

GMB / SECAMB BRANCH S69

YOUR UNION. YOUR VOICE. YOUR WORKPLACE.

MEMBERS' NEWSLETTER • OCTOBER 2026

Following this week's meeting with the Trust, here is an update on changes affecting colleagues across SECAMB. GMB continues to challenge decisions where necessary, protect members' interests and make sure staff experiences are heard.

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BANK STAFF | IMPORTANT CLARIFICATION

The Trust confirmed that the decision to stop using bank staff applies to Field Operations. EOC and Corporate Services will continue bank arrangements where there is an allocated budget.

Some affected colleagues had previously been offered annualised-hours contracts and warned that ongoing bank work could not be guaranteed. The Trust acknowledged that communication with staff and trade unions was poorly handled, with little notice for affected workers and operational managers also caught off guard.

CCPs and APPs who were not previously offered annualised-hours contracts are being considered separately. The Trust has asked for these colleagues to be offered an opportunity to become substantive employees.

GMB's position: Changes affecting people's work and income must involve proper communication, meaningful engagement and appropriate notice.

OTL RUMOURS | SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT

The Trust stated that there is no current organisational change proposal to move OTLs to Band 6 or return them to frontline duties. No such change is being implemented.

GMB will continue to seek clarification if that position changes.

GRIP | PERFORMANCE AND STAFF WELLBEING

The Trust describes Grip as a process to improve operational performance and identify blockages in real time. It acknowledged that the process is causing anxiety for some colleagues but considers it necessary in the current financial and performance climate.

The Trust intends to introduce and monitor productivity targets and KPIs, but has not yet provided the detail. Following GMB challenge, the Trust said underperformance should initially be addressed through support, training and development, with capability procedures used where appropriate.

It remains unclear which staff groups this covers; further discussions will take place.

GMB's position: Targets must be fair and realistic. Reasonable performance oversight must not become inappropriate micromanagement. Please share specific examples with your rep.

C2 AUTO-DISPATCH | DARTFORD TESTING

The next phase of C2 auto-dispatch is due to be tested on a limited basis in the Dartford area. The Trust stated that clinical safety, quality impact and other assurance assessments have been completed.

GMB raised the potential additional workload for dispatchers when resources are reallocated or stood down. The Trust agreed that staff feedback must be captured and followed up, recognising that not all concerns appear in formal incident reports.

Please report operational concerns through the appropriate channels and raise significant issues with GMB.

IC / EOC | SENIOR LEADERSHIP CONSULTATION

Consultation on the proposed senior leadership restructure continues. At the time of the meeting, affected colleagues were expected to have individual consultation meetings within the following two weeks, with more information to follow.

GMB has stressed that consultation must be genuine and properly consider individual impacts, including contractual terms, working arrangements and responsibilities.

Members are encouraged to seek representation and advice.

BANK HOLIDAY TOIL | GMB CHALLENGES THE CHANGE

The Trust is seeking to remove the additional Bank Holiday TOIL enhancement currently received by staff.

GMB has raised serious concerns about both the change and the consultation process. **We do not believe the consultation undertaken so far constitutes meaningful consultation.**

Changes affecting employees' terms, conditions and financial wellbeing require genuine engagement, with sufficient opportunity for trade unions to scrutinise proposals, raise concerns and explore alternatives.

GMB has written to the Trust

GMB has written to the Trust outlining our concerns and requesting that implementation be delayed to allow meaningful discussions and proper consideration of the impact on affected colleagues.

The timing before Christmas is a particular concern. Many colleagues rely on this enhancement and plan their household finances accordingly. Removing it in the run-up to Christmas risks placing additional financial pressure on staff and their families.

GMB's position:

- Consultation must be genuine, meaningful and allow sufficient time for discussion.
- The Trust must properly consider the financial impact on affected employees.
- Alternative options should be explored before changes are implemented.
- Implementation should be delayed to allow meaningful engagement with recognised trade unions.

GMB has requested a delay; this should not be taken as confirmation that the Trust has agreed to postpone the change. We will continue challenging the proposals and keep members informed of developments.

Your terms and conditions matter. GMB will continue standing up for members affected by these changes.

RETIREMENT | KNOW YOUR OPTIONS

The Trust said its financial and workforce position has changed significantly since existing retire-and-return arrangements were introduced. It is focusing on establishment levels, vacancies and staffing costs.

Where an employee reduces their hours, the Trust says it cannot necessarily guarantee a return to previous hours if a vacancy or funding is no longer available.

GMB has challenged the Trust's treatment of retirement drawdown and retire-and-return as the same arrangement. They are distinct arrangements, and GMB will continue to seek clarity on the applicable terms and processes.

Before agreeing to retirement, flexible retirement, drawdown, retire-and-return or a reduction in hours, get the full details in writing and seek advice about the consequences for your contract and pension.

CARERS' LEAVE & SUPPORT | SURVEY COMING SOON

Keep an eye out for our forthcoming **Carers' Leave & Support survey**.

We want to hear about members' experiences of balancing work with caring responsibilities, accessing leave and getting support. Your feedback will help GMB understand the issues members face and inform the concerns we raise with the Trust.

Further details on how to take part will follow.

THE BIGGER PICTURE

Financial pressure and operational performance are major drivers of the Trust's current approach.

GMB recognises the challenges facing SECAMB, but cost pressures must not be used to justify inadequate consultation, unreasonable expectations or unfair treatment.

YOUR EXPERIENCES MATTER

We need evidence of how changes work in practice. Tell your GMB rep about:

- Unreasonable targets or micromanagement.
- Inconsistent approaches between teams or bases.
- Unclear instructions.
- Changes beyond what has been formally communicated.
- Effects on staff wellbeing.

If something is described locally as a new policy or requirement, do not assume it has been formally agreed. Ask for clarification and raise significant concerns so senior JPF reps can challenge them collectively.

GET INVOLVED | BECOME A GMB REP

Want to make a difference in your workplace? We are always keen to hear from members interested in becoming GMB workplace representatives.

Reps help colleagues understand their rights, raise workplace concerns, support members and ensure staff have a stronger collective voice.

You do not need to know everything on day one. What matters is being approachable, willing to listen and motivated to stand up for colleagues. Training and support are available as you develop in the role.

Interested in becoming a rep?

Speak to your local GMB representative or contact:

Jo Smith – GMB SECAMB Interim Branch Secretary
jo.smith@gmbactivist.org.uk

Find out what the role involves and how to express your interest.

Not yet a member? Ask us how to join GMB and get involved.

STRONGER TOGETHER

GMB SECAMB Branch S69 represents members across Field Operations, EOC, NHS 111 and Corporate Services.

We will keep members informed, challenge decisions where needed and make sure concerns are heard.

YOUR VOICE. YOUR UNION. YOUR FUTURE.

This newsletter reflects information shared at the meeting and GMB's position at the time of writing. Further clarification may follow.

GMB SECAMB Branch S69 | October 2026