

# Brighton sack three ground staff during 'witch hunt' over team sheet social media leaks



**No evidence has been found or presented by the club during this near three month investigation says GMB Union**

GMB is calling for the immediate re-instatement of three members of Brighton and Hove Albion Football Club ground staff after they were sacked for allegedly leaking the team selection on social media during the recent season.



GMB represent the club's ground staff team and has accused the Premier League club of failing to follow any due employment processes or even a club investigatory and disciplinary process to wrongfully dismiss staff without a hearing or right to appeal.

The sackings came after prolonged and intrusive investigations of all the ground staff working at the club's Lancing training facility.

**“** The club may have retained Premier League status this year but it seems that it provides its hard-working staff Sunday League employment rights.

### **Mark Turner, GMB Branch Secretary**

BHAFC safety and security manager Adrian Morris could not confirm to staff during his near three month enquiry if his investigation was following any formal process or that he was simply seeking their assistance to find the social media leak.

However, the investigation included the seizure of some mobile phones from staff to check and download content and usage, along with regular surprise interviews, all of which have been unable to provide any links about team selection leaks, to the members of staff wrongfully dismissed.

A letter from Head of HR Rose Read states that the club will be terminating employment without notice, because they have lost all trust and confidence in the individuals, without providing evidence as to why and their right of appeal against this unfair decision.

### **Mark Turner, GMB Branch Secretary said:**

“The club may have retained Premier League status this year but it seems that it provides its hard-working staff Sunday League employment rights.

“No evidence has been found or presented by the club during this near three month investigation which links our members to the supposed social media team leaks, yet they today summarily dismiss our members without notice.

“This just stinks and considering this club prides itself on its commitment to the standards, values and expectations set by the Premier League, along with professing to believe all forms of prejudice and discrimination are unacceptable, the way they have treated their staffs throughout this witch hunt is simply deplorable and unfair.



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"We will of course seek legal advice but we call upon BHAFC to correct this unfair dismissal and reinstate our members and their staff immediately.

"The club may find it has potentially breached staff contracts by dismissing them without notice and in not following disciplinary and dismissal processes. We can also add to that the failure to notify our members of their right to appeal against the dismissals and right to be accompanied.

"They have morally acted outside of what we would hope such a successful and proud club would choose to do so. Simply put, I'm not sure they could have handled this any more unprofessionally if they had tried, but it's early days yet so I can't be absolutely sure.

"GMB will support all our members within BHAFC to ensure they are treated professionally lawfully and with respect."

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### Press office

07958 156846

[press.office@gmb.org.uk](mailto:press.office@gmb.org.uk)

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[info@gmb.org.uk](mailto:info@gmb.org.uk)

