

No. 573/17

25th October 2017

Dear Colleague,

MOTION 29 CWU GENERAL CONFERENCE 2017

Motion 29 was carried at CWU General Conference 2017, for ease of reference a copy of that motion is produced below.

This Conference values the work retired members do on behalf of the union and wants them to remain active and engaged and play their part in the success of the CWU as an independent trade union.

However, following the publication of LTB's 664/16 and 723/16, Conference recognises that concerns have been raised about the NEC decision to endorse the President's ruling on retired members' voting entitlements.

Conference further recognises that there are inconsistencies across Branches in the application of retired members' voting rights and that concerns equally exist regarding whether or not it is right for retired members to vote for occupational/industrial positions at Branch level, when they are no longer in employment.

In light of the aforementioned developments, Conference agrees that as part of the Re-design Project, the NEC will aim to build a consensus on a way forward on these issues, in line with the following principles:-

- To enhance the work of the union, the aim will be to provide clarity on the role to be played by members who are retired and by those who retain other membership but are not in employment
- Recognise that the interests of working members and retired members must be served differently.
- Recognise that succession planning and progression within the union is important to the development and longevity of our organisation.
- To identify what voting rights are appropriate for all categories of CWU membership whilst upholding the principle that retired members should not be able to vote for occupational/industrial positions.

The NEC is instructed to establish a small working group with the aim of producing a report to the NEC no later than the end of July 2017. The NEC will then agree a way forward that supports the principles listed in this Motion and will subsequently publish a report to Branches no later than the end of September 2017. The working group will ensure that there is opportunity for all views to be represented and will include members of the RMAC. The report will also identify any required rule changes and provide for the most expedient, practical and cost effective way to place these before Branches for endorsement.

As can be seen from the wording of the motion the intention was to have a report on this matter to Branches by the end of September 2017.

The purpose of this LTB is to inform Branches of why this hasn't happened and to outline what has taken place, and how we will deal with this issue going forward.

Firstly, the working group is to be made up of (amongst others) members of the RMAC. The election process for the RMAC, following nominations, was not complete until mid-June 2017.

Following this a meeting of the RMAC was held on Wednesday 9th August 2017 with the specific aim of discussing the contents of Motion 29. That meeting discussed the contents of Motion 29 and laid out, in report form, those issues then needed to be addressed by the working group as part of prosecuting the terms of the motion. At that point the intention was to hold 2 meetings of the working group to carry out the more detailed work required.

Unfortunately, no sooner had that meeting take place then work began in earnest around the CWU "4 Pillars" campaign within Royal mail.

Key to this was ensuring that the ballot process was undertaken as scrupulously as possible in order that we reduced the risk of having a ballot declared invalid by the courts. This is a major piece of work undertaken under the remit of the SDGS Department and as such meant that a number of other issues, including the issue of Motion 29, had to be delayed.

Whilst this is frustrating for all concerned there is no question that the serious matters that needed to be attended to demanded that we prioritise this work as part of the wider and ongoing campaign. Difficult as this was we believe making this issue a priority was the correct course of action to take despite the fact that this then seriously delayed our ability to act on other issues.

No sooner had the ballot process ended, with the declaration of the result, Royal Mail then began a process that culminated in the CWU being summoned to the High Court. Once again there is no question that this matter also needed the attention of a number of people at CWU HQ and yet again other matters were subject to delay.

The delay to the process to deal with the terms of Motion 29 are a source of regret, however we believe Branches will understand the overriding need to ensure that the issues that led to the delay are accepted and acknowledged as a priority issue for the CWU given the impact the dispute has for our 111,000 plus members in Royal Mail. There was no alternative but to treat these matters as a priority.

The decision of the Court however means that a window of opportunity has now opened up to address Motion 29, alongside other issues.

Accordingly the working group constituted under Motion 29, that includes 2 members of the RMAC, will now meet in the first full week in November to address the relevant issues.

We understand the frustration felt and voiced by some of our retired members on the delay that has occurred. The NEC and those involved at CWU HQ share that sense of frustration and remain as committed to resolving these issues as we were when the NEC moved Motion 29 at CWU General Conference.

Indeed should any branch wish to make a submission to be considered by the working group then these would be gratefully received, if you would like to do this please could your views be submitted by no later than Monday 7th November 2017.

A further update to branches, in lieu of a final report from the working group, will be made following the meeting in early November.

Finally can we thank all those concerned for the patience they have exercised at this difficult time and we would request that the contents of this LTB are brought to the attention of your Retired Members Section as soon as is practicably possible.

Any comments or enquiries regarding this Letter to Branches should be addressed to the Senior Deputy General Secretary's Department on telephone number 020 8971 7237, or email address sdgs@cwu.org.

Yours sincerely,



Tony Kearns
Senior Deputy General Secretary