**MINUTES OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING**

**HELD ON 24 MAY 2022**

**ON ZOOM**

**Attendance:** See appendix

**Apologies:** Geoff Page (USDAW), Francis Byrne (NARF), Sandra Durkin (NPC VP), Clare Wilkins (NPC East Midlands; stand in David Jones)

The President, Rosie MacGregor, welcomed everyone to the meeting and hoped we could be disciplined and get through a heavy agenda. In particular, those new members to the EC were encouraged to participate and feed back to their nominating bodies.

1. **Minutes of meeting held on 25 January 2022**

Agreed.

1. **Matters Arising:**

* Page 1: Jenny S: Agreed that the names of Chairs of Working Parties should be on reports. When speaking, please give your name and who you represent.
* Arthur: Prospect conference – everything is ready for NPC stall. Do other Trade Unions offer a stall to NPC at their conferences? *Yes, they do.*
* Gareth: NPC Wales will be at the TUC Wales conference.

Rosie said that speakers would only be called once on any given item and should speak for 3 minutes’ maximum to enable us to move through the agenda and give all those who wish to speak an equal opportunity to do so.

1. **General Secretary’s Report:**

Jan updated the meeting with things that had happened since writing the report:

* An interview with BBC Radio Essex on a bill proposed by a local MP, Robert Halfon in respect to organisations who keep you holding on the telephone for lengthy periods. He believes that the first point of contact should be a human being, not a robot asking you to press this, that and the other button. Also that organisations be fined for holding callers on the line for more than 10 minutes.

This is an issue for NPC members and we were happy to support his efforts. There is another issue that we would want to raise with Mr. Halfon and that is the GP surgeries who use specific telephone systems that charge anything between 20p and 50p a minute. Holding on to try and get an appointment is costly. We would also ask him to support our wider digital exclusion campaign.

The meeting agreed that NPC contact Mr. Halfon

* Owen: Digital phone tickets for Wembley matches – only way of purchasing tickets. Has had an email from GP to have a phone assessment on lung capacity – not sure how that works!
* David Lomakin: Digital roll out. Apps are not easy, using a mobile phone in car parks. Batteries are much smaller now. Have one to charge phone, laptop etc. £22.
* Linda: Digital Working Party to look at how we help members that are excluded.
* Jenny: MP Inquiry submission on NHS digitalisation. Currently researching the App, the problems and uses.
* Philip: Areas where no mobile signals. BT are supposed to supply batteries free, but they are not in stock.
* David B: Commissioner for Older People in England. *This is a campaign that will include Unite the Union (their motion), Independent Age, Ageing Better, the Equalities Commission and hopefully others. It will be a feature of the ‘live’ Annual Convention day.*

**Report agreed**

1. **Treasurers Report:**

Steve reported that income and expenditure are in line with the budget so far but we cannot be complacent. We are still in a deficit position. Happy to answer questions today or by email.

National affiliates, some need to be chased, but we prefer to use contacts within those organisations to quietly remind and push for them to pay. We will be sending out reminders later in the year, but find in the past that the personal contact works better.

A report will go to the next Finance Working Party (FWP) on errors in invoicing for the BDC.

* Arthur: Prospect has a new person in place covering retired members. Will chase.
* David Luxton: The forecast deficit is currently £21,000, but are we likely to see a gradual reduction over the year. Steve said he hoped it reduces majorly. The effect of COVID and lack of face-to-face meetings means there were savings on expenses. Face to face meetings may rise. The bulk of our expenditure is rent and staff with a small budget left over to pay for lots of things!
* Owen: As West Midlands treasurer he is contacting Trade Union local branches to affiliate nationally.
* Jenny: NPC Wales starting a recruitment campaign.

Steve then moved on to his presentation (4 sides of A4) which shows that income is going down. Not enough from members and other sources. The line chart shows the expectation each year and the deficit. Every year is an accumulated loss. The money runs out in 8 or 9 years, but there is a direct affect earlier as we need to be winding down certain activities.

The restructuring of the NPC will have costs; i.e. hybrid meetings, face to face, conference venue costs. A more effective and efficient organisation still has costs.

To address the need for income, Vantage are actively looking for sponsors. The Charity is in the process of registering and we can then start to approach Trusts.

There is a need to attract more individual affiliates as well as those at national level. We all have a responsibility – we all belong to organisations that are not affiliated. For example, TSSA has 50 branches that could affiliate to the NPC.

NPC is a premier organisation and there is far more we could do to get money in.

* David: Contacting Regional Secretaries of Trade Unions – not an overwhelming response.
* Tony H: Lot of Trade Unions do not allow affiliation locally, normally national level only.
* David J: East Midlands is resurrecting. Unite has a national policy that all branches affiliate to the NPC
* Owen: North Staffs – 25 union branches. Unite, GMB, PCS, Unison do it.

Steve took on board those comments. It is not easy, but we need to engage and drive.

**Report agreed**

1. **Motions from Biennial Delegate Conference (BDC):**

Jan explained that the recommendations were for agreement only.

* Arthur: Motion 7 – public ownership of the energy sector. Is this achievable for the NPC?

*Jan responded that NPC were not the only organisation advocating public ownership of the energy sector. We work with other like organisations and support each other’s campaigns. Probably not achievable in the current political climate, but we must keep trying.*

* David L: Public Service Pensions Council had a presentation on the state pension age. It seems that there will be a move to bring forward state pension age again and women will be affected by that. Report comes in September. Public services are tied to state pension age as are their occupational pensions.
* Owen: Public toilets in West Midlands are being closed and knocked down.
* David L: Pension age will rise over time and they will want to phase out the state pension. This means private pension companies making profits from future pensioners. TUC should also take on board. Might be wise to look at proportional representation in elections – could be better for older people.

1. **Public Affairs Manager Report:**

Bev presented her report highlighting the two webinars in June as part of the Annual Convention with plans for a ‘live’ one in September. Sharon Graham and Dr. John Puntis (now Tony O'Sullivan) will speak on different aspects of the NHS bill and the impact of Integrated Care Services/Integrated Care Boards (ICS/ICB. These are due to be in place on 1 July.

Assisted Dying is purely a briefing on the Bill that Baroness Meacher is currently putting through the House of Lords. This is a complex and personal issue that NPC has no position on – it is personal choice. Dr. Jackie Davis is part of the BMA Ethics Committee.

* Philip: Timing of the one-day event – with September being the month for deciding the triple lock and the report David was speaking about, better to go for the end of the month. David’s point on proportional representation is timely.
* Arthur: Thanked Bev for her report. Under Assisted Dying – penultimate line – ‘not’ is missing.

**Report agreed.**

Rosie thanked Bev for her report.

1. **Administration and Information Manager Report:**

Jonathan had nothing to add to his report.

* Jenny: Raised concerns about the meeting with APPG; when it took place, limitations on attendees. Could Digital WP attend the meeting. Jonathan replied that the invitation was sent to us very late and there were limited places. Age UK do the administration for this APPG and it is possible that we dropped off the list with people leaving NPC and Age UK organisations.
* David B: Thanked Jonathan for his work in NPC. Asked if there would be minutes from the meeting? The notes provided by Jonathan show specific follow ups and processes. Jonathan replied that he expected there would be minutes of the meeting.

**Report agreed.**

Rosie thanked Jonathan.

*Just a note so everyone is aware that both Bev and Jonathan have contact/liaison/meeting with MPs, Lords, APPG’s and other parliamentary groups in their job roles. They are well versed in the policies of NPC and the views of our members to and able to make professional representation on our behalf.*

1. **Working Party Elections:**

Rosie introduced the elections by saying that we had nominations from affiliates who have never nominated to working parties before and this shows that our message is getting out there. Through these new nominating bodies, there are new people wishing to work on our policies and we remind you all of our intention to bring new people on board. We also want to ask you to be aware when voting that we should strive to also achieve a balance of regions and affiliates in each working party.

Jonathan explained that the poll system in zoom does not cater for more than a certain number of options. He had therefore had to add a page showing the rest of the nominations. Members need to scroll down to ensure they could vote for those on the second page if they wished. We would give the outcome of the voting the next day.

Elections were required for Digital, Health & Social Care, Structure and Transport.

1. **Working Party Reports:**
2. NPC Officer Team Report – Project Work for Working Parties: Rosie introduced the report highlighting the severe concerns about the impact of the cost of living on pensioner poverty. This project asks all our Working Parties to engage in discussion in line with their remit and look at the impact of poverty on our members and the work they are currently doing and would want to do in the future. Each working party will put their findings into a briefing that we can use across the board. The Officer Team ask the EC to approve the initiative.

**Report agreed.**

* Jenny: When will it start and finish? *Jan responded that a set of guidelines would be produced and sent out. This would determine the start and finish of the project. It might mean working parties arranging a one-off separate meeting to achieve the deadline.*
* Tony O’B: Welcome initiative as this is not a short term issue. Not a survey. Enables us to campaign on all fronts.
* Damian: Working together for all our members.

1. Working Party Reports: Rosie asked that only where there are additions to the report should members speak, and keep to a maximum of 3 minutes.
2. **Digital Working Party:**

The examples of why people are not online will be discussed at the next meeting. We are looking to produce a newsletter.

* Linda: why a newsletter, why not use the Campaign News?
* David J: sponsorship of newsletters. *Jan reported that this had been part of the discussion with Vantage and it is not an option. We prefer that sponsorship is for our events and policy booklets that cost more.*
* Barry: London Region circulate all information by email and post
* Owen: Support newsletter.

Jan supported the idea of a newsletter. Little or no cost.

**Report agreed.**

1. **Health & Social Care:** Nothing to add.
2. **Housing:** Jan responded to item 6 and the bullet points.

* It is possible to send a letter to all National affiliates asking them to make their retired members aware of, and the importance of being involved with, the NPC. However, GDPR prevents us from giving a list of contacts. All contact comes through our [info@npcuk.org](mailto:info@npcuk.org) and is filtered out.
* We support the Fuel Poverty Coalition and will continue to do so at no cost.
* Asked for clarification on ‘flexibility’ in the last bullet point. Tony wanted to see more observers in working parties and becoming involved in campaign work more. Jan reiterated that the review of NPC was ongoing and working parties would become part of that later on. For now, they would remain the same.

**Report agreed with the above clarifications. Agreed to share the link to the petition in the report.**

1. **Minority Elders Committee:** For noting. Ellen apologised for missing her name off.

**Report agreed.**

1. **Pensions & Income:** Nothing to add. Letter to National Savings & Investments will be copied to Prospect.

**Report agreed.**

1. **Structure:** Nothing to add.

* Arthur: Special Delegate Conference is a huge workload. It helps to do things as we go along.
* Owen: Scotland. *Jan explained that NPC Scotland was wound down as the Scottish Pensioners Forum is the main older people’s organisation. We do have contact with the pensioner groups in Scotland who are affiliated to NPC, but due to COVID, travel has been suspended.*
* Gareth: Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales make representation to the European parliament.
* David Luxton: CSPA has link to Age Platform Europe and accredited status on UN working party on ageing.
* Tony D: need to understand the difference between the European bodies.

**Report agreed.**

1. **Transport:** Big concerns are e-scooters, ticket machines/staff. Industrial action to oppose loss of staff and services. Buses the same.

* Owen: National Express closing all offices in the West Midlands region. Closing rail booking offices without consultation.

**Report agreed.**

1. **LGBT:** Damian reported the working party was concentrating on conversion therapy and the government refusal to include transgender in the ban.
2. **Zoom Trial:** Jan explained that we would be using breakout rooms in the first of our June webinars and we agreed we would use this opportunity to trial it. Jonathan explained what would happen and how to get in and out of the rooms. Everyone successfully joined a room and came back again. Fingers crossed for the real thing!!
3. **A.O.B:**

* Jenny proposed that after two hours meeting time, a 10-minute break should be given. This was agreed.

1. **Next meeting:**  26 July @ 10.30 am

**Appendix**

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| **Group** | **First name** | **Surname** |
| FNP-CISL (GB) | Antonietta | Bortone-Tinney |
| NPC Eastern Region | Tony | Garner |
| NPC Northwest | Harry | Brett |
| CWU | Damian | Ibison |
| NPC Treasurer | Steve | Whitehead |
| NPC General Secretary | Jan | Shortt |
| Unite | Tony | O'Brien |
| NPC Honorary Vice President | Marion | Wilson |
| NPC Northern Ireland | John | Martin |
| NPC Vice President | Barry | Todman |
| NPC Vice President | Norman | Jemison |
| NPC Anglia | Chris | Brooks |
| NPC President | Rosie | MacGregor |
| co-optee WWP | Meg | McDonald |
| Prospect | Arthur | Bavister |
| NPC Wales | Gareth | Parsons |
| NPC Vice President | Ellen | Lebethe |
| ASLEF | Bill | Dale |
| RCN | David | Briggs |
| NPC London Region | Angela | Banner |
| NPC Deputy General Secretary | Linda | Richards |
| NPC Thames Valley | Tony | Hall |
| NPC Home Counties North | Allan | Jeyes |
| UCU | Phillip | Burgess |
| NPC South East (SENPEC) | David | Lomakin |
| CSPA | David | Luxton |
| NFOP | Steven | Turner |
| NPC East Midlands | David | Jones |
| BTPF | Les | McDowell |
| NPC Wessex | Tom | James |
| NPC GAS | Keith | Evans |
| NPC West Midlands | Owen | Sloss |
| NPC Northern Region | Roy | Rix |
| NPC Anglia | Sam | Sirdar |
| RMT | Tony | Donaghey |
| NUJ | Jenny | Sims |
| TSSA | Cheryl | O'Brien |
| NPC National Public Affairs Manager | Bev | Morrison |
| NPC National Administration & Information Manager | Jonathan | Safir |