

EA Thames Branch Meeting Minutes







26 July 2022 – 11:00 to 13:00, Unison HQ Euston and via Microsoft Teams

Attendees – Chair: Andy Theaker

Josh Chan, Sarah Tedder, Joanne Casey, Peter Bound, Will Lidbetter, Mike Tregent, Chris Thilthorpe, Chris Beales

Guest(s) - Barry O’Hanlon

Apologies – Mick Hylton, Di Holba, Anna Parr, Lane Redgwell, Rebecca Chadderton, Tams Evans, Sam Winter

Agenda number	Agenda Item	Actions		
1	Welcome to all			
2	<p>Branch Officers Reports</p> <p>Branch Secretary JC – Reported he didn’t think that the pay offer was going to cut it for members this year and that Union membership and solidarity was going to be hugely important over the coming months.</p> <table border="0" data-bbox="255 1075 1292 1276"> <tr> <td data-bbox="255 1075 766 1276"> <p>Treasurer</p>  <p>July 22 - Treasurer report.pdf</p> </td> <td data-bbox="766 1075 1292 1276"> <p>Membership</p>  <p>Membership Report July 22.docx</p> </td> </tr> </table> <p>Training – RC: Not present for update</p> <p>Health and Safety – Andy reported he had asked at LJC if the conclusion on the HSE investigation over Mick Crooks death had been released. LJC failed to answer due to legal jeopardy, so Andy then raised the matter at NNG. Richard Houghton, Head of H & S in the EA was surprised nothing had been fed back and that HSE had concluded there was no culpability over the incident and the matter was now closed.</p> <p>Diversity & Equalities Officer – Andy reported that Mick Hylton had announced he was leaving the EA in October and thanked him for all the work he had done on the Branch Exec over the years and wished him all the very best for the future.</p> <p>LGBTQ+ Officer - Still no officer on the Exec</p> <p>Publicity Officer – MT promoted the fantastic EA Unison Thames Branch website and asked for more contributions from members.</p> <p>Waterways Rep – Lane Redgwell is still the rep for waterways staff.</p> <p>Ops Field Team Rep - PB: Members are waiting for the ballot</p>	<p>Treasurer</p>  <p>July 22 - Treasurer report.pdf</p>	<p>Membership</p>  <p>Membership Report July 22.docx</p>	
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	<p>Retired Members Officer - DH: not able to attend, Andy added that Di had been suffering from ill health and wished her a speedy recovery and looked forward to seeing her on her feet again at our next branch meeting.</p> <p>Pensions Officer - WL: reported he was still attending EAPF online meetings and always happy to try and answer questions from members.</p>	
3	<p>Items for discussion</p> <p>Pay Ballot - comms messages from Unison: we've been offered 2 to 3% rise. We've asked for 10%, which James Bevan is supporting. Unofficial ballot to accept or reject will be issued by Unison and staff will have between 2 August and 2 September to respond. Email your response to Andy, who will collate. If a majority result to reject, we will go through official strike action.</p> <p>MT: Asked for key messages to send to members explaining what they need to do etc. e.g. what is the offer. Explain other scenarios - the government offer to the police etc was 5% and this was rejected? Inflation compared to offer (currently 12%, soon to go up to 15%).</p> <p>Do we need to establish is there an appetite to go on strike? There are mixed feelings at National meetings.</p> <p>WL: Instead of saying we've been offered a 2% pay rise tell them we've been given a 7% pay cut.</p> <p>UNISON is preparing a strike fund payment of £50 and looking at legalities of Branches contributing to a strike fund.</p> <p>Recruitment - We are currently losing members because they've leaving the EA. We have a few new starters, but we need to recruit – if we fall below 50% membership, we won't be able to negotiate pay and conditions. Members need to be made aware of this; they may be able to help recruit. Don't forget the social contribution fund – aimed at current members and those wishing to join Unison. e.g., BBQ at an office £30 pp for food and drink or taking members out for a meal etc. Must be organised by a current member and can be used to recruit new members.</p> <p>Branch Rules - BO'H has kindly revised our branch rules – please have a read and feedback to Andy and Barry for further discussion. Very few branches have rules, national rules are vast, so BO'H has written our branch rules, based on the national rules but they are interesting and relevant to our members etc. nothing has been assumed – we can amend as we see fit, take away and add as long as the national rules are used as a guide. It is an ongoing work in progress.</p>	

	<p>Suggested there is more on recruitment and the committee. At the last AGM we proposed a rule change, but any rule changes need to go to NDC. This process is now in the new branch rules. Rules are now plain, simple, transparent. Action to all - read and comments to AT and B O'H - timeline to be ratified at the next AGM.</p> <p>Website - http://eathames-unison.org.uk</p> <p>Unison NDC - MT attended and reported it's a good week. Huge number of motions to vote on – good debates. Our motion was the agenda but was never going to make it to be debated as it was too far down the list. There was no opposition to our motion – the process now is they will list all the motions who didn't get a debate/vote and the NDC will review them, but positive note is no-one opposed it. Recommend others going.</p>	
4	<p>Reports from other meetings, seminars etc.</p> <p>All dates for 2022 seminars are on the website – please do go if you can. Remember the branch will pay for the face-to-face meetings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Joint Council - AT meets with Thames Area, HNL and KSL – no one from GMB or UNITE – they seem to be losing their momentum. • Waterways – attended by LR • National operations joint council (ex RJC) – attended by AT • Sector Group – attended by AT and PB • National Field Operations - attended by AT • National Change Group - • National Negotiating Group – attended by AT • Water, Environment, Energy & Transport (WEET) – to be held in either Newcastle or Gateshead this year – need someone to attend. Conference will be in September/October. Branches come together from all over and it's an opportunity to talk and share. It's more specific to us. MT to send the Exec a list of the conference dates relevant to us. • Greater London UNISON - • Black Members Conference – attended by MH • Retired members conference – attended by DH • Young Persons conference – SW unable to attend this year due to holiday clash 	

5	<p>Representation Stewards reports on grievances, disciplinary meetings etc. AT is really busy with all of the above.</p> <p>Who are our stewards?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Andy • Will Lidbetter • Tony Cruise • Mike Tregent • Mick Hylton • Joanne – is happy to direct but not represent <p>Need more stewards to represent. ***website campaign***</p>	Recruitment campaign needed
6	AoB	
7	Next meeting – End of September and mid-December – AT and JC to look at dates	