

Appendix N2

TIME OFF AND FACILITIES FOR REPRESENTATIVES OF GMB TRADES UNION

1. Introduction

The primary principle of this agreement is that time off and facilities should be made available to Trades Union representatives. However, this must be subject to the needs of the Council to provide an effective service.

2. Identification of Office Holders

The criteria for office holders is as follows:

(a) Branch Secretary

The office holder should be nominated by GMB as appropriate. Support for the postholder will be subject to ensuring that it is possible to avoid it unduly impacting on their working arrangements. Management accept the responsibility of dealing with this matter in a positive and flexible manner wherever possible.

The costs of the approved time off will be shared by divisions in relation to their ratio of GMB members.

(b) Trade Union Convenors and Stewards

Trade Union stewards should represent their immediate constituencies wherever possible. In such circumstances that stewards are needed to have a wider catchment area this should be identified upon election and management should be advised. Recognition will normally be on the basis of 1:50 members, although, exceptions will be considered particularly in the case of geographically discrete locations. GMB will be expected to advise the Human Resources of steward appointments and their constituencies.

3. Time Off For Central Postholders

Branch Secretary 37 hours per week

Senior Convenors 3 x 18.5 hours per week

4. Time Off For Trade Union Stewards

(a) Trade Union Stewards

Basic allowance of 1 hour per week

Plus:

Attendance at Grievance,
Disciplinary, Capability,
Probation, Sickness,
Harassment & Discrimination investigations and hearings

Attendance at consultation, negotiation and staffing review meetings with management

Plus: Allowance of 20% of the time spent with management for preparation/ follow up subject to the complexity of the case issue being dealt with additional

preparation time may be granted by the line manager - subject to the demands of the service.

(b) Health & Safety Stewards

Basic allowance of one hour per week

Plus attendance at health & safety committees

Plus attendance at accident investigations

Plus attendance at joint inspections with management

Plus undertaking of risk assessments

(c) Branch Meetings

Time off for attendance at Branch Committee will be granted on the following basis:

The meetings should be timetabled a year in advance with the times and dates provided to management on that basis. They should be held outside of standard core hours (9.45 - 2.00, 2.00 - 4.00) In instances where stewards are rostered to work they will be allowed up to a maximum (including travel time) of 2 hours paid time to attend. Any additional time taken for the above or any other union meeting not covered in this agreement should be taken in the employee's own time. Attendance at all of the above will be subject to the needs of the service.

(d) Joint Trades Unions Side

Attendance at the Joint Trades Unions Side meeting once every 6 weeks for 3 hours plus attendance at the Authority Wide Consultative Committee and the Employees' Consultative Forum and the Authority Wide Health & Safety Consultative Committee (AWH&SCC).

(e) Corporate Management Meetings

It is anticipated that wherever possible requested for trade unions representatives from management to attend corporate working groups, meetings etc. will be fulfilled by branch postholders. However it is accepted that on occasions it may be necessary for other members such as stewards to attend. This should be subject to the agreement from the employee's line manager who will consider the needs of the service. It will be expected that all the formal joint consultative meetings will be timetabled on an annual basis.

5. Other Time Off Provisions

(a) Attendance At Conferences

All requests for attendance at conferences related to Trades Union business will be considered on their merits. Requests should be made initially to Pay & Workforce Strategy but will then require agreement by the relevant line manager.

(b) Time Off For Trade Union Training

Stewards and office holders will be supported to attend relevant recognised training courses. This will be subject to a maximum of 10 days per annum for new postholders and 5 days for others. Time off will be subject to the needs of the service.

6. Time Recording

Time off will be controlled by the employee's manager who must be informed in advance of regular commitments. At all other times the responsibility is on the employee to minimise the impact of their trades union duties on their work. In all instances as much notice as possible should be given to managers of the need for time off. Managers have the right to refuse time off but this must not be done unreasonably and both parties have an obligation to achieve a mutually agreeable arrangement. A time recording sheet will be provided to record time off retrospectively and this must be available for inspection and completed and returned to line managers on a 4 weekly basis.

7. Other Issues

(a) Job Sharers

The time off arrangements for any office holder or steward may be shared between employees.

(b) Multiple Postholders

Employees seeking to undertake more than one union role with time off implications should discuss this with their line manager. This excludes dual steward and health & safety representative roles.

(c) Cross Organisational Working

To ensure that contact between management and trades unions takes place as close to their source as possible it would be expected that stewards would ordinarily work only with their immediate constituencies and divisions.

(d) TOIL

In instances where it has been agreed between the employee and their manager that there is a requirement for the employee to undertake their trades union duties outside of their normal working hours TOIL may be granted. This should be taken whenever possible during the following 4 week period of time recording.

(e) Telephone Calls / Interruptions

It is recognised that the nature of the role of trades union representative may necessitate some liaison with colleagues and other parties during their normal working hours. This should however be kept to a minimum and every effort should be made to minimise the impact on the employee's work duties and immediate colleagues.

8. Facilities

Accessible and safe office space will be provided on a no fee basis. But any significant alterations/requirements beyond this must be paid for by the GMB. Committee and other meeting and interview rooms may be booked for use on a

no fee basis. Use of the internal phone system will be provided, although local and national calls may only be made from the GMB office or other nominated phones and will be charged for:

Typing, photocopying and printing will be recharged. Notice boards for the use of trades unions will be provided in all departments.

Where no suitable facilities are available, lockable filing cabinets will be provided for stewards.

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