**MINUTES OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**23 MAY 2023**

**In attendance:** See appendix

**Apologies:** see appendix

Rosie welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. **Minutes of meeting held on 28 March 2023:**

* Page 4: item 8 vii; bullet point 6**.** Clare will send Jan an amendment which will be included and the minutes re-issued.

**Agreed**

1. **Matters Arising:**

* Gareth: page 2: item 5: The response regarding the survey did not include how they came to 75%. *The question was asked; the response was given. We can do no more than that.*
* Jenny: page 3: item 8 i: Difficult for new delegates to follow the minutes.
* Clare said it was a difficult balance as people don’t read long minutes.

*Jan: I do the best I can between listening, writing and finding answers to questions. The minutes are already 5 pages long and take up more than the 15 minutes allocated on the agenda. Jenny declined to make an amendment*

1. **General Secretary Report:**

As written with two additions. Digital exclusion: Over 1 million users have ended broadband contracts due to cost. We think this number will increase as the April increases in our bills start to impact. This is an issue that is society-wide and can be addressed at the Annual Convention session with the Digital Poverty Alliance.

* Clare: BT announced 90,000 job losses worldwide with 10,000 of those being replaced with AI systems. A question of fewer jobs in BT, will AI be fit for purpose? People don’t have options if they can’t afford heat and food and can’t always be online.
* Meg: Seriously going to affect those without broadband. All areas of health care affected; the nation’s health is poor. Campaign for free broadband.
* David Luxton: Do people realise that no broadband will affect the digital switch? Jonathan reported that for those without internet, providers will have to provide them with a router and a mobile phone free.
* David Lomakin: This usually provides low grade systems. Leaving a provider can be costly with exit fees.
* Damian: Keir Starmer has said that he wants to take a digital first approach in the NHS. This will affect everyone.
* Cheryl: How do people manage without all the apps and things.

*Jan asked Jenny to take back to the Digital Working Party. There is a lot of information out there on people leaving their broadband contracts which could inform the Working Party on any increase in numbers and reasons. That piece of research would then inform a strategy for NPC to campaign on and whether we stick with social tariffs or go for free broadband. There are members just above pension credit level whose income is constantly squeezed as they need to pay for everything. Jeremy Corbyn did advocate free broadband for all until it showed a cost of £16 billion. Bring a report and recommendations back to the July EC.*

The second addition is that we have been approached by Channel 4 who want to do a programme First Dates for over 65’s. It is typical really in terms of the generational fit TV programmes are now trying to achieve. Search for ‘pensioners’ and the NPC is top of the list.

We recognise that there are older people who are lonely who may be looking for a companion or a partner. However, it was agreed that we would circulate and make it clear that to take part was a personal choice and nothing to do with the NPC.

* Philip: voter ID: Opposed on principle. Electoral Commission’s documentation is a shoddy piece of work. The list of accepted identification; the use of expired documents - renewing a driving licence takes a year. However, it might be useful if banks, airlines and others could accept at least some on the list.
* Gareth: Out of date photo ID as long as it looks like you? Perhaps there should be a pensioner’s ID card, but then that brings in things like civil liberties.
* Owen: Worked the local elections. A major campaign is need by the Commission to remind people that ID is necessary – will they remember?

*Jan asked if members could let the office have an understanding of their own experiences as it seems that acceptable ID has been different across the country. It is important that we get some feedback so that we can pass to the Commission and ask for specific improvements.*

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

Bev needs to leave soon for another appointment. There are two major things in her report to note. The Commissioner for Older People & Ageing in England and also Scotland. The event in Portcullis House had good coverage with lots of MPs dropping in and engaging with us. As a result, there have been several approaches made to ask the government to agree to a Commissioner. The coalition of organisations is opening up a petition.

Annual Convention: Difficult to get speakers to Blackpool. Trying to get everything covered.

Mayor of Blackpool will open the rally; Robert Palmer from Tax Justice on making tax fairer; Fuel Poverty Coalition on the whole issue of housing, fuel poverty; Nanas Against Fracking are a local campaign group on environmental issues. Pensions/68 Too Late; Health & Social Care; Digital Poverty Alliance with their National Delivery Plan – what we do to engage with politicians; Age UK Digital Champion. Age UK are hugely concerned about pensioner poverty. The last session will be on campaigning and growing the NPC. Independent Age are launching their campaigns toolkit.

Chairs will receive a briefing on allowing time for questions and speakers will all have briefs to speak to and maximum speaking times.

The evening entertainment on Wednesday is a disco and an internationally known Diana Ross tribute act.

* Jenny: Congratulations on everything done. Digital Poverty Alliance plan to be launched this week. Jenny asked why the Digital session was the only session not in the main Lancastrian Suite.

*Jan responded saying we cannot fit all the sessions into the one room. Bev has made it clear we are still working on sessions that could fit into the Louis room. Organising is difficult now we have a 2-day event and the fact we are unable to use another room in the hotel for health & safety reasons. If it remains the same, then it has to be.*

* Chris: Congratulations. It is important to have the opportunity for questions but to avoid people making long statements. *This will be included in the Chairs briefing.*

1. **Treasurer’s Report:**

Steve referred to his written report and budget. Although we are in a reasonable position, we are approaching the most expensive time of year for the NPC with the Special Delegate Conference and Annual Convention. Much depends on the income/expenditure of both events. Any questions, please email Steve.

1. **Consultation on Pilot in 2024:**

We circulated all affiliates/regions in February with the motion from the Northern Region and a ballot form with a deadline of 21 May. Jonathan displayed responses and outcomes.

Q1 – joint event

Yes 12

No 3

Q2 – which month

March - 2

June – 11

Do not mind or did not answer – 2

35 national bodies and 15 regions (total 50) were consulted. We received 15 replies

* Steve: reservations for lots of reasons; i.e. not being clear on actual cost (FWP will review both events); capacity of staff and officers; impact on other workloads.
* Chris: Endorse Steve’s concerns – it is a lot of work.
* Clare: The Special Delegate Conference is not the same as a Biennial Delegate Conference (BDC) – it is shorter. Decide after the experience.
* David L: Endorse Steve’s concerns as cost is a major issue. Can see positives in terms of time and travel/accommodation expenses.

Rosie asked Jonathan about the comments on workload to which he responded there was not much difference between having two single events and one altogether event. Doesn’t mind which.

*Jan responded that the schedule for holding the BDC in March starts in August with preparation of papers to go out at the beginning of September. This is a constitutional requirement. All of which means we will need to research venues now, so any ideas welcome. 2024 prices are going to be higher again. There is also the issue of the number of replies which indicates either the affiliated body not having an opinion or have just not replied.*

It was agreed that we would research venues for March 2024 and bring to July EC. The FWP would scrutinise the income and expenditure for both events this year and form an opinion on the viability (or otherwise) of a pilot.

1. **National Administration/Information Manager Report:**

Nothing to add. A very busy time.

* Gareth: ‘sunsetting’ of mobiles? Where does this language come from?
* Clare: Businesses have their own language which changes with time. Concerns around BT loss of jobs and AI.  *Jonathan said this had arisen after his meeting with BT and will raise at the next one.*

1. **Working Party Reports:**

Rosie proposed to take working party reports in reverse alphabetical order for this meeting and alternate for each EC.

1. **Women’s Working Party:** Meg has had to leave. Statement needs to be shared more widely with all NPC affiliates/bodies. *Jan said it also needs a policy and process behind it otherwise it goes nowhere. Affiliates need to buy into it to make a difference.*

*Jonathan shared the statement on screen.*

* Tony O’B: This is a generation of sexism, racism and discrimination and we have to do something now.
* Tom: How may incidents have been reported within the NPC. *Rosie said some had been reported to officers.*
* Damian: Interested as to why we are having this discussion on the basis that we are sensible people, respecting each other. Can’t hold onto a viewpoint that is archaic. Racism/sexism is not a joke.
* Rosie: Sadly, these issues are still with us. Young people are reporting issues.
* *Jan spoke of the process we need to take: We will circulate the statement to LGBT and Ethnic Minority Working Parties first, then to all other Working Parties. We will then take to the Officer team and Structure Working Party for combining the statement into guidelines backed by a Code of Conduct that affiliates will need to buy into. Full circulation to affiliated bodies and regions before going to the BDC in 2024. It needs a BDC agreement to be part of our Constitution in order for affiliates to understand their responsibilities and carry them out.*

The President called for a vote on the process as outlined. Supported overwhelmingly other than a vote against. Tony O’B insisted on it being done now and questioned the vote.

*Jan explained that Working Parties submit recommendations to the EC as the accountable body for their consideration. This statement was accepted at the March EC to come back here today to discuss how we forward it. That discussion has taken place and a process agreed. It must go to the BDC in 2024 as a constitutional change to be accepted along with the attendant guidelines and Code of Conduct that turn a statement into a working policy/mission. You have voted the way you wish and your vote has been noted. That is the democratic process of this meeting.*

1. **Transport:**

Noted. The response made on behalf of NPC to the consultation of accessibility was praised and should be made into a booklet? We can, but not for a while with the workload.

1. **Structure:**

Nothing to add. Noted

1. **Pensions & Income:**

Clare reported that WASPI and Back to 60 Campaign are awaiting a judicial review. 3.6 million women asking for compensation. Interesting that the Department for Work and Pensions has said that their procedure is adequate before the outcome of the review.

1. **Minority Elders:**

Ellen reported a long discussion in the group to change their name. This should now be Ethnic Minority Working Party to align with the census in 2021 and government guidelines on language. The change of name was endorsed. The terms of reference will be brought to the July EC to comply with the change of language.

1. **Housing:**

Tony was on a train and difficult to hear. No fault evictions will be stopped but nothing on the leasehold system. Government funding to integrate housing and social care has gone. This needs to be highlighted. *Jan said the Health & Social Care newsletter carried an article on the matter.*

Rosie raised the number of links in the report. The Working Party should raise in a paper the salient points in each of the links. We do not have the resources to follow every link. *Jan apologised for not having made the last Housing Working Party meeting, but she and Bev will attend the next one to look at a series of press releases on given issues or written material from the Working Party that can be on the website and shared with members.*

1. **Finance:**

Les had nothing to add to Steve’s report. The work of the FWP at the moment is to get the charity registered.

1. **Digital:**

Survey for the Annual Convention. Thanked everyone for the ideas for the newsletter. She asked again if affiliated groups print and post out copies of the newsletter. This carried a cost to regions. General Secretary to liaise over collaboration with Health & Social Care.

* Jonathan said those on post at National level get two mail outs a year which includes the Campaign News and newsletters.
* Damian: London & South East CWU – all NPC information is sent out to those on post as well as online.
* Chris: Greater London Region do a mail out each month with NPC information incorporated.

1. **A.O.B:**

* Jenny asked about captioning and a copy of the transcript. *Jonathan said captioning could be accessed on most devices at the bottom of the screen by clicking the ‘cc’ icon. Transcripts does not save.*

Rosie thanked everyone for their attendance and participation; to Bev and Jonathan for all their hard work.

1. **Next Meeting:**

The next EC will be at 10.30 am on 25 July. This may be the last EC dependent on the outcome of the Special Delegate Conference.

David Luxton gave apologies for this meeting.

**Appendix**

**Attendees**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Group** | **First name** | **Surname** |
| FNP-CISL (GB) | Antonietta | Bortone-Tinney |
| CWU | Damian | Ibison |
| NPC Treasurer | Steve | Whitehead |
| NPC General Secretary | Jan | Shortt |
| NPC Deputy General Secretary | Linda | Richards |
| Unite | Tony | O'Brien |
| NPC London Region | Chris | Mason-Ryan |
| NPC Vice President | Barry | Todman |
| NPC Vice President | Norman | Jemison |
| NPC Vice President | Ellen | Lebethe |
| NPC President | Rosie | MacGregor |
| NPC Wales | Gareth | Parsons |
| NASUWT FRMA | Roger | Darke |
| ASLEF | Bill | Dale |
| NPC Thames Valley | Tony | Hall |
| CSPA | David | Luxton |
| NPC Home Counties North | Allan | Jeyes |
| NPC South East (SENPEC) | David | Lomakin |
| BTPF | Les | McDowell |
| NPC Women's WP co-optee | Meg | McDonald |
| NPC West Midlands | Owen | Sloss |
| UCU | Phillip | Burgess |
| NPC Yorks & Humber | Kevin | Fradley |
| NUJ | Jenny | Sims |
| NPC GAS | Keith | Evans |
| NPC NW region | Harry | Brett |
| NPC Anglia | Chris | Brooks |
| TSSA | Cheryl | O’Brien |
| NARF | Francis | Bryne |
| NPC Northern | Roy | Rix |
| NPC Wessex | Tom | James |
| NPC East Midlands | Clare | Wilkins |
| NPC National Public Affairs Manager | Bev | Morrison |
| NPC National Administration & Information Manager | Jonathan | Safir |

**Apologies**

Sandra Durkin NPC Vice President, Tony Conway (PCS), Angela Banner (NPC London Region - Chris Mason-Ryan stand in), Louis Rolston (Equity), Ron Douglas (NPC Honorary President), Geoff Page (USDAW), John Martin (NPC Northern Ireland), Marion Wilson (NPC Honorary Vice President), Tony Garner (NPC Eastern), Gawain Little (GFTU), Liz Curr (LGBT WP co-optee), Ruby Cox (Women’s WP co-optee), Joel Kosminsky (NPC Standing Orders Committee Chair).