

Minutes

1) Welcome and apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the second RMG meeting of 2022. 25 were in attendance.

The Secretary has received 6 apologies for absence today.

The names of those attending and apologising will be listed in an appendix to these Minutes.

2) Remembrance of deceased colleagues

A minute's silence was held to mark the passing of colleagues.

3) Minutes of last meeting

The Minutes of the last meeting, held on 3rd February and the Committee meeting on 24th March, have not yet been uploaded to the website.

Officers' and Delegates' reports

4a) Secretary

Luke Howard

A volunteer is required to participate in equalities research, preferably an ordinary RMG member. There being no other volunteer, Cheryl O'Brien will do so.

A brief discussion took place concerning when we should move to hybrid meetings. It was agreed our September meeting would be used as a trial when hopefully, any difficulties could be ironed out before our AGM in November. September's meeting will take place at St. Michael's near Bristol Parkway, and the venue has the necessary technology to accommodate a hybrid meeting.

4b) Newsletter

Bob Bayley

Everyone should have received the latest newsletter and Bob is now looking for contributions to fill up the next one with articles, quizzes etc., that will be of interest and relevance to our readers.

Luke queried whether there should be a prize for quizzes. The general feeling was not.

Luke also reported roughly 60% of members open the newsletter e-mail and roughly half of those then open the newsletter itself.

4c) Treasurer

Dave Porter

Dave reported figures as outlined below.

Balance at the last meeting	£849.86
Less NPC Subscription	(£15.00)
Less Travel Expenses for three NPC delegates	(£137.45)
Balance at this meeting	£697.41

4d) Pensions

Neil Baker *et alia*

Neil Baker had little to report but commented that the 'Triple Lock' and the rapidly escalating cost of living was leaving our pensions significantly devalued.

Joel Kosminsky referred again to Brendan Barber's proposals for TfL Pensions which could see all seven unions involved striking. Brendan is aware of concerns but seems little troubled by them

Derrick Codling asked if when state pensions are increased next year, will we get an additional increase in lieu of the part increase we have not got this year due to suspension of the Triple Lock. It was the general view we will not and that we will be therefore worse off for the remainder of our natural lives.

- 4e) National Pensioner's Convention** Joel Kosminsky & Steve Whitehead
Cheryl O'Brien reported back having attended her first NPC Conference. She moved a motion and would happily go back if nominated to do so in a future year.

Joel Kosminsky reported back in his capacity as Chair of SOC at NPC. There is significant concern as Mobility Scooters with Lithium-Iron based batteries are currently allowed to be conveyed on public transport despite being deemed a fire risk. Stephen Halliwell pointed out that Gate staff, where present, would not be able to determine the battery type and disability appliances were often waved through in any case.

Steve Whitehead commented that NPC need to raise more money, but cannot reasonably do so from existing members. Their current annual deficit is circa £20,000 and they need to attract new members to achieve any reduction in that figure.

Steve then moved on to nominations, which need to be submitted by 13th May. As he is now National Treasurer of NPC he is no longer deemed a TSSA delegate. He therefore proposed the following nominations subject to the agreement of the potential nominees.

National Council	Joel Kosminsky & Cheryl O'Brien
Executive Committee	Cheryl O'Brien
Digital Working Party	Luke Howard
Health & Social Care Working Party	Pauline McArdle
LGBT Working Party	Colin Brazier
Minority Elders Working Party	Dinesh Bhardwa
Transport Working Party	Joel Kosminsky & Cheryl O'Brien
Women's Working Party	Cheryl O'Brien
Structure Working Party	Joel Kosminsky
Trade Union Working Party	Joel Kosminsky

There were no other expressions of interest to be nominated for any of the above positions. Luke suggested that Malcolm Wallace might be interested but was currently at a Worker's Memorial Day event, locally.

It was agreed that all the above nominations go forward, subject to consultation with Malcolm later today.

Joel noted that he has been nominated for three Working Parties but can only serve on two. His preference was to stand for Transport & Structure, and he suggested Luke's name go forward for nomination to the Trade Union Working Party. However, it was agreed the above nominations will stand, and if Joel is elected to Transport & Structure, we will be free, at that time, to nominate someone else to the Trade Union Working Party, as every affiliated Union to NPC is entitled to have a representative on that Working Party.

Steve concluded this agenda item by thanking everyone for their support.

4f) Pre-retirement Seminars John Rees, Cheryl O'Brien
A Zoom meeting needs to be arranged between John, Cheryl & Luke Chester to progress this.

4g) Group outings
A brief discussion took place on this topic. The general consensus was that we should get hybrid meetings up and running before considering outings. Everyone who spoke now consider going out, even in crowded places, safe, and that a full return to normality is essential to mental health.

5) Election Of A Committee Member
There were no nominations, and this item was deferred to the next meeting. Luke reminded everyone that we particularly need someone to post documents on to the TSSA website.

7) Proposed Merger and Special Conference (Part 1)
Luke is looking for an ideally, active member of TSSA to second our Emergency Motion, which Luke has asked SOC to table early, in view of its importance.

8) Questions On The 2021 Report & Accounts

Luke advised that the Report & Accounts had been sent out in the last few days, electronically, but the link didn't work. He had got hold of a copy of them and had circulated it to a number of TSSA members.

Derrick Codling asked if we had received the full payment for the former Walkden House in Melton Street. Dave Porter advised that the bulk of the payment had been made by HS2. There was, however, an ongoing dialogue between TSSA and HS2 as the valuations of that property by both parties differ by approx. £2-3 millions. The TSSA could take HS2 to a tribunal in an attempt to secure the extra money but that is deemed a risky procedure, so negotiations are on-going as they have been for some considerable while. Meanwhile, the value of the current Walkden House in Devonshire Square has reduced by approximately £1 million in the last year due to the general slump in property values in recent times, in turn, due to the pandemic. It was noted that neither of these factors are reflected or mentioned in the 2021 Report & Accounts just published.

Steve Whitehead pointed out that his branch has submitted a number of questions to these latest accounts. He has also checked back to the Annual Accounts for 2009 which give a more fulsome description of the Association's finances for that year, including information which Steve believes should be in the 2021 accounts too as he regards that information as being essential for Conference delegates to consider, before deciding whether to approve the 2021 accounts or not. Furthermore, he has had sight of information that has been provided to the Certification Officer, which is also more fulsome, but which has not been made available to Conference delegates, in order to assist them in determining approval of the accounts or otherwise.

6) Luke Chester, TSSA Organiser

Luke apologised for being late. He has just secured 50% +1 in TSSA membership in the Control Grades on SWR. A recognition claim will now be submitted to the Company. Joel was formerly employed in that Control when only two staff were not members. He asked why membership had dropped so drastically. Luke responded saying that whilst he didn't know precisely what had gone wrong in this instance, he did know that in a number of Control offices, in the recent past, there has been a big reorganisation, a significant number of staff have accepted voluntary redundancy, and new staff have come in, who were not union members.

Luke answered a number of questions concerning recruitment, full time TSSA recruiters, and the information supplied to those leaving the Association. In the latter case, those who are known to be retiring, are sent information about, and an application form to join

RMG. In many cases though, the member simply cancels their direct debit without citing a reason for doing so.

Following Luke Chester's Presentation, the meeting was adjourned for 40 Minutes, for a lunch break.

Officers' and Delegates' reports

7) Proposed Merger and Special Conference (Part 2)

A lengthy and wide-ranging discussion was held on the subject of the proposed merger with IBB. Concerns raised were that ordinary members of the Association had not had the opportunity to vote in a meaningful ballot on the issue. Concerns were raised that IBB have ambition to open a bank in the UK and were keen to secure TSSA assets to achieve that, and it was also believed that that was simply an intermediate step to opening a bank in the Irish Republic, where we also operate, as that would give IBB a presence in the EU. There have not, as yet, been any proposals to update our Rule Book to reflect the changes that will be necessary if/when the merger takes place. Luke highlighted that the accounts have not yet been approved for 2019 & 2020 yet. Expenditure on key personnel, specified as Manuel & Frank, was quoted as circa £80,000 in the 2020 accounts, and as £217,000 in the 2021 accounts, a 150% increase. Malcolm said that the auditors were unaware that the original Walkden House compulsory purchase had not been fully completed as yet. They had complimented our current Finance Manager for the work she had done on the accounts. Nevertheless, there were other issues not immediately apparent. For example, the TSSA bought a very expensive printer a few years ago, that has never worked properly. That initial expenditure, and lack of consequential income from that printer, is not accounted for anywhere. Steve Whitehead further pointed out that the new Walkden House is referred to in the accounts but as two separate items. That part of the building that is used by TSSA, is shown and valued at £8 million, whilst the remainder of the building, used by third parties, is shown as investment property and valued at £18 million. There is no mention in the accounts of the disputed difference in valuation of the former Walkden House amounting to roughly £3 million.

9) TSSA Annual Conference, Sheffield, 7th-10th May 2022

a. Update Steve Coe joined the meeting to give a final update on the arrangements for the TSSA 125 Celebrations in Sheffield next month. He outlined the plans for Monday 9th May, the main Anniversary date, and took a few questions.

b. Mandating Whilst our delegate, Luke Howard, was not directly mandated to vote in a particular way on any motions, his attention was drawn to one concerning Stonewall which may well prove controversial. He was also urged to support Item 57, congratulating the rail unions on promoting a vision for Rail in Scotland, and asking for similar visions for the other Home Countries.

c. Emergency Motions An item on last year's agenda fell due to lack of time. It proposed raising the salary band for the minimum subscription from £20K to £24K. It was anticipated this would be brought back to this year's Conference for a decision. It was not, but has been proposed as an Emergency Motion which SOC have ruled is not an emergency. The issue as to whether it be debated, and a decision taken may well depend on a reference back.

d. Voting There is only one contested election for delegations to outside bodies and that's for the TUC. We have proposed three candidates in that election process for three places so Luke will vote for our nominees.

10) Motions From Members/Any Other Business

Joel mentioned a Central London protest march on 18th June. He asked if TSSA were marching as he is being pressed to march with other organisations.

With reference to Minute 4e in this document, Malcolm Wallace was asked if he wanted to stand for election to a TUC Working Party. After a brief discussion on the options available, he chose to be nominated for the Health & Social Care Working Party alongside Pauline McArdle.

11) Future meetings

Committee	11th August	14.00hrs	
General	22nd September	11.00hrs	Hybrid at St. Michaels, near Bristol Parkway and on Zoom
Committee	6th October	TBA	
AGM	17th November	TBA	TBA
Committee	8th December	TBA	

There being no other business to discuss, the Chair closed the meeting at 14.50hrs

Apologies for absence:

Marjit Singh Buttar
David Chalkley
Gareth Davies
Stephen Floyd
Richard Sharp
Sandra Vaughan

Attendees**Officers**

John Rees (Chair)
Cheryl O'Brien (Vice-Chair)
Luke Howard (Secretary)
David Porter (Treasurer)
Bob Bayley (Newsletter)*
Tim Young (Minutes\Website)

Other Committee Members

Dinesh Bhardwa

Ordinary Members

Phil Allen
Andy Bain*
Neil Baker*
Derrick Codling
Mike Downing
John Edwards
Stephen Halliwell
Bob Howes
Joel Kosminsky
Stephen Lawrence
Michael Maguire
Gerard McMahon
Seamus O'Connell
Simon Pearson
Malc Scane
Peter Vincent
Malcolm Wallace*
Steve Whitehead

*Absent for part of the meeting due to other commitments

TSSA Staff Joining For Relevant Agenda Items

Luke Chester
Steve Coe