**Report on the RMAC Meeting held on the 9th JULY 2017.**

The RMAC Committee held a pre-meeting prior to the full RMAC meeting with Jane Loftus Chair, Tony Kearns Senior DGS and two members of the NEC.

The Committee discussed the priorities that we needed to raise at the full meeting. The most important issues were the restoration of the voting rights for retired members when Elections for Senior Officers of their Branch are held ie Chair, Branch Secretary, and Treasurer.

The Committee also felt that the Retired Member’s Secretary should have a seat on the Branch Committee. In addition it was suggested that where Branches do not have a Retired Members Section, their retired members should be transferred to the nearest branch with a Retired Members Section.

When it came to the question as to who would represent the RMAC on the Sub-Committee, it was agreed that we would request that there be one from each region of the RMAC.

**Full Meeting of the RMAC and the EC Members.**

The first item for discussion was Retired Membership figures. There are 94 Branches with a Retired Members Section, and 32 branches without. The total retired membership for the Union stands at 15,511. There followed a discussion on how branches recruited Retired Members and the general consensus was that local Reps within the office need to contact members who are retiring before they leave the business.

The Committee were asked for their nominations for members to sit on the Sub-Committee, we were informed that there would be only two members from the RMAC and that this was not negotiable The Sub-Committee would be made up as follows.:- The Chair of the RMAC, 2 RMAC Members, (Brian Lee and Joan Moxon), two NEC RMAC members, and one representative from both the GS and SDGS Departments.

There then followed an open and constructive discussion on the four bullet points contained in Motion 29 from annual conference.

1. **To enhance the work of the union, the aim would be to provide clarity on the role to be played by members who are retired and those who retain other membership but are not in employment.**

The discussion that followed was on how we could involve retired members in the activities of the union. It became clear that there differences in the way that branches engage with their retired members. For example there were retired members who support picket lines and also assist with campaigns such as saving the Post Office Counters from closures. It was also pointed out that some branches are frustrating retired member’s activities by not funding those who wish to join the attendance of rallies. It was also discussed that often the Retired Member’s Secretaries are the person who gives advice on various issues. To that end there was a discussion on the issue of consideration be given about either training/enhancing the role, or alternatively equipping reps with a directory of who to refer issues that are of concern to retired members. It should also be considered as to whether a retired member involved in local politics could be a link to the Labour Party.

1. **Recognise that the interest of working members and retired members must be served differently.**

It was felt that the term Retired Members was a reluctance of members to continue with membership by those who are leaving the service that they were employed in, as many feel that they are not retired, but just not in work. It was felt that we should look at the possibility of having a non-working group. There was a view that many retired members are very supportive and proud to be a member of the CWU, but do not wish to be seen as separate from the main union.

1. **Recognise that succession planning and progression within the union is important to the development and longevity to our organisation.**

There was a discussion as to why some positions within branches are not challenged. It was felt that some younger members do not apply for positions of officers of the branch as they are not sure what is involved. It was pointed out that in some branches if it was not for retired members then some positions would not be filled.

It was also stated that some members would not move on from certain roles, because they receive an honoraria, and this can be a financial incentive for people to stay in their post, (in some branches but not all).It was also felt that the changes to the constitution made by the NEC has put some off from wanting to remain active within the union.

1. **To identify what voting rights are appropriate for all categories of the CWU membership whilst upholding the principle that retired members should not be able to vote for occupational /industrial positions.**

On this issue there was a full discussion on who retired members should be able to vote for in Branch Elections. All the members of RMAC voiced an opinion that retired members should be able to vote for the Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer. Tony Kearns pointed out that the structure within Postal Branches and BT Branches were different in as much that all BT Branch Officers are management facing, whilst many Postal branches have standalone officers not involved in IR negotiations. The meeting acknowledged that this would not be an easy issue on which to find common ground.

There then followed a discussion on how active retired members are at Regional Level, and are all Regional Retired Secretaries being granted a place on the full Regional Committee. It was the view of the meeting that retired members should be allowed to vote on all Regional Positions and also National Central Posts ie GS, SDGS, Equalities Officer, Legal Services and Health &Safety.

**AOB**

The question was asked if there was any information on the date and venue of the 2018 Retired Members Conference. The DGS said they were in discussions with the Mechanics Institute in Manchester but are awaiting a response on availability.

The Link. There was a discussion on articles published within the link. There had been complaints that articles submitted by regions are not being published because there was no room. This would be taken up with Brain Lee the Editor at the next meeting.

Rod Downing felt he needed more information from Headquarters as to what items were important for him to raise at the TUC Pensioners Committee. The DGS asked to be sent a copy of the Agenda and Minutes to be sent to him prior to the next meeting.

**Please note these are my notes taken at the meeting and are not agreed minutes.**

**If you have any questions I will endeavour to answer them.**

Rod Downing

RMAC