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UNITE THE UNION WORKING FOR CRAIGFORTH MEMBERS

January 2010



UNITE MEETING WITH CRAIGFORTH MEMBERS

MEMBERS CALL FOR STEP UP IN RECOGNITION CAMPAIGN

YOUR FEEDBACK

Following our meeting with members who came to talk to us on the 17th and 18th of December we promised that we would summarise the position of Unite in relation to the ongoing struggle for recognition in Craigforth after we had reflected upon members feedback. Although the visit was short notice and members were restricted by the times that they could be released off the job, it was good to meet and to talk around 100 members over the two days including the Unite members who currently sit on Your Voice.

Members concerns are currently clearly focused on two issues

- 1) The proposed Pension changes
- 2) Union recognition in Craigforth

UNITE CALL ON CAPITA TO LISTEN TO THEIR STAFF

A separate communication is being sent out regarding the Pensions position as we wanted to advise members separately that in accordance with their wishes Unite will now step up the Campaign for Unite recognition and clarify what is needed to achieve this.

We very much hope that Capita will finally see sense on the issue and come to a voluntary arrangement with Unite and we again call on Capita to give staff the representation of their choosing.

Unite and Your Voice

This does not need to be at the expense of the Your Voice forum and Unite are more than happy to work with it as we do other staff forums. Many are members of Unite in any event and we have been supporting them with the current Pension consultations. The Your Voice Reps we spoke to agreed to consider launching their own survey on whether staff would prefer to have Unite only, Your Voice only or Unite and Your voice working together to represent staff as a way of getting a better view on the issue. In the meantime, Unite members and supporters are encouraged to email Your Voice Rep with their views on who they want to represent them.

Recognition - what do we need to do?

That said members have clearly indicated that they do not want the Union to rest on its laurels given that a formal application could take many months to process and want their Union to press on with the Campaign in any event. In order to achieve recognition we firstly need to define a legitimate Bargaining Unit – this we believe can be defined as Managers, I.T. and clerical staff based at Craigforth working on the Prudential contract. According to the feedback received we understand that this currently amounts to around 720 staff.

Based on these numbers we then need to be able to demonstrate to the Certification Officer that we have

- **At least 361 members (50% +1) - this would then trigger automatic recognition of Unite and/or**

- **Enough support to win at least 361 votes (50%+1) for union recognition in a ballot. The simplest way to do this is to organise a petition for staff to sign pledging their support for union recognition. Signatories to the petition do not have to be members of the Union but they do have to work within the eventual bargaining unit.**

NOW IS THE TIME TO JOIN

We have received many dozens of new membership forms in the post in recent weeks and we are currently validating our membership records for an up to date figure but it's clear that we are getting closer to the 361 target and we would encourage every member to encourage their colleagues to join Unite at www.unitetheunion.org/join

THE NEXT STEPS – MEMBERS ORGANISING COMMITTEE

During our discussions it became clear that many members were keen to be more active in the Campaign and as a result we are looking to establish an on site members Organising Committee to drive the Campaign to a successful conclusion.

The key activities for the committee are to;

- Map the current membership by department and continue the push to sign up new members and confirm the composition of the bargaining unit.
- Oversee the petition and the drive to collect as many signatures as possible from staff.

If you want get involved email your contact details and membership number to Capita@unitetheunion.com by the 15th of January 2010.

Once the names are in we will quickly set up the first meeting of the Organising Committee and are aiming to get this up and running in the week commencing 18th of January 2010. Once this has been achieved a further communication will be distributed advising members of the way forward.

Members need to be advised that it is unlawful for members to be discriminated against for trade union activity by their employer and Unite would not expect Capita to behave in such a way. However at this stage no formal time off work can be expected and members will need to act in their own time. In addition, Company facilities cannot be utilised without express agreement from Capita until recognition is secured.

Unite will of course provide members with full support, guidance and resources for the campaign.

Daryl Williams

Full Time Officer – Finance and Legal Sector - Unite

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