

London Ambulance Service Unison Branch Committee Meeting

10th February 2009 1400hrs – Conference Room LAS HQ

Present:

- Eric Roberts - Branch Secretary
- Eddie Brand – Chair
- Phil Thompson – Unison Regional Organiser
- George Achilles - Treasurer
- Sarah Hardy – Vice Chair
- Andrea Gibbs – Welfare Officer
- Michael Apps – Retired Members Officer
- Dave Smith – Membership Officer
- Mark Belkin – Education Officer
- Rob Sydney – Communications Officer
- Peter Hannell – Equalities/Pensions Officer
- Paul O'Neill – Minute Secretary
- Richard Chow - EOC
- Clive Tombs – South East Sector
- Dave Lamey – South West Sector
- Mark Lione – East Central Sector
- Julie Shirt – North East Sector
- Rob Matthews – North West Sector
- Nadine Poonawala – North West Sector
- Karen Walling – West Sector
- Gary Edwards – West Sector
- Fred Phillips – Membership Assistant (Retired Member)

Apologies:

Ian Lee	John Gough
Tim Stephens	Claudette McNaughton

Introductions and Welcome	Action
<p>EB welcomed Janice Markey who has been recently appointed as Equality & Diversity Manager for the LAS. Janice spoke about her background and outlined the key initiatives that she would like to see introduced i.e. the new single equality scheme which includes the six equality strands and she will also present key equality initiatives to the Trust board.</p>	
<p>Previous Minutes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Two corrections – a typographical error resulted in a double 'L' in Nadine Poonawala's surname and delegates were agreed for the upcoming Health Conference and not the National Conference. - Minutes from 19th January 2009 <u>agreed</u> as a true record. 	Agreed
<p>Matters arising</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - None. 	

<p>Branch Secretary's report (ER)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Legal report and running total of compensation distributed. Compensation totaling £121,967.94p has been awarded to LAS Unison branch members since March 2008. £1,348,317.06p of compensation has been obtained by the branch on behalf of its members since 1999. Four Legal forms have been processed since the last meeting. - Foundation Trust letter to be sent to all staff from Peter Bradley. - Thanks received for donations to the Ambulance Service Workers Hardship Fund (ASWHF) - The Health Bill and the NHS constitution (England) letter and information from Karen Jennings Head of Health for Unison - Recruiting in the private sector discussed with PT. - Retirement grant requests received on behalf of John Jewson from Chase Farm Station and Alan Delafond. 	<p>Agreed/GA Agreed</p>
<p>Partnership Forum/Constitution (ER)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dates have been set, however the anticipated apologies and retraction from GMB have not been received at the time of this meeting. We will not sit if these are not forthcoming. - EB to meet with Tony Crabtree to finalise dates for 2009/10 workplace representative elections. <p>Foundation Trust Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Process of consultation is now underway. Letters have been sent out to every member of staff. ER reiterated the issues surrounding Foundation Trust status. As part of the consultation process ER will write to LAS senior management regarding point twelve of the Memorandum of Understanding and the permutations relating to the Foundation Trust Board. Three people nominated and three people elected would be the ideal. ER believes this would take place every two years. 	<p>ER</p>
<p>Branch Officer Reports:-</p> <p>Communication (RS)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The committee thanked RS for the new front page of the website. 	
<p>Retired Members (MA)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mail out to members regarding the AGM in March. Those attending will have priority for the National Retired Members Conference. - Attended the Greater London Retired Members committee. - National Ambulance Golf Pairs tournament in Harlow. - National Pensioners Group convention. - Following the redevelopment of Smithfield Ambulance Station, retired members who used to work there are being sought to attend the reopening ceremony. 	
<p>Health and Safety</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No report. 	
<p>Membership (DS)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - List of new members distributed – Thirty new members agreed by committee. - There are a number of union recruitment sessions coming up at LAS training centres if anyone is available to assist with recruitment. 	<p>Agreed</p>
<p>Treasurer (GA)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No report. 	
<p>PTS (GE)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No report as meeting cancelled. 	

<p>Welfare (AG)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - AG believes more awareness of Welfare services is required. - Convalescing places are available not only for members but also members of their family. - Those on long term sick may be eligible for a grant. Information available through the Department for Work and Pensions website. - Attended the Greater London Welfare Conference – Forced marriages were high on the agenda for discussion. Will distribute information leaflets, crews may for example be called to domestic incidents and can refer suspicions to the Police’s Forced Marriage Unit. - Family Justice Centre in Croydon is involved in 16% of London’s domestic violence cases. 	
<p>EOC (RC)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Five staff have recently been appointed to an OCM post and three EMD’s have been appointed to the Allocator position. - RC has been seconded to the CAD 2010 project until April 2009. - ER queried the amount of EOC staff still on Whitley contracts? 	RC to deal
<p>Diversity/Equalities (PH)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PH thanked Janice Markey for giving some of her time to speak to the committee. - PH raised concerns over racist connotations during the recent fuel terminal strikes. ER and PT also spoke on the issues and PT referred the committee to the website www.bearfacts.co.uk 	
<p>Education (MB)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Grievance and Disciplinary course planned for 16th and 17th June has been move forward , will now take place on the 9th and 10th June. - Posters distributed for upcoming courses, could reps make sure these are displayed on stations. 	
<p>Labour Link (JG)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No report. 	
<p>Pensions (PH)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No report. 	
<p>Regional Organiser (PT)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nominations for Branch committee posts closed on 9th March 2009. At the time of the meeting it had not been confirmed if there were any further nominations. <p>Organising in the Private Sector</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PT started the overdue debate regarding recruiting and organising in the private ambulance sector. Although this mainly concerns PTS staff it may include cleaning, canteen and Make Ready staff. The committee debated the subject at length. Many questions were raised such as ‘Do we want private ambulance staff as members?’ PT believes yes, but how do we organise private ambulance workers when there are no NHS terms and conditions in place. Private ambulance workers are probably the biggest group of non unionised workers. If private ambulance workers are members of the union then they may get better pay along with terms and conditions which may help NHS ambulance win PTS contracts which would otherwise have been won by private providers undercutting and providing a poor service. The committee agrees in principal to recruiting in the private sector. ER stated it would be unfair to recruit and not service members within the private sector and therefore a proper organizing plan needed to be agreed and carried through. An approach would be made by ER and PT to the Region and LAS management to discuss release of staff and funding. 	Agreed/ER & PT

<p>Staff Council (EB)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No report, next meeting on 19th February. 	
<p>AOB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Function for John Whiting, where he will be presented with a Unison Honorary Life Time Membership will be held at The Horse Bar Westminster Bridge Road SE1 commencing at 1800hrs. - Reminder that the next committee meeting will be held prior to the Branch AGM on 18th March. 	
<p>Date of Next Meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 18th March 2009 time TBC 	

ADDENDUM - since the Branch committee held on 10th February 2009 meeting two nominations for Branch Secretary were received therefore the position will go to ballot. Papers will be sent out shortly. All other post nominees were elected unopposed.