GMB Northants Community Summary Branch Minutes 30th July 2026

Secretary, Alan Irwin,
Email: Alan.Irwin@gmbactivist.org.uk
gmbnorthants.org

1. Apologies

Apologies were received.

---

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the Branch Meeting held on 23 June 2026 were accepted as a true and accurate record.

---

3. Matters Arising

Lee Barron/Lucy Powell Fundraiser

Ross advised that the fundraiser previously discussed by the branch had been postponed and will now take place on **4 September 2026**.

The branch's agreed £100 donation for five tickets remains in place, with further details regarding payment arrangements awaited.

---

4. Correspondence

Alan reported on correspondence received during the month, including:

- Numerous member enquiries seeking advice and support.
- Labour Party correspondence and updates.
- Regional vacancy notifications and casework updates.
- Correspondence relating to branch restructuring discussions.
- Updates regarding St Andrew's Healthcare.
- Membership reports and membership analysis information.
- Retired Members Conference communications.
- Cuba Solidarity Campaign correspondence.
- Unity Trust Bank grant opportunities.
- Requests for promotional items from the Regional Organiser.
- Notification that the branch's motions for the Retired Members Conference had been accepted.

CLP Delegate Appointment

Alan advised that following Tommy Beattie's retirement from the role, **Alison Dalziel** had agreed to become the branch's additional Constituency Labour Party delegate alongside Ross Armour.

Members agreed the appointment.

Tommy Beattie

Alan confirmed that Tommy Beattie had received the branch's £30 book token and had expressed his thanks to members.

Donation Request – “Just Him”

Alan informed the branch of a request from Paula Bolton for support towards her play **"Just Him"**, focusing on men's mental health.

Decision:

- Alan proposed a donation of **£100**.
- Members unanimously supported the proposal.

Resolved: Donation of £100 approved.

Promotional Materials

Rachelle requested the purchase of promotional materials for recruitment and organising purposes.

Decision:

- Branch agreed in principle to support the purchase of approximately 500 trolley coins and 500 pens, subject to obtaining the best available pricing.

Unity Trust Community Grants

Alan reported that Unity Trust Bank offers community grants.

Action: Alan to pursue a grant application to support the branch's ongoing community and food bank work.

---

5. Secretary's Report

Alan reported:

- Increased member contact through the branch website and social media platforms.
- Continued support for members seeking workplace advice.
- Ongoing work supporting local food banks, with six food banks currently receiving branch support.
- Consideration of expanding support to an additional food bank in the Rushden area.
- Concerns regarding email storage capacity due to growing casework workloads.
- Positive progress with the Midlands casework allocation system.
- Continued concerns regarding branch restructuring proposals and their implications for St Andrew's Healthcare members.
- The need to continue developing branch capacity, representation and workplace support structures.

Alan stressed that any restructuring must be assessed on the basis of what best serves members.

---

6. Financial Report

Alan reported the branch account balances.

---

7. President's Report

Jackie reported:

- Reduced activity recently due to family commitments.
- Continuing attendance at local Labour Party branch meetings.
- Concerns regarding low attendance at local Labour Party meetings and declining membership.
- Plans to write directly to members to identify barriers to engagement.
- Participation in Labour Party training but withdrawal from a campaign programme due to the financial contributions expected from participants.
- Continued work as a councillor and Police Liaison representative.

Alan Irwin formally thanked Jackie for her support to the branch and the work she undertakes as Branch President.

---

8. Digital Communications Officer Report

Adrian reported:

Website

- 320 visits from 293 users during the previous 30 days.
- Publication of:
    - Tommy Beattie tribute.
    - Summary minutes.
    - Branch meeting notice.

Membership Communications

- WhatsApp group remains at 51 members.
- July email newsletter issued to 1,803 members.
- 482 opens recorded (27% open rate).

Social Media

- Facebook content received 119 views from 26 users.

YouTube

- Subscriber count stable at 66.
- 14 views recorded over the previous 28 days.

- AI analytics indicate approximately 40% of viewers discovered content through platform recommendations rather than direct searches.

---

9. Equality Officer's Report

Pat reported:

- Attendance at the Regional Equalities Forum.
- Progress regarding the branch motions accepted for the Retired Members Conference.
- Ongoing encouragement to support Pride events where possible.
- Confirmation that **"The Last Shift"** will be performed at the TUC Women's Conference on 3 December 2026.
- Contact with Lee Barron MP regarding attendance at the performance.
- Updates regarding Labour fundraising events.

Pat suggested that the branch formally invite Lee Barron to attend the performance. Members supported the suggestion.

---

10. Youth Officer's Report

Alan presented Verena's written report.

Key issue:

- NHS workforce uncertainty has resulted in training opportunities being reduced despite significant demand for therapists.
- No further matters were reported.

---

11. Regional Organiser's Report

Rachelle provided a comprehensive report covering:

Members welcomed Rachelle's return and thanked her for the update.

---

12. Accompanying Representatives Report

Alan reported:

- Casework remains extremely busy.
- St Andrew's Healthcare continues to generate a significant proportion of cases.
- Increasing complexity and emotional demands of representation work.
- The need for additional support structures and future representative development.

Rachelle confirmed that several new St Andrew's cases had already been referred to her since returning to the role.

---

13. Health & Safety and Education Report

Neil reported:

Chronic Conditions Campaign

- Continued development of a national campaign on workplace support and reasonable adjustments for workers with chronic health conditions.
- Positive support from national and regional GMB officers.
- Survey and campaign materials nearing completion.
- Launch planned for September.

Education

- Work progressing on a chronic conditions and capability training course.
- Development of associated educational materials and videos.

PPE Campaign

- Completion nearing on a national PPE campaign video for the GMB.

Members congratulated Neil on his continuing work and commitment to the campaign.

---

14. Workplace Reports

ASDA

Neil reported:

- Ongoing uncertainty and low morale as a result of restructuring proposals.
- Concerns around capability requirements, workforce flexibility and future redundancies.
- Increasing anxiety amongst members regarding future workforce changes.

---

15. Political Reports

Ross

Ross reported:

- Re-election as Trade Union Liaison Officer for Corby & East Northamptonshire CLP.
- Significant difficulties filling officer positions within the CLP.
- Low meeting attendance remains a concern.
- Alison Dalziel re-elected as CLP Treasurer.
- Future reporting arrangements will continue between branch delegates.

Jackie

Jackie reported:

- Continuing difficulties recruiting people into officer positions within local Labour Party structures.
- Ongoing membership and engagement challenges.

---

16. Any Other Business

WASPI Campaign

Pat reported that discussions involving Andy Burnham and WASPI campaign representatives may be progressing.

Care Home Consultations

Pat raised concerns regarding West Northamptonshire care home consultation proposals and encouraged members to participate in ongoing consultations.

Rachelle advised that she had begun engaging directly with care home staff regarding the proposals.

Members discussed care provision, workforce pressures and future policy developments.

---

17. Date of Next Meeting

It was confirmed that:

- No branch meeting will take place during August 2026.
- The next branch meeting will be held **24th September 2026**.

Meeting Closed

The President thanked members for attending and closed the meeting