

GMB Northants Community Branch
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Summary of the branch meeting held on 29th April 2015

Present: Deborah Foley, Kayleigh Ketteridge, Chelsey Furniss, Fergus Farrell, Adrian Grover, Jackie Grover, Gordon Glassford, Rajko Loncar, Robert Wood, Sterling Bryan.

Apologies: Maggie Don, Ray Beeby, Lily Lowe, Charlotte Harris, Brian Fayter.

Sterling had attended Brian Cameron's funeral as had Rachelle Wilkins and Brian Fayter. It had been well attended and Brian got a good send off. The secretary had sent flowers on the branches behalf.

It was agreed to donate £200 to the Nicodemus Trust which helps homeless children in Guatemala and £200 to the Oakley Vale Community which is helping young, local, musicians

Our motion to congress, concerning the setting up of a working party to look at the use of accompanying reps had failed to get the support of the regional delegation or of the Central Executive Council. We feel this is very short sighted and the union is passing up the opportunity to represent members at low cost and committing full time officers to doing 'low level work' such as initial disciplinary hearings that could be handled by lay members. After a discussion it was agreed that the secretary write to region and the CEC to express our concerns.

The attendance for the Workers Memorial Day commemoration had been quite poor although it was felt the event went well with excellent speakers. The appeal for the June Hancock Mesothelioma Research fund had not gone as well as in the past. UNISON had donated as had USDAW. Region had made a generous donation which was welcome but the only donation we received from a GMB branch was from Grimsby Central. It was suggested that we should consider not donating when similar appeals come to us from other branches or failing that make clear that we will be donating in spite of the fact that our appeal had fallen on deaf ears.

The Youth 2000 Brass Band had not been able to perform at the event as they had for the previous 2 years. The secretary had been informed that they would only be able to muster 8 members which wasn't viable. It was agreed that the secretary contact the band to express our concerns and to find out if they could give a performance at another time. It was also agreed that we continue to support the band.

The branches financial situation remains healthy

Jackie Grover, branch president, felt that Workers Memorial Day had gone well in spite of the lack of numbers and the speakers, especially Andy Sawford, had been very good.

Workplace Reports:

Learn Direct: More employees have joined the union so we should be able to get recognition.

Initial Services: Sterling said that everything is going well so far after the takeover.

Kier: The employers have changed agencies and are trying to cut costs by sending workers home unpaid when the work is done. This is a worrying development. It was felt that more could have been done by the council to get agency workers onto permanent contracts with Kier. The change of agencies also means that those workers who may have been due to the same conditions as Kier employees are having to start again.