**MINUTES OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING**

**29 NOVEMBER 2022**

**In attendance:** Please see appendix

**Apologies:** Geoff Page, Chris Brooks (Sam Sirdar stand in), Arthur Bavister (Mike Moriarty stand in), Phillip Burgess, Keith Evans, Ellen Lebethe

1. **Minutes of 27 September 2022**

**Agreed**

1. **Matters Arising:**

* Tony G: page 2 – the matter has been resolved.

1. **General Secretary Report:**

Jan apologised for a typing error on page 6. The Good Law Project event is 2nd December.

Also, the issue of planned blackout emergencies whereby people can sign up to receive £3 per kwh in return for switching off their power when asked by the National Grid.

Older people and those on low income could see this as a way of cutting energy bills without the understanding of the health, safety and welfare consequences.

The Guardian and Mirror both carried articles and we believe that the National Grid has suspended the cut off planned for today.

Share the links to these articles: updated articles: <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2022/nov/28/national-grid-emergency-winter-plan-energy-prices>

<https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/breaking-national-grid-blackout-called-28602476>

The National Grid has abandoned the trials, but we need to make sure that power cuts are properly managed. If you have a digital phone system, the phone will not receive calls and you cannot make calls.

* Jenny: Digital Poverty Alliance: feedback on what kind of partnership NPC will have. Jan reported that their meeting with the Alliance showed that they had not given a lot of thought to working with older people. Their main area was ensuring that children had devices and access to internet during COVID and beyond. The meeting was positive in that the Alliance agreed with choice being the priority for older people and a wider discussion within the Alliance would take place to see how it could work with us. We are waiting their response. The organisations that we already work with are in essence our partners.
* Special Delegate Conference: costs are 2023 not 2024. Prices for 2024 have been hard to get.
* David Luxton: What can we find out on the £300? {*The extra £300 is a cost of living payment that will be attached to the winter fuel allowance and paid on top of the normal allowance to those eligible to receive it during the month of November. Eligibility depends on when you were born and your circumstances, but for most pensioners:*

***Under the age of 80***

* *You qualify and live alone (or none of the people you live with qualify) - £500*
* *You qualify and live with someone who also qualifies - £250*
* *You qualify, live in a care home and do not get certain benefits - £250*

***Over the age of 80***

* *You qualify and live alone (or none of the people you live with qualify) - £600*
* *You qualify and live with someone under 80 who also qualifies - £350*
* *You qualify and live with someone 80 or over who also qualifies - £300*
* *You qualify, live in a care home and do not get certain benefits - £300*
* David Briggs: Commissioner for Older People – we are pushing for a date for the meeting with Baroness Stedman-Scott.
* David Lomakin: The government have a new strategy for the winter fuel allowance.

*There have been rumours for a long time around taxation, means-testing; adding it to housing benefit etc.*

* Tony O’Brien: Other benefits – housing benefit capped? *Housing benefit will increase although whether it will cover rent increases we won’t know. Local Housing Allowance (LHA) is still frozen and private landlords will most likely increase rents again to mitigate the mortgage rises. Some may sell, which creates a further housing problem.*
* Bev: All benefits increase by 10.1% but need to clarify ‘all benefits’
* Bill Dale: Heard Kenneth Clarke on the triple lock saying that people were living longer than expected and costing the country billions. Some don’t need a state pension – means test it.
* Clare: Benefits will rise along with personal allowances. Caps and extras are always separate. Winter Fuel Allowance is subject to legislation.

1. **Treasurers Report:**

Steve gave an update – all affiliates and regions have paid. The budget for next year is being worked on with a notional increase of 12% across the board. Due to staff holidays and office closure, figures for December are expected in January.

The year-end position is that income is on target, donations are down and expenditure is on budget, with a predicted £23,000 deficit.

* Tony O’Brien: all regions of Unite should affiliate to the NPC.
* Rosie: UNISON policy is the same.
* Jan: Letters have gone out to all national affiliates for donations. It would be good if delegates could follow up and help get some extra money in before the end of the year.
* Meg: Important more than ever to give other pensioners a voice. We need to recruit non-trade union members.
* Jenny: Need ideas from people.
* Dignity Day: Jan explained that the 1st February was chosen as Dignity Day by the National Dignity Council. However, as February tends to be a cold month, the EC some time ago agreed that regions could determine a different date as close as possible to the original. We will produce a leaflet for affiliates to use for their own events.

Rosie thanked Steve for his report and hard work.

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

Bev reported that we have done a lot of work with other age-related organisations in lobbying for the triple lock; challenging the myths of intergenerational fairness. Firefighting issues around the cost of living, the delayed care cap, the government energy support grant in no way meets fuel costs and other inflationary rises.

Sponsorship: we have had a few meetings with interested parties. We await to hear their response, but we feel there is a positive interest.

Daily Express is always keen to help us. We have had good coverage over the period of lobbying for the triple lock and now the cost of living issues for older people.

Looking at a recruitment leaflet for both local and national level.

* Meg: How we can advertise.

Rosie thanked Bev for her report and her hard work.

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

Jonathan reported recent flyers on rights/services/fuel poverty on the website. Working on recruitment and winter deaths. Will compose one for dignity day. Email ideas to Jonathan on other issues.

Rosie thanked Jonathan for his report and hard work.

**BREAK**

1. **Working Party Reports:**

Rosie asked that we keep to 3 minutes and raise only additions or clarify recommendations.

1. **Digital Working Party:** Jenny presented the report and asked that Regional Secretaries made the ‘Connections for All’ newsletter available to their members either by email or post. She also asked for feedback on the content and format of the newsletter.

* Rosie thanked the working party of their newsletter and supported the recommendation.
* Tom: Sends out all the information. The number of pages increases costs in postage. Can newsletters have less pages or an abridged version?
* Gareth: congratulations on spelling ‘Connections’ correctly.

1. **Finance:** Les presented the report highlighting the fact that income v cash flow is an issue. Working on the 2023 budget. Looking closely at sponsorship and will bring to the EC any who are interested in supporting us. We have renewed our partnership with Fred Olsen for discounted cruises which also gives the NPC an amount of money.
2. **Health & Social Care:** Nothing to add.
3. **Housing:** Tony presented the report. Recognition for the work Pat Turner has done not only in the working party but across the NPC. Many issues in housing; i.e. outsourcing housing to Housing Associations; no repairs to properties; lack of liaison with tenants; the death of a toddler as a result of damp and mould. A positive move to install sprinklers in all high rise blocks. 3rd and 8th December are key dates to organise and get active.
4. **LGBT:**  Liz introduced herself as the new chair of the LGBT Working Party. There have been several difficulties within the working party and she gave background to her work in the area of LGBT policy. Liz spoke about the work of LGBT allies and the wealth of understanding, support and knowledge they bring to the NPC as well as to the LGBT group. There are issues with the NPC route to nomination for the group which could mean breaching the law and she thanked Jan for raising the point at the Trade Union Working Party to see how we could put the nomination process on a safe footing for LGBT retired members. There are three strands to our current work programme and we hope the EC agrees them. The amendments to the Terms of Reference are to reflect the new way of working that members of the working party agree is the best way forward.

* Jenny asked how many members in the group. There are 6 at the moment.
* Owen: West Midlands are concerned about LGBT supporters and allies. The terms of reference mean that currently a man could be nominated to attend the Women’s Working Party (WWP).
* Jan: Owen, I take offence at that remark and I believe it is also offensive to those male delegates in attendance as I am sure they are well aware that they are not eligible to be nominated for the WWP and would never dream of doing so. In terms of LGBT allies and supporters, the NPC and the LGBT group have both benefited from their involvement. The perspective they bring is unique to the NPC and their positive contributions are much appreciated. It has been clear that without LGBT allies and supporters, certain members of the working party would not have the confidence to do what they do and would not be where they are today. This is all new to us and if we feel it is not working, we will come back and say so. I would ask that you support the amendments to the Terms of Reference and the work programme.
* Rosie: explained that when the WWP hold their fringe meetings at the Annual Convention, men are invited in order for them to understand the issues being raised.
* Tony C: PCS has its own approach to LGBT involvement through internal equalities groups sharing life experiences. We recognise this report as work in progress.
* Tom: The NPC is a democratic organisation and we should accept the LGBT group’s way forward.
* Tony Donaghey: Moved acceptance of recommendations. Seconded by Cheryl O’Brien.

Rosie asked for a show of hands for acceptance of the recommendations. The vote was carried.

f) **Pensions & Income**: Indexing information – CPI is at 11.1%; RPI is at 14.2% which means the gap between the two continues to rise and pensioners miss out again. Need to be vigilant and pass information on.

* Jan said that she had written to all Working Party Chairs and asked that they review their poverty briefing and draw attention to any additional impact on our members in their area of work using the House of Commons Cost of Living Special Report as circulated. It is also an opportunity to discuss the current crisis and where we may need to focus our resources.
* Norman: Major campaign on pensions (see report)

g) **Structure:** Nothing to add.

h) **Transport:** Tony Donaghey presented the report. Transport for London (FfL) have withdrawn proposals. Other areas of the country need buses and cuts are taking place without consultation. Planning for a conference in London around April next year is under way and will be self-financing.

* Owen: Rural buses/trains campaign. North Staffordshire – Avanti have moved to close ticket offices. Buses are being cancelled. There are no buses after 5.00 pm. Working people can’t get to or from work.
* Tony G: Basildon – cuts to bus routes. Southend no bus to the hospital. Birmingham train, cash only transactions due to technology not working.
* Kevin: Yorkshire & Humberside running three campaigns. East Yorkshire Better Bus campaign is supported by the TUC. Conference in York 17 June which will be a hybrid meeting.
* Tony O’Brien: Need opposition to cuts in transport right across the country.
* Meg: Petition to ask for Oyster card users to be able to use their bus pass before 9.30 am. {*There was some confusion around the petition. Meg has since sent a clarifying email that Age UK London presented their petition and a question was asked of the Mayor}.*
* Jenny: link to an article on older people.

Tony responded by saying that the Transport Working Party does not think that the bus pass change is a priority. The priority is having a bus to use it on; i.e. stopping the cuts in bus funding and services – changing legislation. It is necessary for members to campaign in local areas for changes to bus pass. The RMT campaign is about keeping booking offices open, staff on stations and on trains. We take note of the conference in York.

i) **Women’s Working Party:**  As Ruby (Chair) had to leave, Rosie spoke about the need to work with a region to hold a seminar. Any region interested, please contact.

* Meg: The progression rate of Alzheimer’s, particularly in women is concerning. Connected to pollution.
* Rosie agreed with this analysis.

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

* Jenny: Communications and reports – nudge chairs to submit and put the date of when the report was submitted. *{Once again we remind delegates that meetings are sometimes close to the date of EC meetings. Sometimes research is needed to complete the report. Everyone does the best they can with the time they have}.*
* Derek (observer from North West): Lobbied MPs before the Autumn Statement. Poor returns until the threat of protests at surgeries. One MP is willing to meet (Friday this week) for a very short time.

Rosie thanked everyone for attending, the Working Parties for their reports and hoped everyone would have as good a Christmas as possible. Keep safe and warm.

1. **Next Meeting: 24 January 2023 @ 10.30 am**

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| **Group** | **First name** | **Surname** |
| FNP-CISL (GB) | Antonietta | Bortone-Tinney |
| NPC Eastern Region | Tony | Garner |
| PCS | Tony | Conway |
| CWU | Damian | Ibison |
| NPC Treasurer | Steve | Whitehead |
| NPC General Secretary | Jan | Shortt |
| Unite | Tony | O'Brien |
| NPC London Region | Angela | Banner |
| NPC Honorary Vice President | Marion | Wilson |
| RCN | David | Briggs |
| NPC Vice President | Barry | Todman |
| NPC Vice President | Norman | Jemison |
| NPC Vice President | Sandra | Durkin |
| NPC President | Rosie | MacGregor |
| Prospect | Mike | Moriarty |
| NPC Wales | Gareth | Parsons |
| NARF | Francis | Byrne |
| ASLEF | Bill | Dale |
| CSPA | David | Luxton |
| NPC Home Counties North | Allan | Jeyes |
| NPC NW | Derek | Barton |
| NPC South East (SENPEC) | David | Lomakin |
| NASUWT/FRMA | Roger | Darke |
| BTPF | Les | McDowell |
| NPC Wessex | Tom | James |
| NPC Women's WP co-optee | Meg | McDonald |
| NPC West Midlands | Owen | Sloss |
| NPC Northern Region | Roy | Rix |
| NPC Yorks & Humber | Kevin | Fradley |
| RMT | Tony | Donaghey |
| NUJ | Jenny | Sims |
| NPC NW region | Harry | Brett |
| NPC LGBT WP co-optee | Liz | Curr |
| NPC Women’s WP co-optee | Ruby | Cox |
| NPC Northern Ireland | John | Martin |
| NPC Anglia | Sam | Sirdar |
| NPC East Midlands | Clare | Wilkins |
| TSSA | Cheryl | O'Brien |
| NPC National Public Affairs Manager | Bev | Morrison |
| NPC National Administration & Information Manager | Jonathan | Safir |