

GMB Northants Community Branch
Secretary: Gordon Glassford, Corby, Northants, NN17 2LL
Email: gordonglassford@gmbnorthants.org
www.gmbnorthants.org

Summary of the branch meeting held on 22nd February 2017

A minutes silence was held in memory of Robert Wood, a workplace organiser at Kier in Corby who has died following a long illness from which he seemed to be recovering so it came as a shock. It was agreed that the branch will send flowers to the funeral or make a donation depending on the wishes of the family.

It was agreed that Maggie Don, public services, and Jackie Grover, commercial services, should be nominated for regional council.

Eleanor Marx Award. It was felt that Maggie would be an excellent recipient for this award and she reluctantly agreed to be nominated.

Arrangements are going ahead for this years Workers Memorial Day commemoration. Letters have been sent out asking for donations for the Mesothelioma Research fund to the regional committee, other unions in the region, other local union branches and Andy Worth has been asked to send out appeals to GMB branches. Bert Schoenberg, GMB International Officer, has agreed to speak but we are still looking for other speakers. Ray has booked the buffet and he has also arranged for a room in the Cube in case the weather is poor. Alida Coates will be attending representing the June Hancock Mesothelioma Research fund. All we need now is for more speakers and the cheques to come rolling in.

The secretary is currently sending out letters to new members. Because it is a while since he has had an updated membership list there are rather a lot but most have been sent.

The standing orders for foodbanks has run out after a year. We have supported foodbanks in Daventry, two in Northampton, Wellingborough, Towcester, Kettering and Corby. It was agreed to include the Kettering Centre for the Unemployed which is part of the Trussell Trust.

Financial Report:

The secretary is in the middle of the quarterly audit. The NAU has not processed the commission to three new reps which is causing some problems.

The Presidents and Social Media Reports:

Jackie and Adrian had sent their apologies.

Equality Officer Report:

Quiet at the moment. The BBC had been showing a series of programmes about the disabled. After a court ruling wheelchairs now take priority over pushchairs. A number of new buildings are going up with no disabled access which is against the law and ignores the power of the 'purple pound' which is extremely short sighted.

Workplace Reports:

Accuma Plastics: Our members have been given assurances that they are receiving the living wage but that is doubtful now it appears that the company might not be paying holiday pay properly. Rachelle is chasing it up.

Matalan Warehouse: Ian reported that moral is quite low at the moment. No pay rise last year and Ian has been prevented from meeting union officials from the other Matalan site in Skelmersdale. It is likely that a joint pay claim will be submitted. Meanwhile Matalan is making a healthy profit.

Kier: The company have been replacing old equipment with even older equipment. The company is a complete shambles. Kier are unable to prove that they have been doing the required safety cheques in the council run cemeteries after a member was injured by a monument falling on him. Rachelle will write to them.

Amey (Northants Schools) Recruitment is good at the moment we do not have formal recognition yet but we should soon be at 50% plus 1. We do have check off and union facilities.

Rachelle reported that the Northamptonshire County Council is a complete shambles and there is a possibility that they could be the first council to go bankrupt. They are making cut after cut, especially in the care of the elderly but they still managed to waste forty-six million pounds of public money on 'project angel' for a building which isn't worth that on the open market. There are number of buildings which the council owns that contain asbestos and they appear to be failing in their statutory duty to identify and deal with it.

Martyn said that there will be a change to the local employment structure. Tribunals will no longer be held in Huntingdon and Bedford but in Leicester, Cambridge and Watford instead.

Maggie will be abseiling down the Express Lift tower in Northampton for the Homestart charity. The branch agreed to donate £200 and wished her luck.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm.