial allowances into base salary, but also looking in some detail at the working of the matrix and 'market' salaries, the number of 0% increases and those who were 'overpaid' in the Bank's terms.

Following discussion of the pay settlement she ended by advising the meeting that the Bank's activities in India were currently under discussion by the GT Committee. There were a number of unanswered questions on which the Bank would be pressed again and Branch might consider the latest position, following today's Committee, at its April meeting.

### **Date of Next Meeting**

Tuesday, 24<sup>th</sup> April, 12:30 – 13:30, Conference Room 1, A/2 Core.

*(Members stayed on for a further half hour of informal discussions with Alison)*

\_\_\_\_\_ Chair

\_\_\_\_\_ Date