



**Minutes of the Branch Meeting held on Tuesday 7th March 2006, 2pm,
Monet Room, St Clements Hospital Main Building**

Present: Liz Potter, Ray Hill, Steve Cook, Gordon Morris, Philip Bloyce (Chair) and Annette Petty (notes)

Apologies: David Edginton, Ian Talbot, Julie Hammett, Cheryl Godber

Philip welcomed everyone to the meeting, it was decided to defer the Branch AGM to **Wednesday 29th March** – Annette to email reps with revised details, Agenda and UNISON nomination form for stewards – closing date for nominations which must be returned **by no later than Friday 24th March 2006**

Action Annette Petty

1. Branch Rules

Ian emailed the 2006 Draft Branch Rules to the reps on 28th February, asking for any comments/amendments to be forwarded to him by no later than 5th March. As there were no replies, the meeting approved and upheld the amendments for the draft rules which have now been adopted.

2. Change Management Procedure

Philip opened the discussion on the above in respect of Mental Health issues. He met with the group this morning led by Karen Parker, HR lead. There are 3 categories on the "at risk register". Category 1 represents staff at risk not in a new job, Category 2 staff at risk in 4 week trial – semi at risk and Category 3 staff at risk but offered a new post – therefore off the at risk register. Currently there are 102 members of staff in Category 1 "at risk register". They discussed the 1:1 interviews that have been arranged for staff to attend with HR, their Manager and Union representation if required – Philip questioned the Manager's involvement. 29 1:1 interviews were arranged last month, only 12-14 staff turned up, and are all looking at redundancy packages. Philip suggested that only the member of staff, member of HR and Union representation is required – the interviews consist of asking these basic questions: - Who are you? Where do you work? What qualifications do you have? Location of work? Do you drive? Are you in the pension scheme? Etc as HR require this information to match against vacancies. There are currently several in Learning Disabilities, held for some time. A qualified nurse going to Learning Disabilities would need 18 months shadowing before transferring posts – this is excluded under Project 2000. Guidance is required via the N.M.C working around skills/capability. This item was discussed at Trust Council on 9th November 2005. There are a number of agencies within Learning Disabilities and have a number of candidates to slot into posts.

Philip to produce an "idiots guide" to include qualifications and pay bands in the next few days for Karen Parker – **Action** Philip Bloyce

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If staff are moved to Learning Disabilities, their pay protection must be looked at.

Criteria used and discussed to seek alternative employment – Pay Banding, Location, Hours, Shift Patterns. It seems that if these criteria are suitable to the Trust then it is suitable for staff. There has to be a 2-way approach, and we should “be aware” of implications. If a post is **not suitable** there should be justified reason why not, and, as an organisation, suitable alternative employment should be offered.

Philip is concerned regarding 3 domestic staff at the Anglia Centre, Lothlingland which may be closing, as the centre is being TUPE'd to Social Care, their requirement is to work 20 hours from 30. There seems to be no “cut off” for suitable distance to travel to work in other areas. We need to be reasonably consistent as to “what is **Not Suitable**” in particular for unqualified staff.

There are 18-20 “hidden redundancies” i.e. the hollies and clubhouses, staff whom are paid N Grades but are not N Grade staff. HR are looking at the number of vacancies with the number of staff on the “at risk” register and the difference = . As regards to HCA posts, there is little difference in Learning Disabilities compared to Mental Health. There are currently 42 staff in Post who are 65 years old or more in SMHP and management have written to these staff to explain the current situation the trust is in with jobs at risk ect, although much depends upon the individual contact and in light of the pending age discrimination legislation which comes into affect later this year.

3. Discussion on Consultation for Pay Protection

The Management Protection Policy is in place thanks to Ross Young and Karen Parker, HR, however not a lot has happened. Philip met with Jan Togher, Deputy Director of HR with the latest new version (3) and has emailed the document to staff side for their opinions – please pass comments on to Philip for forwarding to Jan Togher – feedback available at the next Trust Council (20th March). Gordon commented that this new policy may disadvantage a number of members as reps don't seem to be consulting them, he acknowledged that information is widely circulated via email. Philip re-iterated that information is well circulated by himself, Ian and Annette to all the reps who should be informing members and keeping them up to date. The Pay Protection Policy was emailed to all staff side members/reps within Suffolk Mental Health Partnership Trust by Philip, it is the reps duty to talk to their members. Gordon to attend a meeting with Learning Disability Staff in the next few days, will follow up with Philip – **Action** Gordon Morris

The current Learning Disabilities policy which applies is pre 1999, and is likely to be “swallowed up” by mid Anglia.

This current policy is a new improvement on Mid Anglia and protects staff minimum 3 years (long term) up to retirement/pensionable age 4 years (55 years being special, 60 being any age within the NHS pension scheme, and 65 for all staff which is extended for an extra year (4 years i.e. 51, 56 and 61 years).

Philip proposed 12 months of short term pay protection – not many staff will move from bands 6 to 5 and a period of full pay, 66% and 33% - to be negotiated at Trust Council on 20th March 2006.

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Under Agenda for Change less than 20% of staff are on pay protection. Negotiation involving staff side takes place at Trust Council and the final details of the policy agreed.

4. Learning Disabilities

Learning Disabilities providing social and health care are being transferred beginning of April. Learning Disabilities will become a specialised unit providing assessment treatment and challenging behaviour, one assessment unit is planned for Ipswich. Philip will forward Judith Alderton's email to Gordon Morris in respect of the Learning Disabilities situation.

5. Stewards/Officer reports

a) Liz Potter – Heathfields Respite Unit, Newmarket

Several staff are leaving the Trust as the same is occurring at Felixstowe Hospitals.

b) Steve Cook – Easton Ward - SCH

Currently Steve is dealing with several disciplinaries and grievances and asked how he can manage these under the Facilities Agreement to take further time off. Steve also reported that there seems to be a "higher level" of suspensions taking place. Philip will raise this issue at his meeting with Jan Togher on Wednesday 8th March.

6. Branch Surgery Update

Hartismere – Tuesday 21st February – Philip attended with Wendy Arbon - there was a higher turnout due to the fact this surgery was held prior to the Health Scrutiny Group's meeting

Felixstowe - Friday 3rd March – Philip attended with Ken Abbott and Julie Hammett – reasonable turnout but not as many as Hartismere

7. A.O.B.

a) Annette to contact Mark Scarff (H&S Rep) to ascertain his rep status (currently he is a rep for the RCN as well as UNISON – cannot be dual)
Action Annette Petty

b) Branch AGM – re-scheduled date – now Wednesday 29th March, 2pm, Monet Room, SCH Main Building.

Annette to notify reps via email and include steward nomination form.

Closing date for return of nominations – Friday 24th March 2006

There being no further business the meeting closed at 3.45pm

Please Note - Branch AGM now takes place on Wednesday 29th March, 2pm, Monet Room, St Clements Hospital Main Building.

Ratification of stewards will be approved on 18th April Branch Meeting.

ADP/PB
070306