**Anglia Region Pensioners’ Association (NPC)**

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**Thursday 6th April 2023 - 10.00 for 10.30**

**Village Hall, Back Lane, Hethersett, NR9 3JJ**

1. **The Chair,** Chris Brooks welcomed and thanked everyone for attending.

**2. Attendance** - Richard Chilvers and John Sillett (Waveney TUC Sec UNITE ) Ron Douglas, David Pierce (Billericay), Chris and Janet Brooks, Aisha Jermy, Kevin Hilson, Cliff Horn, Ian Evans, Bill Mountford,

Jane and David Bull (visitors)

**Apologies** - Letitia Wilkins, Sam Sirdar, Ros Hodgkins, Audrey and Les Wilson, Glynis Calvert, Keith and Ros Montague, Timothy Hartstone, (on behalf of Civil Service Pensioners – Norfolk & Suffolk )

Betty Constable and Dave Harris (Colchester Councillor).

3. Minutes of 3 March 2022 was accepted as a true record.

4. Reports: **a. Chair** – The Chair provided a written report setting out meetings, demonstrations and events he attended since the last AGM and provided Newsletter 37 containing the last two Old Grey Matter Articles for 3 March and 1 April 2023. He reported on the joint meeting held with Sheringham when it was agreed that the group would be renamed Norwich NPC in an effort to attract new members. Meetings of that group have been held at the Nelson Hotel Norwich. **The next meeting is Thursday 20 April, 10. 00 for 10.30 at the same venue.**

The information provided by the Chair of matters discussed at meetings attended includes: WASPI women have won one of their cases; 8.6million are in fuel poverty while 2.1 million older people are living in poverty. The government budget allocation for Social Care is split: 50% of the budget being allocated to people with special needs and the other 50% going to older peoples’ needs.

The Chair’s report which was full and informative was accepted by the meeting.

**b.** **Secretary’s Report,** Aisha gave a verbal report on the issues highlighted in the 4th Quarter’s Newsletter which ought to be available at Lowestoft NPC meeting on 14 April. She also reported on giving feed back to the Structure Working Party on its Interim Report after the matter was discussed by members. She attended Regional Secretaries Meetings and fed back to Anglia and Lowestoft NPC useful information/ideas that may assist in promoting the appointment of an Older Person’s Commissioner and changes to the structure and working practices of NPC.

**c. Treasurer**- Despite Sam being in hospital awaiting further heart surgery he managed to provide the meeting with Accounts for 2022 produced by Stephen Smith FMAAT, of Essesse Accountancy Services dated January 2023 which shown a loss in 2022 of - £1225.51 as a result of attendance at Birmingham PC and accommodation Costs of delegates attending BDC. The Bank **Balance at the end of the financial year is £3,304.86.**

**d. Communications -** Since neither Letitia nor Ros Montague were able to attend the meeting Chair confirmed that those not on the internet are still receiving paper copies from Letitia and Ros continues to disseminate information to those members with internet access.

**5. Speakers were John Sillett & Richard Chilvers** – **John** commended the Chair on Anglia Region April 2023 Newsletter, (No.37) for the usefulness of the information provided. He mentioned Foodbanks, Warm Rooms and Public Services Crisis in this the fifth richest country in the world! He explained the wave of recent strikes have been caused by years of austerity coupled with inflation and rise in cost of living which was the straw that broke the union’s back. He confirmed Public Sector Employees are up for the challenge and mentioned the youthfulness of those on the picket lines. Young families are unable to meet cost of living which is being driven by companies. He pointed out the wealth of the richest have gone up exponentially with the loss suffered by the working population. He gave as an example HOMEBASE which, during COVID made £45m in profit, £25m of which went to shareholders! Post 1945, services were improved, conditions/quality of life also improved, there was compromise between employers and employees. All that has now broken down – the rich are grabbing back what they believe they had lost. Government is now starving the NHS to force people to use private medical services. Academies, now running state schools, are businesses; much democratic rights have been lost. He said action does work.

In a recent poll, said John, 75% of people said they could not find a party to represent them. He does not think the turn out at election time will be good. Pensioners in France rose up against raising of the pension age. The world is in turmoil - old world order is dying; debt, he says, has to be written off somewhere. Inflating debts eats away at cost of savers. **There is unity between Unions and NPC and together we need to push harder.**

**Richard** said he and our Chair Chris, had a meeting recently with Peter Aldous, Member of Parliament, about Lowestoft Hospital closure since the government is simply running down the beds in the whole NHS system. He attended a recent Board Meeting at James Paget Hospital where there are 140 beds that cannot be used because of older people who should be having care in Lowestoft Hospital or care in their homes.

**Friends of Lowestoft Hospital, says Richard, have £200,000 in the bank to spent on bringing back beds in use at Lowestoft Hospital.**

The closure of Halesworth and Southwold hospitals clearly exacerbates the problem. Fortunately for Beccles, the government could not touch that hospital because it has a private legacy. The government allocation of £500m has now been cut to £250m for dealing with care of the elderly. Richard said he sent a letter to the Journal about an ill person being kept in an ambulance which led to that person’s death. Why? Ambulance staff was told NOT to use oxygen or pain relief!!

The idea put forward and now being piloted to place the elderly who are in need of care in random people’s spare bedrooms is incredibly frightening (here the secretary is expressing her own view) what checks and balances will there be to see that people are properly cared for? None – people will be paid to let the elderly die an ignoble death!

**6. Election of Officers:**

Membership – Kevin Hilson – proposed by Chris Brooks, seconded by Sam Sirdar

Chair - Chris Brooks – proposed by Cliff Horn and seconded by Ron Douglas

Secretary – Aisha Jermy – proposed by Chris Brooks and seconded by Ros Hodgkins

Treasurer- Sam Sirdar – proposed by Kevin Hilson and seconded by Bill Mountford.

Cliff Horne proposed all be voted in en bloc as present incumbents were willing to serve.

No other nominations were forthcoming when called for so the five above were elected unanimously.

**7. Executive Delegates:**  for National Pensioner’s Convention Tuesday 27 June 2023 –

Chris Brooks, Ian Evans, Letitia Willins and Aisha Jermy. Chair confirmed NPC Anglia will refund travel costs.

**8. Future Events**: i) National Pensioners Special Delegates Conference – Blackpool - Tuesday 27 June 2023

ii) National Pensions Annual Convention – Blackpool - Wed/Thursday 28 / 29 June;

iii) Burston Strike School Rally – Sunday 3 Sept;

v) International Day of the Older Person – Sunday 1 October - Leaflet stall / Campaign

**Richard says there will be an open mike at the Grit in Lowestoft to celebrate Mayday Mon. 1st. May + music etc**

**9. Dates of future meetings:**

 **Joint General Meeting of Anglia and Eastern Regions (NPC) – Wednesday 19 July 12.30 pm**

 **Moreton Hall Community Centre, Symonds Road, Bury St. Edmunds IP32 7EW**

 **Anglia Executive Meeting Diss -Thursday 18 May**

 **Norfolk Branch Meeting – Thursday 20 April – 10.00 for 10.30**

 **Suffolk Branch Meeting – 60+ Club Clapham Road South, Lowestoft**

 **Friday 14 April; Friday 5 May; Friday 2 June and Friday 7 July 2023**

**10. Social: The raffle raised £12 and Refreshments raised £7.60 – Total £19.60. Raffle prize was donated by Cliff Horne- a bottle of wine.**

**Aisha Jermy,**

**Regional Secretary.**