

Grŵp Trawsbleidiol i Gefnogi Gweithwyr ASW  
The Cross-Party Group in Support of ASW Workers

Minutes

*Wednesday, September 24, 2014*

*Conference room 24, Ty Hywel*

*Attending:* Bethan Jenkins AM, Byron Davies AM, Peter Black AM, Jocelyn Davies AM, Gareth Llewellyn (AMSS on behalf of Leanne Wood AM), John Benson, Dennis Kelleher, Phil Jones, Duncan Higgitt (AMSS, Bethan Jenkins AM), around 25 former ASW workers and family members

**1. AGM business**

- Election of chair & vice-chair

*Bethan Jenkins AM was elected as chair and Byron Jenkins AM was elected vice-chair.*

- AOB

*There was none.*

**2. Update on the current position from John Benson**

After the update, the audience was invited to put its views forward. There was considerable anger that the campaign had continued for 12 years, and dismay that a recent open letter to the Prime Minister and other members of the UK Government had received no reply.

ASW workers asked which MPs were still supporting. They believe that have received what they have so far only because of the banks' collapse in 2007, but were at pains to point out that what they are asking for is the full 100% of their pensions and not "assistance" as the UK Government has frequently referred to any settlement.

Bethan Jenkins suggested taking the campaign to London on a date that means something to the campaign, and members will consider an appropriate date.

John Benson suggested that the group considers influencing manifestos for next year's General Election.

### **3. Forthcoming meeting with Pension Protection Fund**

Bethan Jenkins reported that she will be meeting with Julie Shah of the PPF on November 13, as the PPF administers the Financial Assistance Scheme, which has returned part of ASW pensions to former staff. John Benson is to attend the meeting, too. Bethan said she was waiting to hear back from the PPF on finalising arrangements and would report back to the group when it meets next.

### **4. Discussion – getting Westminster colleagues to begin an all-party group**

Bethan Jenkins opened the discussion by referring to the Visteon campaign which, with its slogan "Pensions are wages deferred" would annually stage a high-profile march and protest in Westminster. She suggested:

- That each of the four AMs in the cross-party group contact and urge a Westminster colleague to set up an all-party group in the House of Commons. This was agreed.
- A letter to the UK Government signed by all AMs, protesting the UK Government's refusal to fully fund the pension settlements and index them. This was agreed;
- That the members of the Cross-Party Group – AMs and former ASW workers would deliver that letter to the Department of Work and Pensions. This was agreed.
- That a march in London could be staged around this event. There was some concern here over numbers that might attend so this will be investigated further by Bethan's office.
- A Facebook group and Twitter account could be set up to support the campaign online. This was agreed.
- Bethan suggested putting together a cross-party debate in the Assembly on ASW. This was supported.

- Audience members suggested getting in touch with unions, specifically Community and Unite. This was agreed.
- Members suggested contacting the Panorama team that covered the ASW pension case when it first happened. This was agreed.

## **5. AOB**

There was no further business. A date for the next meeting will be decided in the coming weeks.