

**London Ambulance Service NHS Trust**

**Minutes of the Meeting of the  
STAFF COUNCIL  
Held on 19<sup>th</sup> February 2009  
1100-1400 in the Conference Room, HQ**

<b><u>Chair:</u></b>	Caron Hitchen – Director of Human Resources & OD	HQ
	Eddie Brand – Staff Side Chair	Unison
	Eric Roberts – Staff Side Secretary	Unison
	Martin Flaherty – Director of Operations	HQ
	Tony Crabtree – Assistant Director, Employee Support Services	HQ
	Steve Sale – Head of Workforce Modernisation	HQ
	Nic Daw – Head of PTS	Pocock Street
	Bob Buck	Amicus
	David Lamey	Unison
	Pete Hannell	Unison
	Richard Chow	Unison
	Mark Lione	Unison
	Mike Dinan – Director of Finance	HQ
	Paul Woodrow – ADO (South Area)	Deptford
	Mick Butler	GMB
	Pat Osliff	GMB
	Dave Powell – Full Time Officer	GMB
	Tim Stephens	Unison
	Peter McKenna – ADO (West Area)	Hanwell
<b><u>In Attendance</u></b>	Gill Huechan – Assistant Director of Professional Education Development	HQ
	Bill O’Neill – Assistant Director of Organisation Development	HQ
	David Foley – Local Counter Fraud Specialist	
	John Wilkins – Foundation Trust Lead	Loman Street
	Scott Velleman (Minutes)	HQ

**ACTION**

**01/09 Apologies for Absence**

Gary Edwards  
Peter Suter  
Phil Thompson  
Richard Webber  
Phil Savage

**02/09 Minutes of the Previous Meeting – 20<sup>th</sup> November 2008**

Agreed

**03/09 Matters Arising**

None

**04/09 Fraud**

DF introduced himself and outlined his role as the Trust's local counter fraud specialist, the work of the NHS Counter Fraud and Security Management Service, and how he can work with the LAS. He also discussed and tabled for comment the draft Fraud & Corruption Policy.

**05/09 Director of Operations – Report (Standing Item)**

MF reported that despite the challenge of meeting the 75% category A target under the new call connect arrangements, the LAS is still having its best ever year in terms of number of category A calls within the national standard. However, the winter period has been very difficult, particularly with hospital delays. Category A performance stands at 73.6% with 6 weeks of the financial year left. Category B performance is at 83.74% against a target of 95%. The Trust must hit 85% otherwise it will be classified as 'Weak' by the Healthcare Commission. All ambulance Trusts have found the new targets very difficult, and London is not alone in being slightly adrift at this stage.

MF stated that he and senior colleagues have worked hard with the commissioners this year, and the result of their exploratory work is that it has been identified that the LAS is still the highest utilised service in the UK. As a result we will need an additional 400 staff and £26 million next year, and agreement with Commissioners on these figures is believed to be very close.

MF stated his belief that 2009/10 will be quite different in terms of performance with additional staffing and expressed his appreciation for how hard everyone is working.

ER welcomed the increases to staff and funding, and affirmed the importance of continuing to recognise how hard staff are working.

MF confirmed that he is aware of this and that the efforts of staff do not go unrecognised..

CH added that this year has demonstrated clearly how individual NHS organisations' targets have interfered with each other; and highlighted the need for additional partnership working between organisations to be done.

**06/09 Director of Human Resources – Report (Standing Item)**

CH reported that the Service will have recruited 350 student paramedics by the end of March, by which time we will be at full establishment of 2,913 operational staff. EOC will also be fully staffed by the end of the financial year. These are both based on the establishment figures for 2008/09 and do not take into account the increases discussed by MF earlier.

**Director of Human Resources – Report (Standing Item) (continued)**

Currently there is a surplus of funds allocated for the training of student paramedics which the Strategic Health Authority is allowing the Service to divert to other training.

CH also said that work is continuing with the Resource Centres to enable Promis to manage the administration of individual annual leave years where the anniversary date would be based on either date of birth, or date of entry into the LAS. The intention is to start with frontline staff once arrangements are in place and staff have been fully briefed. CH stressed the need to communicate clearly to staff that their total entitlements will not be affected.

ER felt that the organisation would need to be flexible in the first year while staff were still getting used to the new system, and after that it should become routine for all. He added that the East of England Ambulance Trust is already operating this system successfully, and suggested that HR consults with them on any difficulties that were encountered and how they were dealt with.

CH was also pleased to say that the CRB checking process was coming to an end. She stated that following the checks there have been 2 dismissals which is a miniscule amount when compared to how many checks have been done.

PH noted that he is doing some work with Janice Markey, Diversity Manager and asked for a demographic and ethnic breakdown of the student paramedics recruited, and those that have failed their training.

CH said that this could be obtained from Recruitment.

**07/09 Director of Finance – Report (Standing Item)**

MD stated that a small surplus of £600k is being forecast. Non essential estates work has been deferred until the new financial year in order to free up funds for overtime incentives etc approaching year end. All of the Service's capital funding will be spent this year.

As stated earlier by MF, £26million of additional funding has been agreed in principle by the lead commissioner. This still has to be agreed by the 25 additional commissioners but MD was confident this would happen. The funding levels for next year need to be agreed by 14/03/2009. The proposed increase in funding will equate to £30 per head of population for London.

The Trust Board has agreed to procure 100 new Mercedes ambulances in the next financial year, which will allow the LDVs to be decommissioned.

**08/09 New Ways of Working (Standing Item)**

BoN told the group that despite some delays in moving the initiative forward, there have been some significant achievements to note.

Training schedules have been identified. Phase 1 is aimed at getting people up to the skill level that they need. Phase 2 will launch a CPD programme that will run concurrent to those of other complexes. Phase 3 will cover up-skilling and the bespoke training needs particular to Barnehurst and Chase Farm. Training facilities are being developed. Chase Farm has a dedicated room, whilst Barnehurst is still being worked on. Team Leaders have had some training in advanced assessment and advanced life support. 2 Community Involvement Officers are now in post, 1 for each complex.

There are 2 outstanding issues to be dealt with. These are team-based working and the delivery of training. Some other items will be introduced on a trial basis so as to enable evaluation and assessment in a managed way.

MB supported these achievements and agreed that they are positives at Barnehurst. He stated concerns that the work has stalled somewhat, and underlined the need to supply the staff with some facts and figures and suggested rotas etc so that they identify their options and make some decisions.

**09/09 PTS Issues (Standing Item)**

ND stated that the Barnet, Haringey & Enfield Mental Health Trust contract has recently been won. Contrastingly PTS were not successful with the Lewisham contract because it is being amalgamated with Kings, Guys & St Thomas' which weren't bid on for logistical reasons. PTS have also not won Barking, Haringey and Redbridge. There are still some other results to be announced from the London Procurement Programme (LPP). Outside of the LPP the South West London & St George's Mental Health Trust contract has been won.

PTS are £200k in deficit presently which has halved since the last Staff Council meeting on 20/11/08. There are now two months left to achieve financial balance. The majority of the deficit has been caused by taking on a sub contracting role at Barts & The Royal London renal contract, because the journeys carried out have been far more extensive in terms of distance than what has been paid for. ND stated that he has given notice of termination unless changes to price can be agreed. If termination does occur then as ever PTS will look to find other roles for the staff that would be affected.

**10/09 Fleet Issues (Standing Item)**

BB repeated previous concerns about the Fleet Review, and whether Fleet service can be maintained with the new model that is proposed. He stated that he would write to MF with specific concerns.

ER stressed the importance of obtaining and retaining staff support for such a programme of change.

MD replied that work does need to be done and changes made because of the evolving nature of A&E demand. He also wanted to acknowledge the work of the Vehicle Resource Centre and how well it has managed the increasing demand on vehicles despite there being no increase in overall fleet size.

**12/09 Partnership Conference**

**& 13/09 Station/Workplace Elections**

TC stated that station elections will be held in March. Senior reps should be confirmed and in place by the end of April. Once all this has taken place a partnership conference is intended to be held on 15/05/2009.

**14/09 Bike Loans**

TC told the group that in recent years there have been small numbers of requests for support for staff to purchase bicycles. The LAS doesn't currently have the capacity to run a salary sacrifice scheme, although this has not been ruled out for the future. In the meantime the Service will offer an interest free loan of up to £1,000 where purchase must be made at Halfords or Evans, and details will be in the RIB in the next 2 to 3 weeks.

**15/09 Mileage Rates**

MB tabled a suggestion that the sub group meets to look at mileage rates.

TC replied that he had no objections. He added that the groups' work had been put on hold while national discussions were ongoing. He suggested he speak with MB outside to discuss when would be best for the group to meet.

**16/09 Bank Holiday Payments**

ML asked for clarification on how and when time in lieu is paid back.

TC replied that he will write to the Joint Secretaries in the next 2 weeks. He also said that the Terms & Conditions Group should be re-established.

**18/09 On-road Supervising Training Payments**

TS stated that his colleagues have requested financial compensation for this PPED role.

ER added that the item is being raised because the scale of the recruitment programme, and therefore the amount of supervising required of PPEs has increased significantly.

CH responded that this is being reviewed and suggested that this item is included in a wider discussion on terms and conditions.

RC asked if work-based trainers in EOC can be included in the discussions as they will be needed much more when CAD2010 goes live.

TC stated that the correct way to deal with this would be to produce an agreed job description for the work-based trainers which would then be put forward for banding in the usual way.

**Date of Next Meetings:** 07<sup>th</sup> May 2009, 1100 – 1330 hours  
Conference Room, HQ