

London Ambulance Service Unison Branch Committee Meeting

29th July 2005 1030hrs – Partnership House SE1

Present: Eric Roberts - Branch Secretary
Eddie Brand – Chair
George Achilles – Treasurer
Ian Lee – Health & Safety Officer
Jim Underdown – Membership Officer
Mark Belkin – Education Officer
Dave Smith – Equal Opportunities Officer
John Gough – Labour Link Officer
Paul O’Neill - Minute Secretary
Michael Apps - Retired Members Officer
Joe Easterbrook – CAC
John Whiting – North East Sector
Peter Hannell – North West Sector
David Lamey – South West Sector
Sarah Hardy – South West Sector
Gary Edwards - West Sector
Karen Walling – West Sector

Apologies:

Phil Thompson	Fred Phillips
Rob Sydney	Andrea Shields
Kerry Hancock	Harry Day
Julie Shirt	Richard Chow
Claudette McNaughton	Kevin Tarsnane
Clive Tombs	Mark Lione

As a mark of respect, the committee held a one minute silence for the tragic events on 7th July 2005.

Introductions & Welcome

Previous Minutes

– Minutes from 14th June 2005 agreed as a true record.

Matters Arising

– None.

Branch Secretary's Report (ER)

- Legal report and running total of compensation.
- Press release regarding Ambulance Service review.
- Correspondence regarding retired member's conference.
- Branch continued affiliation to Searchlight. **Agreed.**
- Retirement request received on behalf of Phil King. **Agreed.**
- Accident & Emergency Service restructuring. A & E sector remodeling.
- Smoking policy regarding smoking on LAS premises.
- Letters of support received from ambulance services around the UK and internationally, including GMAS and Cuba, for the victims and their families and people involved in the rescue and recovery operation on 7th July 2005.
- Page of remembrance for events on 7th July 2005, including tributes and details where members affected by the bombings can access welfare and counseling.
- Minutes from National Ambulance Sector committee meeting.
- EMT/Paramedic matching dates will be 5th 8th 9th and 10th August 2005.
- Protect our Pensions update, proposals revoked by Parliament.
- Updated rule book now available.

Agenda for Change Update

- ER gave a detailed report.
- Correspondence regarding High Cost Area supplements.
- Meal breaks for PTS staff.
- Contracted hours and meal breaks for A&E staff.
- Accrued annual leave entitlements.
- Ambulance Practitioner Matching – Report and Guidance
- Review of unsocial hours payments.
- Minutes from AfC terms and conditions meeting 15th July 2005.
- SGEx Motion regarding concerns over the deadline for the implementation of AfC.

Equal Opportunities (DS)

- No report.

Retired Members (MA)

- Confirmed 3 visitors attending Retired Member's conference.
- Retired Member Ken Leaper has sadly passed away.

Welfare (AS)

- No Report.

Treasurers Report (GA)

- Latest bank reconciliation figures.
- The criteria for 'carers allowance' was reiterated.
- Apologised for cheques still not being available.

Health & Safety (IL)

- Manual Handling Policy.
- Ballistic body amour.
- CAC issues.
- Radiation pagers – Rollout to frontline staff not expected until January.
- Morphine – Rollout is planned for 12th September 2005. Concerns over safe storage and responsible handling as there are 300 EMT and Paramedic drug packs unaccounted for. Training is likely to be provided pre/post shift.
- 7 trial Mercedes A&E vehicles – The weight savings which were to be made by using carbon fibre panels will be lost as the manufacturer ordered the supply of carbon fibre 1mm too thick.

Communication (RS)

- No report.

Recruitment & Retention (ER)

- Deferred.

Membership (JU)

- No report.

Education (MB)

- Introductory course for stewards proved to be popular and a great success.
- Latest TUC course brochure is now available.

Labour Link Officer (JG)

- Pleased to announce that the BNP failed to hold on to their council seat in the Borough of Barking and Dagenham.
- Thoughts are with victims their families and staff involved in the tragedies on 7th July.

PTS (KT)

- EB read a message from KT regarding events on 7th July. PTS staffs thoughts are with the bereaved and those involved in the tragedy. The PTS staff felt part of the LAS on the day as they were involved in the major emergency plans.

CAC (JE)

- Police CAD link still giving incorrect incident locations. VCS still at risk.
- Police update printer seems to be too quiet so no one is alerted if an update comes through. It is also too heavy for the desks and has to be placed on the floor away from the controller.

Regional Officer

- Not in attendance

Staff Council Reports

- No meeting held.

AOB

- PH raised concerns over the content of the Operation Resilience Bulletin. Mainly regarding the paragraph which covers annual leave. PH concerned that consultation with reps had not taken place before decision was made. Also asked why a decision like this was made two days before this meeting and could it have waited and been discussed today. PH stated that he did not disagree with the sentiment of the bulletin, he was concerned with the democratic process.
- ER stated that having been approached by management side for advice and support following the events of 7th July on this matter he and Eddie immediately contacted all senior sector staff side representatives by email for opinion and guidance. A decision had to be made and as no reply had been received ER and EB were left to make this decision. ER stated that after collecting figures for A/L granted on every complex for August they agreed that restricting additional ad-hoc leave could help alleviate the pressures on the service at this difficult time. The Service has never been on such a high state of alert for such a sustained period ever. These are not normal times.
- No matter who is to blame for lack of staff and poor manning, staff cannot have it both ways. We cannot say publicly how proud we are to serve the people of London and how we will always be there for them in difficult times and yet despite the recent tragic events say “but not if it affects me”. We have a duty of care not only to our members but to the people of London, no one who already had A/L booked will be affected and all staff who would be booking block leave in this period have already done so.
- If the state of alert is downgraded, then the decision will be jointly reviewed.
- The committee voted to support the decision made by ER - 17 for, 0 against and 1 abstention.
- Everyone in the LAS did themselves proud Respect and thanks go out to all staff involved on 7th July.

Date of next meeting

- TBC