

GMB J25 Judicial Branch - Speaking Up for JOHs



Meeting Notes from 25.07.25 GMB J25 Judicial Branch Meeting

Private & Confidential

Present over Zoom: 14 members, including Nawal Kumrai (Chair for this meeting) and Andy Brodie (Secretary). Total branch membership: 118 members.

In attendance: Stuart Fegan - Senior Organiser (SO). Dermott (Senior Solicitor GMB).

1. Apologies/ Welcome to New Members Attending

- a. 3 apologies, including Claire Gilham (President)

2. Minutes of Last Meeting 16.04.25 – Approval

- a. Approved

3. GMB Legal Service

- a. Presentation received from Dermott, a senior solicitor from GMB's central legal team who J25 members can access through Unionline. In the light of its experience of the specific and often more complex nature of legal issues that our judicial members raise, GMB is providing a more bespoke service to J25 members, who often raise different issues than other GMB members. Cases are referred on to specialist panel firms as appropriate, such as Blackfords who specialise in regulatory issues.
- b. We agreed that his presentation was inspiring, and real progress was being made in providing an effective service to J25 members, tailored to their needs. He'll look at doing a short Youtube-style video explaining what the service can offer, to put on J25 branch's website.

4. Secretary's Oral Report

- a. Recent focus has been on effective organisation, communication and service to members. This is to establish a firm foundation to seek official recognition from the MoJ once the Employment Relations Bill becomes law.
- b. There would be many benefits from official recognition including:
 - i. J25 officers can attend GMB training and be skilled up to represent members
 - ii. We get access to the judiciary through a page on the ejudiciary website and maybe slot on training courses, to recruit members and strengthen our position as judicial representatives
 - iii. We get a seat at the "MoJ table" / MoJ Whitley Council central negotiations with colleagues including Crown Prosecutors
 - iv. We can set up a local negotiating committee with MoJ for focussed discussions on ongoing issues with MoJ such as discipline/ Judicial Complaints Commission and recruitment/ JAC secret soundings.
 - v. We can set up local health and safety committee with MoJ, which has statutory powers.
- c. Stuart reported that the Employment Rights Bill is still going through Parliament, but will hopefully make it easier for trade unions to get recognition from the employer from 2026; GMB nationally is being consulted. Employers are likely to be encouraged to recognise voluntarily rather than being forced to after a ballot of relevant employees.

5. President's Oral Report

- a. Claire is unwell, so deferred, with our wishes for a speedy recovery.

6. "Secret Soundings" JAC Case at Court of Appeal

- a. Our member did not manage to get the JAC's selection condition quashed, but had secured useful declarations from the Court on how the JAC should deal with references. She had provided a letter to be read out about her experiences, but the meeting declined as there had previously been extensive discussions.
- b. Stuart would be arranging a suitable press release.

7. Matters Arising

- a. A SEND listings experiment had recently started, which had made hearing preparation more difficult. The future of the SEND tribunal was uncertain, because of planned government changes in Special Educational Needs support.

8. Any Other Business

- a. (None)

9. Next Meeting (by Zoom at 5p.m.)

- a. Thursday 16.10.25