

Meeting Notes from 16.01.25 GMB J25 Judicial Branch Meeting

Private & Confidential

Present over Zoom: 14 members, including Claire Gilham (President) and Andy Brodie (Secretary).

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

1. Apologies

- . 6 apologies.

2. Minutes of Last Meeting 24.10.24.– Approved

3. Branch Scope, Objectives, Organisation, Campaigns

a. Proposal to include other expert JoHs such as doctors as entitled to join us, so that we become judicial instead of judges' branch

Agreed

b. Adoption of Aims and Objectives to reflect judges' duty of reserve– see motion overleaf

Agreed with addition of objective 9 to reflect UN Nauru declaration to read:

“The GMB Judicial Branch adopts the Consultative Council of European Judges (CCJE) Opinion 23 on the role of a judge’s association, which establishes relevant international standards. CCJE advises the Council of Europe. It also adopts the UN Nauru Declaration of 25th July 2024.

Accordingly GMB J25 Judges Branch's Aims & Objectives are:

- 1 contributing to the administering of justice in conjunction with those responsible for it
- 2 promoting fair recruitment, promotion and disciplinary practices
- 3 defending judges and judiciary against any infringements of independence,
- 4 claiming sufficient resources and satisfactory working conditions
- 5 aiming for adequate remuneration and social security
- 6 rejecting unfair criticism and attacks against the judiciary and individual judges
- 7 establishing, promoting and implementing ethical standards,
- 8 safeguarding non-discrimination and gender balance.
9. supporting and promoting judicial wellbeing

The term 'judges' has been used above for brevity. 'Judges' are all Judicial Office Holders including tribunal expert members such as doctors."

c. Adoption of annual Branch Development Plan

Plan as circulated was agreed.

d(i). Proposal that we monitor JAC issues revealed by FOI requests with view to possible branch campaign

Agreed that Nawal maintains a watching brief regarding what emerges from FOI requests. SO to be public face of campaign.

d(ii) Emergency Item – Proposal That SO Writes Open Letter Following JAC Chair's Resignation as Chair of Criminal Cases Review Commission

Agreed SO to send Secretary of State open letter calling for JAC Chair's resignation, as JOHs appointed by chair, and are potentially tainted by CCRC revelations. Also previous concerns over JOH appointment procedures. Open letter to be released to Press.

e. Proposal that we, depending on judicial attitudes survey results due imminently: issue a Press Release calling upon the Ministry of Justice to honour their duty of care to us, insist on codes for leadership judges, Presiders and to stand up to the Judicial office support of poor behaviour of some leadership judges - raised by KK.

Agreed

f. Election of 2nd Auditor, now we are about to exceed 100 members and have our own bank account.

Not required as GMB regional finance can act as 2nd auditor.

4. National GMB Conference Brighton 8.6.24 - 12.6.24

. Proposed motion

Agreed as below:

"This Congress condemns the continued horrific delays in UK courts and tribunals. These are particularly severe in the crown court where victims and those accused of crimes have their lives put on hold for years while they wait for justice to be done. Sometimes justice is defeated when memories fade or victims withdraw. Congress resolves to campaign for proper **resources** for justice and a proper plan for the courts and tribunals to eliminate unacceptable delays while safeguarding the quality of British justice."

. Any members wish to attend as visitors?

(none)

4. Secretary's Oral Report (adding to Branch Development Plan at 3c above)

- . Agreed – most relates to Plan, as above, which also reflects recent developments.

5. President's Oral Report

- . Agreed – Ombudsman had not engaged with her complaint about a senior judge writing his own references.

6. AOB/ Matters Arising

- a. SO advised that members who are unhappy that GMB is not taking their legal case up can ask for a reassessment. If handling of legal cases is an issue for the branch, this can be added to a future meeting's agenda on request.
- b. He also advised that, for reasonable adjustment cases, a strong letter from him often works.

7. Date of Next Meeting

- . **Thursday 17th April 2025 at 5pm** by zoom.
- . Other 2025 dates at 5pm: **Thursdays 17th July & 16th October.**

End of meeting notes.