

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the TSSA Retired Members' Group on 19th November 2020

Held on-line via Zoom

Taking part were 37 Members with apologies from Nadine Rae (Head Office).

1. Welcome

John Rees welcomed new and regular members to the Meeting which, thanks to modern technology could take place. He explained the procedures for attracting his attention if they wished to speak and, for the record, asked that they introduce themselves.

2. Remembrance of deceased colleagues

A short silence was observed. Specific mention was made of John Ainsworth, Paul Jeffries and Les Richardson (Head Office staff).

3. Officers and Delegates Reports

- ❖ **Secretary: Luke Howard** reported that he had written to Retired Member Branches over sharing the RMGs second Zoom licence and so far, 2 had shown interest. He would prepare guidance notes for Branches on how to use Zoom. The Conference Working Party had also noted that Divisional Councils were looking at a shared Zoom Account. The main issue would be Conference and that was covered by Agenda item 6.

He confirmed the 2021 meeting dates: General Meetings on 4th February; 20th May; 23rd September with the AGM on 18th November with Committee Meetings on 1st April; 12th August; 7th October and 9th December. Initially these would be via Zoom but, depending on Covid restrictions, we would explore the possibility of hybrid meetings for general meetings to allow greater participation. It was mentioned from the floor that meeting venues needed to have the necessary broadband speeds and audio-visual capabilities for this to happen.

- ❖ **Newsletter Editor: Bob Bayley** invited comments on the Newsletter content. He wanted readers topics, articles and photographs to

broaden the scope of the publication. Comments and suggestions via the Secretary please. **Colin Cowey** asked if there would be another Newsletter for 2020 and **Luke Howard** said there should be one, either late December or early January, timing to take into account the February 4th Meeting

- ❖ **Treasurer: Colin Cowey** reported that so far, our expenditure had been £900 as against the £2,500 of 2019. This was due to not having to pay for meeting rooms, or refreshments. **Stephen Halliwell** asked if any surplus had to be sent back to Head Office or should we retain it. **John Rees** said we would keep it to set against 2021 expenditure. **Colin Cowey** pointed out that this would be less than £100.
- ❖ **Pensions matters: Neil Baker** mentioned that in accordance with the CPI index, RPS increases would be 0.5% for April 2021 and 2.5% for the State Pension in line with the triple lock. Most RPMI staff at Stooperdale were working from home and he asked that, as a result, if anyone had had problems with the standard of service, would they let him know. He also repeated an earlier recommendation that anyone who had not registered for on-line access to RPMI should do so as much information was available. He briefly mentioned that the Pensions Regulator is consulting on the funding of Defined Benefit Schemes. RPI and the Trustees are heavily involved as there could be a significant impact on RPS. He would put an article in the next Newsletter on this issue. **Luke Howard** remarked that the TfL Pension Fund has had its ups and downs but had not been hit so hard by the effects of Covid because of stock market recovery. He was grateful that the latest 3 year audit came up with improved protections for pensions. In particular, the employer guarantee had been strengthened and indemnity arrangements put in place. Staff pensions expected to become an issue in the upcoming GLA Mayoral election. **Joel Kosminsky** noted that occupational pensioners have a Guaranteed Minimum Payment element. This is set by Government who index this part, usually at a lower level than the relevant index. The rest of the occupational pension is indexed at the relevant rate. Thus, the annual rise is less than the quoted index. **Simon Pearson**

said he was in the Network Rail Care pension scheme whose Rules have been updated with existing pensioners remaining on RPI but new pensioners on CPI index. He had welcomed that they had changed Pensions Administrators from Capita to Willis Towers Watson.

- ❖ **Pre-retirement seminars:** Bert Slater said that he had heard absolutely nothing from Nadine Rae in response to the email he had sent on the digital platform. Luke said Nadine was not certain she had received any details from Bert. He would also now take Bert's name from future agendas.
- ❖ **National Pensioners Convention:** Steve Whitehead reported that the NPC was now functioning via Zoom and had a much-improved website but was also very aware that many members are excluded. In his view, the main item at the Financial Working Group and EC was the financial position and shortfall in affiliates income. The Biennial Delegate Conference had been postponed from March 2021 to March 2022 and he will be submitting a report to our September 2021 meeting setting out proposed nominations for NPC elections plus our BDC motion(s). If the BDC had been meeting in March 2021 this report would have gone to the September 2020 meeting. Joel Kosminsky reported that:-
 - the NPC National Council meeting is in the week following our AGM, the first such event in almost a year. The NPC has bought a Zoom licence but is acutely aware of those who cannot be on line - not a happy compromise, same as for RMG. Next NC meeting planned for April 2021 but on line or real to be determined by circumstances.
 - The Transport Working Group meets quarterly-ish by Zoom, lucky that all delegates are on line. This is by courtesy of the Yorkshire delegate's link to a body with a Zoom licence (not on the NPC's Zoom licence) so we can have meetings longer than the free 40 minutes.
 - Busy agendas, much of which are ongoing issues -railcards (*especially government supporting Rail Delivery Group's refusal to re-imburse or extend all types of railcard for periods of enforced non-use due to Covid*), bus passes (*risks to future use, even greater loss of routes and frequencies to use them on*), e-scooters (*risks to less abled pedestrians*), Transport Select Committee consultations (*including*

one we did not know about and which has recently closed)
etc...Meetings always well attended, possibly because of the elimination of travel requirement.

The **Trade Union Working Party** hasn't met - very little relevant activity to report on. Not all delegates are on line. Nothing about any future meetings. Possible issue may be how TUWP operates - an NPC Officer does the minutes, as we don't have a formally constituted secretary.

NPC's Standing Order Committee My membership extended to the 2022 BDC which replaces the 2021 event. We won't meet until motions etc for BDC are submitted.

- ❖ **Group outings:** Due to Covid restrictions, nothing new had been planned. **Joel Kosminsky** said that concerning the Aviation and Motoring Museum at Brooklands, he would follow this up once the environment was safe.

4. RMG Constitution/Elections.

(i) Proposed changes to RMG constitution

Luke had circulated the proposed changes for approval. **Peter Vincent** pointed out that reference to voting in clause 8.4 was in breach of TSSA rule 11.4(e). This was altered as was a minor renumbering of clauses. With these amendments, the revised document received 100% agreement. **Luke Howard** undertook to forward a copy to the EC for approval, after which it would be available to members. **Joel Kosminsky** asked what the EC wanted and **Luke Howard** referred to Circular 62 which set out what was needed to cover on line meetings.

(ii) RMG Committee Elections

Chair: **John Rees** had agreed to stand as Chair for a second term of Office. There had been no other nominations and he was duly re-elected.

Treasurer: **David Porter** had volunteered to stand as Treasurer. There had been no other nominations and he was duly elected.

Committee Member (Website Liaison): **Tim Young** had volunteered and as there had been no other nominations he was duly elected.

It was further agreed that both **Tim Young** and **David Porter** be invited to the Committee Meeting on 9th December to facilitate continuity.

- (iii) Election of Auditors: **Cathryn Slater** and **Tim Bartlett** were our current auditors. As there had been no other nominations, both were duly re-elected.

A SHORT REFRESHMENT BREAK

5. Annual Conference 2021

- (i) Update: Head Office had issued Circular 78/20 which set out the timetable and deadlines for Conference which would be held on line from 5th to 7th June. We had scheduled our 2021 meetings to allow compliance. The Conference Working Party were working towards an on line event but if the pandemic situation permits a physical Conference, we might be able to do something. Process and procedures would be as close to normal as possible, with order papers being sent out to delegates prior to Conference but late Emergency Motions will only be entertained if significantly urgent.
- (ii) Motions and Rule Alterations:

(A). National Care Service (proposed by Malcolm Wallace)

"That this Conference notes that Sir Kier Starmer, Leader of the Labour Party, has repeatedly said that he wants to see working people have a greater share of wealth and power. The Labour Party set out the means of doing this in its 2019 Election Manifesto and Conference urges the Party to fulfil these objectives, particularly for retired people.

Conference notes that this Manifesto included a commitment to a National Care Service. Conference believes that such a service, working in partnership with the NHS, will ensure that care is for people, not profit. This service should be funded like the NHS through general taxation, free at the point and without means testing.

Conference instructs the EC to campaign in support of this policy"

Amendment (proposed by Peter Vincent)

To delete all between first "that" in line 1 and "working" in second paragraph and substitute "a National Care Service" His narrative was that the motion covered 2 more issues than the National Care Service and they should have been the subject of separate motions as they detracted from the main issue. In response, **Malcolm Wallace** said he could not agree with that reasoning and asked for the amendment to be defeated.

A poll was taken and the amendment was lost and then the unamended motion was put to the meeting and carried by 93% to 7%.

(B). Cashless payments (proposed by Steve Whitehead and Joel Kosminsky)

"That this Conference opposes the withdrawal of cash facilities in the UK for normal daily transactions, and supports all reasonable measures to allow both "card" and cash payments.

Conference further states that everyone has the right to access their cash without charge, within reasonable geographic reach during reasonable hours, and seeks the EC's support for this principle and to lend the Association's name to any such campaigning.

Conference instructs the Association to support activity to pursue these objectives and, where appropriate, to work with our Self-Organised Groups and any relevant Branches to ensure cash is an option in financial transactions as much as possible."

A poll was taken and the motion was carried.

(C). Honorary Life Members (proposed by Luke Howard)

"That this Conference recognises the extensive work and commitment of many Association members who have been rewarded for those achievements with

Honorary Life Membership (HLM). This illustrious list includes past Presidents and other senior lay officers.

Conference is deeply concerned that these HLMs are being neglected by the Association.

Conference instructs the EC to maintain the details of HLMs to the same standard as all other members. Conference asks the EC to send each HLM an individual letter each year, and to copy these letters to the Retired Members' Group and the appropriate branch (either the relevant Retired branch or the branch covering the member's former workplace) to help branches and the RMG maintain contact with these members."

This motion is exactly the same as the one submitted to Conference last year which was merely noted by the EC in their Conference Report. Joel Kosminsky wondered what the EC's problem was with that motion. Luke said he had been unable to find out why the EC had not supported the motion so it was right to re-submit.

The feelings expressed by the meeting were totally in support of the motion and critical of the way HLMs have been treated. The poll was 100% in support of the motion.

(D). Rule alteration motion (proposed by Luke Howard)

EC Report and Accounts

Preface: To allow more time for Branches and SOGs to consider the EC Report and Accounts, whilst ensuring the EC have adequate time to prepare the Report.

Rule 10 Annual and Special Delegate Conferences

10.1 Annual Delegate Conference, Clause (n) EC Report and Accounts

"To delete "4" in line 1 and substitute "16 April or 6".

To insert after "Conference" in line 2 "whichever is the greater"

The poll recorded 100% support for the motion.

Malcolm Wallace said the Audit Committee Meeting had looked at dates and it was in the hands of the EC. We were assured delays were not of TSSA making but down to contact problems with the previous Auditors who, apparently, were not talking to each other. The General Secretary was charged to tell the Auditors to complete the audit as soon as possible.

These agreed motions would now lie on the table along with any others we may receive and a final decision on which motions to be submitted to Conference would be made at the February 4th Meeting.

(iii) Election of Delegate:

As no names had been put forward, it was decided to defer this item to the February 4th Meeting. Names to **Luke Howard** please.

6. Motions from members/Any other business

The Committee was looking at a suggestion concerning a one-off subscription payment for Retired Members as offered by other Unions. **Derrick Codling** said that he understood other Unions had a sliding scale and **Luke Howard** asked him to give him details.

Joel Kosminsky floated the idea that as other Unions have retired member representation on their ECs, and given we pay a lot in subs and cost very little to service, the TSSA should do likewise. **John Rees** asked him to propose a motion covering this issue. **Joel Kosminsky** also raised concerns about the Government consultation on the future of the RPI index which will stay in name only but be calculated on CPI + Housing + Rental Allowance. This was not a recognised National statistic, only an arbitrary number. The results would be announced on the same day as the Spending Review with the hope that it gets buried therein. We should be aware and alert as there will be effects on pension funds such as RPI who hold bonds and certificates

Malcolm Wallace congratulated the officers on the way in which the meeting had been organised asked **Luke** to give the EC a short briefing. **Luke Howard** said we were already required to report our activities to the EC and he do so.

There being no further business, the Chair thanked those who had participated and presented reports. He wished all well and closed the meeting at 13.10 hrs.

ADDENDUM : PARTICIPANTS

COMMITTEE

John Rees Cheryl O'Brien Luke Howard Colin Cowey Neil Baker
Malcolm Wallace Bob Bayley Steve Whitehead Richard Sharp

MEMBERS

Graham Abercromby	Yav Agyei	Phil Allen
Andy Bain	Preston Booker	Dave Bolton
Marjit Singh Buttar	Peter Church	Derrick Codling
Vivender Choudhry	David Chalkly	Mike Downing
Steve Floyd	Tim Hawkins	Stephen Halliwell
Bob Howes	Joel Kosminsky	Bill Langsford
Stephen Lawrence	Gerald McMahon	Rod Payne
David Porter	Simon Pearson	Bert Slater
Cathryn Slater	Malcolm Scane	Peter Vincent
Tim Young		

POST MEETING NOTE

In response to an enquiry from Will Boisseau, (Head Office) in which he asked if, as a result of Covid, we needed extra time to comply with the GenSecs request for a report on our activities, **Luke** sent the following reply on 20th November.

Will

I was just about to start writing our reply. RMG has looked a couple of times over the months since the letter was sent. We agreed appropriate changes to our Constitution and Standing Orders at our AGM yesterday and I have sent the revised document to the EC for endorsement. We do not need an extension.

- *We have had a written Constitution since the RMG was set up. We have revised it to reflect the EC 's wishes and address some other points - see attached.*
- *Our Constitution includes a vision and purpose.*
- *Our Constitution highlights campaigning as one of the objectives of the Group. One of our Committee members has a specific role of maintaining the RMG space on MyTSSA and we will contact the press office about anything we wish to place in News on the Go.*
- *There is obviously limited scope to recruit new members in retirement, but we have engaged with the Membership department and (through Head Office) Branches and Divisional Councils about encouraging retiring members to remain in membership. We have provided Membership and Branches with a leaflet to give to retiring members for this purpose, although we have recently come across some members who were not sent the leaflet as they should have been when they told Membership they were leaving employment, which is a concern we will raise with Membership. A number of our members have engaged with Branches for working members or General Branches and taken part in those branches' recruitment activities.*
- *We affiliate to the National Pensioners' Convention on behalf of the Union and our delegates there play significant roles in the work of the NPC.*
- *We believe our name does reflect our work and our membership. There is a long-standing confusion between "Retired Members" and members who have retired: several of our members are in the latter category, remaining as full subs-paying members and often as Officers of General or other Branches. We think there are other members in this category who we are not in touch with. We regard the name "Retired Members' Group" as encompassing all members who have retired, whether categorised in the Rules/Guidance as Ordinary, Retired or Honorary members.*

Yours in solidarity

Luke Howard

Secretary, TSSA Retired Members' Group.