

YEOVIL & DISTRICT TRADES UNION COUNCIL

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Minutes of the **Meeting** held Wednesday 18th February 2009 At Unity Hall Yeovil BA20 1JL

Present: Bill Byrd, Unite/Amicus; Chriss Dennett Unite/Amicus; Brian Macrae, Unite/Amicus; Vivian Willis, Unite/Amicus; Brian Wadsworth, Unite/Amicus; Dave Osborne, Unite/Amicus; David Kingdon, Unite/Amicus; Joe Conway, Unite/TGWU; Dave Symington, Unite/Amicus; Mark Hoskins, PCS; Lee Skevington, GMB (Visitor) and Ken Keable, Prospect (Visitor)

1. Apologies: Neal Ware, Unite/TGWU and Colin Stewart, Unite/TGWU.

2. Minutes: were read and after the following correction in item 3, paragraph 4 delete "Yeovil 50+ Forum, our strategy that it is a campaigning organisation and get a speaker from the National Pensioners Convention, and supporting TUC demonstration 1st April." And insert "Yeovil 50+ Forum: It was agreed, in general terms, that we would support the Forum in campaigning to increase the state pension" the minutes are accepted as a correct and true record.

3. Matters arising: The 50+ Forum is currently without a secretary. Concern was expressed over the "People before profit Charter" item 6 "End the occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan and use the money to expand public services. Stop the erosion of civil liberties"

4. Officers reports: The **President** reported on the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Cuban Revolution night, the accommodation at the Mermaid Hotel for Natasha Hickeman and Luis cost £30 each, advertising costs £110. With subsequent donations, the amount raised for the Cuba Solidarity Campaign came in at around £1000. Nine had applied to join CSC Joe thanked everyone who helped out on the night and sold tickets. Natasha and Luis were overwhelmed by the welcome and hospitality they received from us. There was good coverage of the event in the local press. The event was a great success. The President suggested we have a May Day event, and the room down stairs has been booked for it. Though, we need to come up with a theme. The meeting agreed we go ahead with it.

The **Secretary** reported on the last meeting of the 50+Forum. Paull Robothan was guest speaker, representing "Somerset together" a local Government "Local Strategic Partnership" with a brief to listen to "The Community" if services are being delivered, and "Improving the quality of life in Somerset; something called the "Sustainable Communities Act" which derived from a private members bill' basically giving citizens what people want. Example, the use of "Head cams" by the Police – "Crimes in Progress" could be halted, it would stop there and then. Bros Byrd, Keable and Willis expressed the view this is undermining local democracy – Paull Robathan said this was not the case; and Trade Unions are represented. The next meeting of the "Local Strategic Partnership" is due Friday 27th March 09:00 – 12noon at SSDC offices/Council Chamber.

Received affiliation of £25 with delegate from the Communications Workers Union; The meeting approved the following resolution:- Yeovil TUC Resolution Reference Royal Mail

"That the Yeovil Trades Union Council notes that the Labour Party Conference 2008, with the backing of Ministers, supported "a vision of a wholly publicly-owned, integrated Royal Mail Group"; Yeovil Trades Council welcomes the conclusion of the Hooper Report that the current universal service obligation offered by Royal Mail, including six days a week delivery, must be protected and that the primary duty of a new regulator should be to maintain it. Yeovil Trades Union Council further welcomes the recommendations in the report that the government should take responsibility for the pensions deficit which followed an extended contributions holiday and endorses the call for a new relationship between management and postal unions. Further, this Trades Council welcomes the commitment of the CWU to negotiate an agreement which would support the modernisation of the industry. This Trades Council however rejects the recommendations of the Hooper Report to sell a minority stake in Royal Mail which would risk fracturing one of Britain's greatest public services. This would be a breach of the 2005 Labour Party Manifesto. Yeovil Trades Union Council therefore agrees to write to all MP's in the Yeovil area demanding that they oppose the partial sell off of Royal Mail"

EDM 428 ROYAL MAIL13.01.2009

Smith, Geraldine

That this House notes that the Labour Party Conference 2008, with the backing of Ministers, supported a vision of a wholly publicly-owned, integrated Royal Mail Group; welcomes the conclusion of the Hooper Report that the current universal service obligation offered by Royal Mail, including six days a week delivery, must be protected and that the primary duty of a new regulator should be to maintain it; further welcomes the recommendations in the Report that the Government should take responsibility for the pensions deficit which followed an extended contributions holiday; endorses the call for a new relationship between management and postal unions and welcomes the commitment of the Communication Workers Union to negotiate an agreement which would support the modernisation of the industry; observes that in 2007 the Government agreed to a £1.2 billion loan facility on commercial terms to modernise Royal Mail operations; rejects the recommendation of the Hooper Report to sell a minority stake in Royal Mail which would risk fracturing one of Britain's greatest public services; further notes that the Government is currently advertising for a new Chair of Royal Mail; and urges the Secretary of State to appoint a Chair and management team who are committed to the principles of a modern public enterprise.

The secretary writes to Yeovil MP David Laws calling for support of the resolution and EDM428

Treasurer: The treasurer confirmed that the 2008 accounts are now fully audited and both auditors are happy to continue for another year. The balance of our accounts is quite healthy for this time of year but this is due to donations made last year and we urgently need Branches to submit affiliation fees.

Balance at end of:		January 2009	
EXPENDITURE		INCOME	
Expenses - Cuba celebration	£110.00	Balance b/fwd	£650.16
TUC Regional Council	£110.00	Donation - Cuba celebration	£50.00
Somerset Association TUC	£20.00	Affiliation CWU	£25.00
	£240.00		£725.16
		Balance c/fwd	£485.16

Delegates reports: Dave Osborne gave a report on the recent TUC Briefing on Coping with the Economic Downturn. Tom Wilson (TUC Head of Organising & Services) spoke about what the crisis means for unions and suggested the government is now more willing to listen to unions. Nigel Costley (TUC Regional Secretary) gave a regional overview and said it is in the interest of unions to protect the unemployed so that they remain members, Dave suggested that Branched and Trades Councils have an role in this. The meeting suggested that unions have an important role in working with the CAB, Job Centre Plus, Train to Gain, etc. Most of these organisations were present and delegates could talk to representatives and pick up leaflets at a "carousel" session. There were also workshops on dealing with redundancy and why skills matter. Dave provided a full report for the website and more information can be obtained from the Unionlearn South West website.

5. Local Matters: The campaigners against the "Sports Zone" had successfully overturned the building of it on Mudford Recreation ground at a recent full Council meeting. But we felt that the issue would come back. Consequently, there was a debate about possible alternative sites.

It is expected that the Tax office will close down in 2011; that the staffing level is down to about 40 from 100.

6. Press release: On the issue of possible privatisation of the Royal Mail – for our resolution see Secretary's report.

7. Correspondence: Annual General meeting of Trades Union Councils' Conference 30th – 31st May 2009 Eastbourne Centre, Eastbourne; Viv Willis as delegate, also included TUC registration form.

SWTUC Annual General meeting of Trades Union Councils will be held at Taunton New Library, Paul Street, Taunton TA1 3PF, Viv Willis, Dave Osborne and Joe Conway as delegates.

Delegate to SWTUC Regional Council, Dave Osborne. It is urgent that the form must be returned the SWTUC no later than 26th February 2009

2009 TUC Disability Conference at Congress House, Great Russell Street, London WC1B 3LS Wednesday 20th and Thursday 21st May 2009.

From Labour Research, pamphlets on "Drugs and alcohol" and "The law and Health and Safety".

From the TUC in conjunction with the Citizens Advice Bureau a pamphlet "Coping with the down turn – a practical guide to working people and their families" Giving advice on redundancy; benefits, debt and rising prices; work, skills and training; further support and advice.

8. Any other business: because of tonight's heavy agenda there was insufficient time to discuss the "credit crisis" – to put further up the agenda for the next meeting.

President _____