

MINUTES

Meeting Between GMB Regional Pensions Officers and National Pensions Dept

Marx Memorial Library, London

Tuesday 24th February 2009, 13.00 – 15:00

Present: Naomi Cooke (NC), Phil McEvoy (PMc), Mohammed Khalik (MK), Alex McLuckie (AMc), Graham Benton (GB), Bert Schouwenburg (BS), David Castledine (DC), Trevor Stephenson (TS), Bob Cunningham (BC).

Apologies: Pamela Drake, Terry Mellor

Agenda summary

1. Minutes of Last Meeting
 2. Action Points Arising
 3. Communications Update
 4. Industrial Information
 5. Activist Update
 6. Training
 7. Policy
 8. AOB
 9. Date of Next Meeting
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Minutes of Last Meeting

The minutes were agreed.

Action Points Arising

The majority of these had been actioned although it was noted that some Regional Websites did not have any pensions links (eg link to National Pension Page).

Actions:

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| 1 RPOs to ensure pension link on Regional websites |
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Communications

The list of bulletins, guides, Q&As and other documents was given verbally.

There was a discussion of the upcoming NHS Choice exercise which will affect any NHS employees who were in the pension scheme before April 2008. National Office has already produced some briefings on this. There was discussion on how GMB could best recruit on the back of this exercise (eg through workplace presentations), and there was discussion of involving Regional MDO's.

There was a discussion on how pension provision would look in the aftermath of the current economic climate, and on the notion that pension investments are sustained by long term economic growth. It was noted that a briefing on how final salary schemes will be sustainable in the long term should be produced, and in addition to this some consideration given to the long term impact on funding levels.

The success of the Parliamentary Rally on Ofgem's pensions interference was noted, and it was suggested that this should receive significant coverage in the GMB Regional Magazines (NB The most recent magazine, published subsequent to the meeting, has a page on the rally).

Actions:

- 2 PMc to circulate NHS Choice Briefings and keep RPOs informed
- 3 Dept to work on briefing on current economic climate and funding

Industrial Information

A brief update of National work, particularly in relation to LGPS and NHS was given. All developments on these are communicated through our website.

On specific regional industrial matters it was noted that Glasgow City Council had outsourced a significant number of staff with an open admission agreement for continued access to the LGPS. There was some general discussion on the recent growth of salary sacrifice arrangements, which GMB does not support. PMc agreed to re-circulate the department's briefing on salary sacrifice.

Actions:

- 4 PMc to circulate salary sacrifice briefing

Activist Involvement

An update on the growth of the Capital Stewards network was given, and an outline was made of the intended course of work on this project. It was suggested that it would be useful for RPOs to have a list of Member Nominated Trustee and Capital Steward members.

BC advised PMc of a trustee member who would be potentially interested in joining the network.

Actions:

- 5 PMc to circulate list of MNTs/Capital Stewards

Training

A draft version of the officers training format was circulated for discussion (it was agreed to circulate an electronic version of this). It was noted that this would be intensive, but the department will try to keep the issues covered as relevant as possible with real life examples. RPOs are invited to feedback any comments on the outline structure and any suggestions on format. Subject to these the department proposes to build the training programme along these lines in line with the approach agreed with the GS and SMT.

Actions:

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| 8 | PMc to circulate electronic version of training outline |
| 9 | RPOs to comment on this |

Policy

There was a brief outline of the number and content of motions that were provisionally being put to Congress 2009.

The department also advised of the intended program around pensions at Blackpool including a pensions fringe and a joint fringe with the Health & Safety department on pension investments and environmental issues.

A further update of ongoing consultations was given, and the department will continue to circulate our responses to these amongst RPOs.

AOB

There was no other business.

Next Meeting

It was proposed that the next meeting should be held soon after Congress (i.e. June 2009).

Actions:

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| 10 | Department to circulate dates for a meeting in June. |
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