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**FOR USE OF NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OFFICERS ONLY**

**NATIONAL FEDERATION OF SUBPOSTMASTERS**

**REPORT OF A  
MEETING OF THE  
NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

**held on**

**19 - 22 March 2006**

**at**

**THE GRIMSTOCK COUNTRY HOUSE HOTEL  
COLES HILL, WARWICKSHIRE**



## **Report of a Meeting of the National Executive Council**

**held on Sunday, 19 March to Wednesday, 22 March 2006  
at the Grimstock Country House Hotel, Warwickshire**

Those present:	Mrs Trish Jenkins	National President and Chairman
	Mrs Irene Bethell	Mrs Kam Matharu
	Mr Alan Butlin	Mr David Milner
	Mr Michael Darvill	Mr John Morris
		Mr John Peberdy
	Mr Dave Foster ( <i>part</i> )	Mrs Sally Reeves
	Mr Phil Howorth	Mr Keith Richards
	Mr Cyril Jones	Mr Geoff Simpson
	Mr Mervyn Jones ( <i>part</i> )	Mr George Thomson
In attendance:	Mr Colin Baker	General Secretary
	Ms Marilyn Stoddart	Assistant General Secretary
	Mr John Willshaw	Assistant General Secretary ( <i>part</i> )
Apologies:	Mr Norman Ferguson	

THE PRESIDENT welcomed everyone to the meeting.

# **Irrelevant**

# Irrelevant

## A/1 REPORTS AND RESOLUTIONS

- The Minutes of the Executive Council meeting of 9, 10 and 11 January 2006 were signed as a true record.
- The Resolutions passed at the Executive Council meeting of 9, 10 and 11 January 2006 were signed as a true record.
- The Minutes of the Executive Council meeting of 13 February 2006 were signed as a true record.
- The Minutes of the Special Executive Council meeting of 27 February 2006 were signed as a true record.

DECISION

DECISION

DECISION

DECISION

## A/2 MATTERS ARISING

- There were no matters arising.

## A/3 REPORT OF THE NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE

### 1. Future of the Post Office

PO PZ

#### (a) DWP - Post Office Card Account

PO PZ 01/PO PZ 06

- Combined with Agenda Item 8(a) Campaign.
- Adam Crozier and Barry Gardner had made mention of the campaign in speaking to the Executive Council.
- Became pretty certain during visit to Geoffrey Norris at Number 10 Downing Street that the DWP had over-stepped the mark.

- Had been left to a junior Minister who had made a mess of the issue.
- All Party Group had insisted that a copy of the contract be placed in the House of Commons Library, hence the Federation becoming aware of its content.
- The General Secretary had called those who signed the contract to book for signing away their business and making Subpostmasters futures gloomy or even worse.
- Advice from Adam Crozier to keep the campaign going. Took a lot of time, but worth the investment.
- The campaign had to be driven from the centre to keep it focussed.
- If the Government were given a chink of light they would get off the hook.
- Alan Johnson was a 'friend' of the Federation who had met with the General Secretary and Mr Peberdy the previous week.
- He had been embarrassed by what the DWP had done as the DTI did not know that they were going to take action without a POCA replacement in place before the pilots.
- Alan Johnson was meeting following day with John Hutton and it appeared that Government realised they needed to be joined up on both POCA and Post Offices.
- They had the acceptance of the Social Network Payment and had extended the 'no avoidable closures' policy until there was a strategy in place for the size and shape of the network, along with an exit method for Subpostmasters with compensation.
- There would be a tough battle for compensation but the Federation would not discuss closures without an offer.
- Closures may need to be staged over a 5 year period rather than in one big hit.
- The Federation had done a very good job for its members.
- The ongoing letter writing campaign had worked well, with one excellent Westminster Hall debate already and a further debate on 22 March. In a change of tactics, the letter with attachments to John Hutton had been 'leaked' to strategic MP's to inflame the situation.
- Profile of the whole issue had been raised despite other major national issues in Parliament.

- Petition proposed with the following wording as amended by the Executive Council: *'We, the undersigned, believe that the post office network provides a vital service to local communities in both urban and rural areas which are threatened by the Government's withdrawal of services from local post offices. Accordingly we call on the Government to reverse its announcement that it will end support for the Post Office Card Account in 2010 thereby threatening the viability of thousands of post offices and we urge it to immediately halt its activities designed to kill the account off in advance of that date.'*
- Will be mailed to every Post Office for signatures to be collected then sent back to Shoreham. Decision would then be made as to how to use it, depending on whether the number was over the 3 million reached for the last petition.
- Trying to get national newspaper behind petition, starting with Mail on Sunday, and if not will try a different one.
- Not necessarily to keep POCA but to keep negotiating, and have commitment that the Federation will be involved.
- Amended wording to be supplied to the Executive Council.
- Crucial that signatures were genuine and there was no duplication or creative issues or credibility would be damaged.
- MR MILNER proposed that *'the Federation go ahead with a petition to send out to all members.'* This was agreed.
- Originals to be sent to Shoreham, but members to be urged to send a copy of their pages to their MP to keep the focus locally too.
- The National Treasurer was keen to continue with the petition even if the Federation had to bear the cost as funds were available.
- Communication via BSC's to be improved to keep members informed of progress.
- Not possible to publish all progress as it could be seen as 'gloating' and could affect invitations to participate in the creation of solutions.

ACTION

DECISION

ACTION

# Irrelevant

# Irrelevant

# Irrelevant



# Irrelevant

# Irrelevant

**A4 CONFERENCE MATTERS**

**Irrelevant**

# Irrelevant

**A/5(A) REPORT OF THE PUBLICITY & DEVELOPMENT  
COMMITTEE**

**Irrelevant**

TION

# Irrelevant

# Irrelevant

7. **Future Executive Council Meetings**

FM OG

(a) Dates of Future Meetings

FM OG O2 02

- 19,20,21 June 2006
- 2,3,4 October 2006
- 8,9,10 January 2007
- All to be held at the Grimstock Country House Hotel.

**Irrelevant**



**Irrelevant**

# Irrelevant

# Irrelevant

**A10(A) DEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE**

**(A) FOR DISCUSSION**

**Post Office Ltd**

**PO PC**

**1. Network**

**PC NW**

**(a) POL/BA-Horizon Streamline Decommissioning**

**PC NW 06 01**

- MS STODDART referred to an e'mail received from Post Office Limited and stated that it was indicative of what was happening in the business at the moment.
- Streamline terminals are to be decommissioned from Post Offices. The changeover from Streamline to Horizon will take place on 24 March.

# Irrelevant

# Irrelevant

(c) Horizon Service Improvements

PC NW 06

- An update on service improvements had been circulated.
- Concerns were raised on how robust the Horizon system was.
- MR MILNER proposed *"that the issue of Horizon Service Improvements be remitted to A3"*. The proposal was carried.

DECISION

# Irrelevant

**A/14 MATTERS RECEIVED TOO LATE FOR INCLUSION ON THE AGENDA**

- None received.

**A/15 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**Irrelevant**

SHARON MERRYWEATHER  
LYNDA WILLOUGHBY

March 2006

**GRO**



CIRCULATION: NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL A1

FM OG 02 02

Please attach to the minutes of the Executive Council meeting held 19-22 March 2006.

**Irrelevant**

# Irrelevant



**Irrelevant**

**Irrelevant**

# Irrelevant

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