**Minutes of NPC Executive Committee**

**25 November 2021 Held on Zoom**

**In attendance:** Please see appendix

**Apologies:** Jan Shortt,Dot Gibson, Janet Shapiro, Peter Rayner, Paul Russell, Phil Wiseman, David Briggs, Geoff Page.

1. **Minutes of meeting held on 23 September 2021:**

Accuracy:

Arthur - page 4 - AOB - use of word query - would prefer the word 'asked; to replace 'query'.

Meg - page 4 - AOB - concessionary travel still has sanctions. delete that section.

1. **Matters Arising:**

Arthur - page 4 - AOB - Prospect stall - yet to action but hasn’t forgotten about the stall.

**Minutes agreed.**

1. **General Secretary’s Report:**

**Questions/Comments:**

**Southport**

Ron advised that the number of people who have declared their interest in attending the Annual Convention lies at around 200 people, which is below the number needed.

Barry reiterated that we need to know the numbers for Southport -

Marion - Officers decided that the EC should decide whether Southport should go ahead in its current format if we do not receive 350 people stating they will attend by 3rd December. This will be voted on by the EC.

Arthur - Prospect committee hasn’t met much but has a meeting on 2nd December. Potentially 6 people will attend.

Gareth Parsons asked about the rally. Ron responded that there was no progress on rally at Southport due to lack of numbers

Tony Donaghey asked about cancellation fees and the previous deposit for 2020. General Secretary and Officers will investigate this. Currently NPC has not signed a contract for 2022

EC Southport vote -

For (to cancel) 27/30 90%

Against 3/30 10%

Abstain 0/30 0%

Clare asked whether any replacement event will be a zoom only event, Ron advised that the office and General Secretary shall examine our options going forward.

**Report agreed**

**Milk n More**

Tom James - Item 10 Milk & More - System in place for people to call for priority register. Will pass info to office.

**NHS Digital**

Jenny mentions - Item 3 - NHS digital / Patient coalitions - Jonathan advised that he would keep the Health & Social Care and Digital WP in the frame on developments on this.

Clare - Heard there is a proposal to axe NHS digital, but unsure of the details.

Jonathan advised it was announced this week that NHSX, NHS Digital merging with NHS England.

**BDC**

Phil- Item 6 - advises UCU meeting was after the BDC deadline, but info has now been sent in.

Tony Garner - BDC delegates sent in.

Ron clarified for David Luxton that the BDC starts lunchtime 15th March and finishes lunchtime 16th March.

Jonathan outlined the timeframe for the BDC - hoping to send out all information with motions, nominations etc the week of the 6th December. Amendments to motions to be received 17th January 2022.

**Report agreed**

1. **Treasurer’s Report:**

Barry wanted to highlight some key figures. Affiliations we have done okay, and anticipated deficit is better than forecast. Maybe around £5k. This could change. NPC hasn’t increased revenue, but has made a lot of savings in reality, reduced post, activities etc.

**Questions/Comments:**

David Luxton asked for clarification on the Annual Convention deposit. If we are paying the deposit in 2021 presumably, we don’t get the revenues back in 2022.

Barry replied advising that David was correct and that the reality is even if we get 350 people in Southport that is only £3500 and that is much less than the deposit and costs of the event.

Jenny asked that the treasurer gives a written report as well as the excel figures. Gareth Parsons agrees a written report would help.

Jenny asked about the overall picture of affiliations. how are we doing with affiliations?

Barry - We have met targets for national, regional bodies and local groups all pretty much on target. We are static with affiliations. Not losing groups, but not gaining new groups.

**Report agreed.**

1. **National Public Affairs Officer Report:**

Bev introduced her verbal report. She explained that it has been a very busy period for the NPC in terms of responding to policies government Policies which frankly are not in the best interest of older people.

**Excess Winter Deaths**

Update given on excess winter deaths demonstration on 26.11.21. Lord Prem Sikka, Sue Ferns (TUC), Ruth London (Fuel Poverty Action) will speak about rising fuel costs, poor housing stock, rising pensioner poverty and the excess winter mortality figures. Barry will attempt to hand in a letter to 10 Downing Street. Originally planned as just a London Region event it has now snowballed, and we are unsure how many people will attend, but there has been good publicity about the event.In Scotland, where the figures are released separately and early the excess winter mortality rates were up and we can’t probably expect to see something similar in England and Wales.

**Social care**

The government’s social care report was published. It was confirmed that the cost-of-living fees such as food and gas will not be included towards the £86,000 cap. The Health & Social Care WP will look at the details of the report and press releases / submissions will follow. Previous promises that no older person will have to sell their home to fund social care have been broken.

Jean Hardiman Smith (Chair of NPC Health & Social Care WP) wrote a fantastic piece, which appeared as a comment in the Daily Express explaining the NPC position on social care

We are hoping that the House of Lords will do what they did with the triple lock recently and send it back to the comments with amendments, and the NPC will lobby both the Lords and MPs on this vital issue.

**Triple Lock**

On 15.11.21 there was a vote on the Triple Lock, which unfortunately the government won. The Triple Lock will be suspended with the proposed rise of 3.1% to state pensions, at a time where there is rising inflation. Inflation could hit 7% by the middle of next year. The cost of living is becoming ever concerning especially considering the removal of the triple lock mechanism.

**Questions/Comments:**

Jenny said the NUJ can help. Senior Reporter issue focussed on pensions and the Triple Lock. Happy to share info. Will try to support the demo.

Barry asked the EC to thank Jonathan and Bev for the work they do.

Meg reported that UCU retired members passed a motion from London Region UCU about warm homes, winter deaths and retrofitting. Advised there is a campaign in Scotland about retrofitting. Meg to send Bev the motion.

Arthur indicated that the Dilnot report was not acceptable to NPC and that this government won’t fix social care. This £86k cap is worse than Dilnot's proposals.

Arthur said he had written to his MP on the Triple Lock and included figures about wage growth being closer to 6%. There is lots of misunderstanding on the figures being used.

Bev added that the social care cap figure of £86,000 does not include cost of living towards the cap. It will affect those with lower incomes and with fewer assets more. It was not what was expected or promised. The NPC will still campaign for a National Care Service.

It is important that people write to their MPs. In the Triple Lock debate a Conservative MP said that no single letter he had received was in favour of suspending the Triple Lock.

Ron thanked Bev for all her hard work.

**Report agreed.**

1. **National Administration & Information Officer Report:**

**Questions/Comments:**

Damian glad that the report indicated that online forms of payment were accepted by the NPC, as well as other forms of payment accepted.

Arthur stated that the October webinar on digital and the right to choose was very good and informative.

Ron thanked Jonathan for all his hard work.

**Report agreed.**

1. **Working Party Reports:**

**Minority Elders Committee**

Ellen apologised for the late sending of the report.

**Questions/Comments:**

Jenny stated a report came out today by Centre for Ageing Better. There are figures about minority elders in the report. Ellen will look for the report and send it to ME group.

Ellen answered Gareth's question on Speaking Out! advising that the previous issue came out in October, the next one is hopefully in December. The issues are put on the NPC website and goes to all on the NPC mailing list.

**Report noted**

**LGBT Group**

**Questions/Comments:**

Damian reported the LGBT group had a speaker from Tonic Housing. He asked if any groups wanted a speaker from the LGBT group, then to please get in contact. Next meeting 06.12.21 and will discuss government proposals on conversion therapy.

**Report noted**

**Health and Social care**

**Report and recommendations agreed**

**Transport Group**

Ron moved the report. Explained there was a lot of debate about closures of National Express offices at the previous meeting.

**Questions/Comments:**

Sandra asks for the word handicapped to be amended to disabled from the report. She lives in Coventry and raised the issued of National Express closures. WMPC would welcome collaboration on the letter to Andy Street. (West Mids Combined Authority) Using figures from Covid times is not a true reflection of actual numbers. National Express could be in breach of Equalities Act 2010. No consultation locally with affected groups. National Express doing similar in other areas (Oxford and North East). Bev liaising with Regional Secs on this issue.

Tony Garner spoke on e-scooters trials. Essex has had trial in six locations. One of those is finished and the other five are going to continue from what was due to be 12 months to 15 months. He heard on BBC Radio6, the director of Spin, the company running the trial in conjunction with the county Council, that it would not be mandatory to take a photo of where the e-scooter had been left, as there are lots of issues with them being dumped or left on pavements.

Rosie agrees with changing the language in the report

Jenny advised NUJ has a code that she can circulate on language use. Age Scotland also has a draft guide.

Chris Brooks spoke on the trial of e-scooters in Great Yarmouth which had been declared a success. Norfolk police are quite concerned about younger people getting e-scooters for Christmas. e-scooters have been impounded, people have been arrested drink driving, multiple people on e-scooters, and they the rest of people being underage and more than one or even two on a scooter. Trial rules are ignored, but there is no police will to enforce.

Bev asked for examples on these issues.

**Report noted**

**Women’s WP (WWP)**

Rosie - asked for report to be noted, adding the Network Exchange will be coming out in December. Thanked the office for their support and asked that people circulate the newsletter.

**Questions/Comments:**

Tom James said the issue of widows’ pensions should be referred to Pensions & Income WP.

Jenny Sims announced that today is international day for the elimination of violence against women. There is more data about the abuse of older women. Asked if it was an issue the WWP had tackled. Jenny has submitted an article to Network Exchange and asked when the deadline is.

Rosie responded that the WWP have written about violence to women and domestic abuse. She was a trustee to an organisation that dealt with that issue and the WWP will continue to raise awareness of the issue. The WWP welcomes articles, hopes for a slant towards women on them, but Digital Exclusion is an issue that affects women more than men. They have already finalised the December issue and agreed March issue articles, but welcome articles for May. WWP also welcome article from men.

**Report noted**

**Finance WP**

**Questions/Comments:**

Jenny asked about the ongoing formation of the charity and fundraising initiatives.

Les McDowell responded that most grant and funding givers will only give money to registered charities and therefore by forming a charity, the NPC is widening the number of organisations we can apply to. The Finance WP is nearly at the point to report back to the EC on the charity.

**Report noted.**

**Structure WP**

Jonathan advised that the structure questionnaire will go out in December to the Regions. The NPC did request multiple times for responses.

Jenny concerned about the lack of response from national organisations. She had chased her own union to respond and hoped others would do the same.

Arthur said that the Prospect group secretary only works part time and it is difficult to get replies.

Norman advised that the person dealing with UCU retired members had retired and no one had replaced them. - person who dealt with issues retired and no-one replaced them,

Jonathan will resend the questionnaire to David Luxton - CSPA & Rosie Macgregor - Unison

**Report noted**

**Housing WP**

Tony stated the report covers the last two housing meetings. The recommendations have been carried out. Key thing to note is the excess winter deaths protest on 26.11.21. There is a tube strike in London tomorrow and hopes it doesn’t affect turnout. Much work from London Region members to put on the demonstrations.

Although large increases in fuel prices already, the real jump in prices will be seen in April when the energy cap is re-evaluated, and prices will go up significantly. The figures are one year behind as you know so this is going to be a very much an ongoing situation

States that although evictions are rising, Labour have a progressive housing policy. In Wales new reforms on rent caps and programmes to end homelessness, increased social housing bans on second homes in rural areas, have been agreed.

**Questions/Comments:**

Jenny asked when they will see the review of the Housing WP recommendations. Is there anything in it about cladding? These issues affected all ages, not just younger people. Many older leaseholders badly affected.

Tony advised that the recommendations should go out on week of 6th December with other BDC information and that they are open to amendment. Policy number 14 will cover cladding issues. It affects 3 million homes. Not just cladding but deregulation of building products.

Meg states the Housing WP very active and work with Homes for all, advice for renters, fuel poverty action. Asked as many people as possible to attend the winter deaths rally tomorrow.

**Report and recommendations already carried out**

**Digital WP**

Jenny asked for the EC to accept the Digital WP report's recommendations. She explained that the Older People’s Commissioner for Wales (OPCW) has issued new guidance “to ensure older people can access the information and services they need in a digital age” – crucial to ensuring older people’s rights are protected and upheld in an increasingly digital world.

The guidance sets out how local authorities and health boards should ensure that people who can’t (or don’t wish to) get online have ways to access the information and services they need via non-digital means, and that support should be provided to help older people get online and use the internet safely and with confidence. The aims of this guidance are also the aims of the NPC’s Connections for All campaign and can help the NPC campaign for a Commissioner for Older People in England.

**Questions/Comments:**

Ron said he had read the two reports and sees no reason why they can’t be circulated. The Northern Ireland Commissioner previously spoke at the Annual Convention, and it is an issue the NPC will be campaigning on.

Meg said at the UCU AGM a Welsh delegate raised the issue of a Commissioner for Older People. Also said that London Region is asking for a deputy mayor for older people.

Norman concurs with Jenny and Meg. Having a Commissioner for Older People in England is an important policy to campaign on.

Bev advised that Jan has spoken of the need for a Commissioner for Older People in England, and it is something the NPC is pushing for.

Gareth advises NPC Wales has a good relationship with the cross-party groups and Welsh government as well the Older People's Commissioner.

Chris Brooks says that any opposition parties should want a Commissioner for Older People in England

**Report and recommendations agreed**

**Pensions & Income WP**

Arthur thanked the working party for looking at the issue of pension protection funds (PPF) and offered the help of Dr Tony Wickett in any way.

David Luxton clarified that the PPF 2.5% cap only index linked form April 1997. Affects people who have no indexation before 1996.

**Report and recommendations agreed.**

1. **A.0.B.:**

Arthur advised the TV programme on social care by Ed Balls where he looked at the whole care system and it was a real eye opener. It is available on iPlayer.

Jenny asks for Chairs to put their names on your reports. Gareth seconds that. Ron advised it will be minuted and Chairs asked to put their names to their reports.

1. **Next Meeting:** 25 January 2022 at 10.30am on Zoom.

Other meeting dates for 2022: 24 May, 26 July, 27 September, 29 November. The March meeting is set aside in view of the Biennial Delegate Conference.

Appendix

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| Group | First name | Surname |
| Co-optee ME Committee | Antonietta Bortone | Tinney |
| NPC Eastern Region | Tony | Garner |
| Treasurer | Barry | Todman |
| NPC Yorkshire & Humber | Paul | Russell |
| NPC President | Ron | Douglas |
| TSSA | Steve | Whitehead |
| UCATT | Tony | O'Brien |
| Vice President | Marion | Wilson |
| Vice President | Norman | Jemison |
| NPC Anglia | Chris | Brooks |
| UNISON | Rosie | MacGregor |
| NPC West Midlands | Ingrid | Caras-Atlas |
| PCS / ARMS | Sandra | Durkin |
| co-optee WWP | Meg | McDonald |
| Prospect | Athur | Bavister |
| NPC Wales | Gareth | Parsons |
| CWU | Damian | Ibison |
| NPC Northern | Roy | Rix |
| NPC Vice President | Ellen | Lebethe |
| ASLEF | Bill | Dale |
| RCN | June | Clarke |
| London Region | Angela | Banner |
| NASUWT/FRMA | Roger | Darke |
| NPC Thames Valley | Linda | Richards |
| UCU | Phillip | Burgess |
| NARF | Francis | Byrne |
| NPC East Midlands | Clare | Wilkins |
| BTPF | Les | McDowell |
| NPC Wessex | Tom | James |
| NPC GAS | Keith | Evans |
| NUJ | Jenny | Sims |
| NPC National Public Affairs Manager | Bev | Morrison |
| NPC National Administration & Information Manager | Jonathan | Safir |