

## **NATIONAL FEDERATION OF PLUS AREA**

### **15<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting**

### **(79<sup>th</sup> Annual National Conference)**

**Held Over ZOOM.**

**Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> February 2021**

#### **1. Chairman's Welcome to Delegate**

Thank you for joining the very first virtual 18 plus or plus, AGM. Just going to quickly run you through a few things. Obviously just because the numbers of people here, could everyone except me be put me on mute.

If you wish to speak you want to make it known to by raising your hands, you've got the option of raising your hands or you can use the reactions on the Zoom, or you can go to the chat. So, with that, I'd like to hand it over to the President Gerry.

#### **2. The Presidential Address by Vice President – Gerry Edwards**

Good Morning everybody, and welcome to the first virtual NAGM, an interesting experience. Not the first AGM I've been through recently by this means, and I think by now we're fairly well practised at using Zoom.

I'm hoping that as a result of using this form of virtual meeting, we're going to get a bigger turnout. And currently looking at the numbers, we've got 27, hopefully we're going to get more.

What we have today is a chance for everybody to engage in this meeting where they might not have been able to get to Coventry. I think it's a great shame we're not there physically, because I do think team building is good fun, whether it be by social means, or by just talk to each other during the meetings is great fun and nothing. We're all missing that desperately, and I do hope the times quickly roll on where we can get out to socialise and be with friends and people again, it's important.

In the meantime, the purpose of this AGM is to keep Plus going and to make sure that as soon as lockdown does start moving away, and it is starting moving away. Notice as from next week, people can go into care homes, it's a start that we will be able to meet together in due course, probably the middle year onwards. I'm really hopeful that by this time next year, we'll have a proper AGM again, where we call meet, but in the meantime, let's have a good meeting today.

Don't abuse the virtual meeting. James and Rhianna are going to have to manage that mute button. I think the most important thing to take part in debate and pretend we're in a real room. Don't interrupt, although of course it is quite easy in zoom to interrupt people, deliberately or non deliberately. So enjoy the day. I think it should be great fun, gives us all the chance to see what we're going to be when we come out of it.

Steve Rolfe – National Chairman

Thank you, Gerry. Just to let everyone know the agenda has slightly changed overnight. We've got a few more requests come in. So the first one I've got to enact now is a minute's silence for those that have lost their lives during this past 12 months and also include any former members that we've lost. I believe Les Lemon, and Martin Brown both of Slough group have passed away so with so give a moment silence Thank you.

#### **3. Election of Tellers**

Ben Allen

##### **3.1 Determining Voting Strength**

Hillingdon Ian and Jeff  
Barnett Sharon and Mark

Stevenage Eric and Liz  
Didcot Adrian and Tina.  
Lincs Quest Liz and Geoff  
Abington Simon and Kath  
Lichfield Francis  
Rothwell Brian and Bridget  
Slough Harry  
Solihull Mark and Kathy

Voting Strength is 18

#### **4. Election of Ballot Counters**

Ben Allen as Ballot Counter as well if necessary.

#### **5. Apologies for Absence**

Chris Melloy (Lichfield Group) as he has a power outage

#### **6. Acceptance of the minutes of the 13th Annual General Meeting in the Jacobean hotel on the 23rd of February 2019.**

Ben Allen: Point of information, of the people here this morning, 16 were delegates last year.

##### **6.1 Points of Accuracy**

Mark Hawkins - I have added quite a substantial document of minorish corrections to the minutes we, Katie and I've been through it.

I don't think it's productive use of people's time to sort of go through them line by line, it is sort of names in group results of votes and things like that. I appreciate these difficult times and they may well have been produced as minutes without actually ever having been a piece of paper but I think there's enough to merit to correction so I shall send it through to whoever produced the minutes. Steve said yes, send it to Alison Cumbers.

Steve said the last few minutes of the recordings from 2019 stopped so we are don't quite know what happened here, it wasn't very clear when saying number of votes received.

Ian Crawshaw – Hillingdon Delegate: I was going to fill in a few of the gaps but it sounds as if Mark will have done a more thorough job than me that the only one that I think does have some importance is that when the VPS were elected Gerry Edwards was there as well as me and Adrian Gerry's name was missing from the minutes. There are some other spelling things and so on but I'm pretty certain mark scooping them up so I'm not going to waste time by going through them myself. Mark said He wouldn't claim the credit. It was primarily Katie.

Ben Allen: Point of Information

Just for confirmation on that with every NAGM recently for last three years. I keep a list of who were attending for completeness even including delegates and the NEC. So if anybody wants them ask I can tell you who the 33 were last year if we need that.

Chris Melloy – Lichfield Delegate joined the meeting

Rachel Grant – South Buck Delegate joined the meeting, voting strength increased by 2.

Proposer for Minutes Didcot

Seconded by Barnet

9 for the accepting the minutes

11 Abstentions

The minutes were accepted.

## **7. Matters arising thereon**

No matters arising

## **8. Presentation and Acceptance of the Federations Reports for the Year 2020**

Katie Hawkins Barnett observer. There doesn't seem to be a report on the website for the HGS or the NEC administrator

No questions

Rhianna – NEC Administrator, I didn't know I needed to do one but I have one if you want it forwarding or do you want me to read it out. – Rhianna read out her report.

Steve Rolfe said the Gazette has been a great addition to communicating with everyone.

No questions

Alison Cumbers – HGS sent her report to the top table, it was forwarded to everybody.

Alison said she stood at the time because no one else would but now her situation has changed so can't restand.

No training Officer so no report

Activities Officer Report

No questions

Internet Coordinator

Point of Information: Ben All: Was John Smith voted on as a NEC committee member? John agreed to help Jeff with the Internet coordinator position

Jeff said: John has a few things going on at the minutes so won't formally restand but is happy to help out where needed.

No questions for the Area Chairs Reports

Point of Information: Ian Crawshaw, Hillingdon Delegate: Regarding the Southern Area report. It says report for national Annual General Meeting on the 22nd of February 2020. So I just wanted to check whether we actually are seeing this year's report or a last year report. Nicky said had just forgotten to change the date.

No further questions

## **9. Presentation and Acceptance of the Federations Accounts for the Year 2020**

We've had to do an emergency fund while we're sorting out the bank issue to the Plus AGM which was refunded and we've taken money out of the AGM bank account into the national account for the expenditure wise we paid both levies. It's the invoice for 2019 Bank, the website and the 2020 website hosting charges.

We've paid off for insurance and we've incurred some stationery costs for membership cards for previous years.

Ben clarified in regards to NAGM deposit for this year. The £1000 I've had an email from the hotel which the NEC committee has seen and the £1000 deposit has been moved forward a year. The hotel has agreed to move it to next years event.

Francis Wallington – Lichfield Delegate: Firstly, what is our current status with our web hosting and payment? So ERP paid up to date? We are covered to August 2021 web hosting and question 2 are we currently insured and our public liability policy and can we therefore hold this event? Yes.

Chris Melloy has lost connection so voting strength now 21.

Acceptance of Federations accounts for the year 2020/2021

Proposer Lichfield

Seconded Rothwell

Votes to accept the Federations accounts 21 Accepted

Acceptance of Officers Reports

Proposer South Bucks

Seconded Solihull

Votes to accept the Officers Reports

Proposed Lincs Quest

Secunder Abingdon

Votes 19 for 1 against

Acceptance of the Independent Examiners Report

Area Levies are up to date, James screen shared and ran through to accounts.

Katie said this year was much easier, we have got this down to a fine art

Proposed Barnet

Seconded Solihull

18 Votes for, Francis is Frozen!

## **10. Election of National Chairman to serve from 1<sup>st</sup> March 2021**

Nomination, Steve Rolfe

Mark Hawkins said Steve has been one of the most communicative Chairman especially in these strange times.

Steve's Cat meowed, it was confirmed it was Squeaky

19 For, passed by majority

## **11 Election of National Officers to serve from 1<sup>st</sup> March 2021**

### **11.1 HGS**

HGS to be held later in the meeting

### **11.2 National Finance Officer**

James Oliver

Proposed Rothwell

Seconded Stevenage

James has access to all major accounts, he will make sure the GPC has access.

Carried 19 Votes for.

### **11.3 National Training Officer**

Position not filled

James Oliver said that the training officer position has not been filled for years, under area lead National doesn't do training and it may not be in the standing orders.

Adrian Barnard said that may be the case but area lead also said no NAGM and here we are today so keep National Training officer on the agenda as hopefully it will be filled in the future.

### **11.4 National Activities Officer**

Ben Allen

Proposed Didcot

Secoded Slough

Steve Rolfe asked: What was the most your biggest challenge during 2020/21  
biggest challenge has probably been organising stuff.

Trying to get people motivated. It's been very difficult getting people motivated to do events. It's very difficult when you've had the COVID to come along.

There's been some delays and challenges. I think trying to get the 80th Birthday of off the ground and trying to get people motivated to have it run because a lot of people asking for it but then nobody was coming forward from ex plussers to actually say, Yeah, we want to kind of do it so then there was a problem with that.

So it kind of that didn't help matters, but that's still there and it's just been spilled COVID issue seems to be kind of kicking us in the teeth at the moment with things being delayed or being moved forward but I'm working through it and see what happens with the challenges we've got with that.

It's about giving people something to look forward to when we come out of lockdown that fits is a key thing really. We all want to do something but we've got nothing to aim for.

Elected, 18 For 1 Abstention

Steve Rolfe said I know it's been a very tough for you both professionally and personally and I value the time and the effort you put in to try and make things happen. I really in such a difficult period of our lives. So personally. Thank you from me.

### **11.5 National Public Relations Officer**

Position Not filled

### **11.6 National Internet Officer**

Jeff Rea

Proposer Hillingdon

Secoded Rothwell

Jeff's proposal speech, Well, only to say that my intention is to continue with the plan, which I've outlined before last year so sort of looking at a design brief to come up with a new image and that kind of took me off down the track of looking at the idea of a bit because we've got an issue with our current name and other companies using it and we can't really protect it.

Having a look at the options of forming a company limited by guarantee so I've been looking into that and we'll be coming up with some proposals for the NEC as to how that might work but it's all related to the big projects that I've outlined

Simon Good Abingdon Delegate asked Want to know what the actual state of the website is now? Is it live? And why has it taken years for? You know, why have we got a website? Why is it taking so long? And I'm not a website person so it might be a reason but we don't seem to have a website for years now.

Jeff replied

What we basically got two things happening with the website. One is the website that provides the internal information for the members of the group so my intention is to do the publicity side along with because I because there are other things that we need to do first, because what happened before when we had a publicity website, was it generated a lot of inquiries, but we didn't really make best use of those inquiries. What I'm trying to do is to put things in place so that when the website actually does go live, and we start getting those inquiries in we actually know the way forward and how we move forward with that. I'm not sure if you were around at the meeting last year, but basically what I was outlining then, the content of the site is pretty much done and that that can be put live fairly quickly I'd say by June, because that's quite conservative. I hope to do it before then.

Brian Whitaker Rothwell Delegate: We have given Mark Hewson permission to look at our hosting ability to another provider, and also a better package. So we've never had a fresher looking website.

Externally at a time when there's lots of people online using social media. That's the way forward and that's the way we've got a move. That's pretty good, We haven't had a website for years so we've missed out on a lot.

I think he needs to reach out and grab the help more, because it's quite a tough job to do on his own band. And so I would say that for him.

Ben Allen asked if Erica was Coventry Delegate she said yes, Voting strength is now 20.

The vote was deferred until later in the meeting, I'll keep the minutes for together.

Adam created a website but isn't a website designed, it's been put together partly in an NEC meeting and partly today. Just to give an idea of what we can do. We need to go back to our roots and empower people

With Jeff, Adam and Mark on board we can form a subcommittee to help with the website and try to make the new website attractive to new members rather than a holding page.

Votes for Jeff Rea as Internet Officer

13 for

5 against

1 absention

The conference welcomed Jeff, Jeff will bring what he has done to the next NEC meeting to show them how far he has got.

### **11.7 National Publications Officer**

Position not filled

### **11.8 NEC Administrator**

Rhianna Wright

Proposer Rothwell

Seconded Barnet

I've been just been doing the roll for a year and I've just got the hang of taking all the minutes and doing the Gazette and hopefully I can give it another go. When there's more news to go on it.

Brian Rothwell Delegate The happy, cheerful and enjoying what she's doing. If something's enjoy doing, you've got a much better chance of getting your minutes and on time.

Carried 20 for

### **11.1 HGS**

Erica Knight

Proposed Hillingdon  
Seconded Didcot

Ian Crawshaw VP

It's not every day I get to propose to Erica. Sorry. I mean, propose Erica. No, it's great to have her back. What she lacks in words she more than makes up for inactions. As many of us know she's done the job before as well as a load of other NEC jobs and I know that she's more than capable. And she'll work well with Rihanna the NEC administrator plus everybody else on the NEC so I thoroughly welcome her

Steve Rolfe comments

I think the one thing I could probably say to everybody here is that the position the budget, the title, HGS probably puts people off, if someone wants to consider taken on in the future to shadow her and to see what the role is about what it is about because it's probably not as difficult as it sounds by the name but equally sharing a bit of experience that somebody might consider to take the post on the future.

Voting Strength now 19

Votes for Erica as HGS 19 Elected

Dot Sallis joined the meeting, voting strength now 21.

### **12. Motions for Debate**

Francis Wallington challenged the Chair stating the motion information had not be sent out if good time.

Ian Crawshaw said:

Having read the conference standing orders and it's two or more delegates, after which it's a simple majority vote as to whether the challenge will be upheld.

Lis Buller Lincs Quest Delegate said I that Francis should have been aware of this on the 12th of January because James Oliver, who was our chair at the time, sent it out to Midland area.

I think it might be mentioned in your report. I think we raise it says I am pleased to announce that for the second year the membership fee is to be suspended along with area levies. That's what your report said Steve.

Mark Hawkins – Barnet Delegate It was actually mentioned last to NEC mean so that was voted on earlier as being accepted. There's actually two points at issue here. One is has the NEC got the power to do this, I believe in the Constitution you can set it as they wish.

But the second thing is whether a motion can be presented and arguably the timetable of presenting the motion has been missed but it's a testament to the conference weather they have this debate, the setting the membership fee is fine, but the setting of the area levy that does require an AGM vote I would say.

So that is that is a bit of this motion means it has to come to an AGM at this point. No one has, I suppose, proposed an emergency motion but this year since it was submitted to go on the agenda in good time. I don't know why didn't go out on the agenda, but it certainly was submitted to go on the agenda at that time.

But the assessing that if it's not an emergency means it should go to an AGM the national constitution actually says annual membership fee for member areas shall be determined by the NEC from time to time. Okay, well then it could be down to NEC as well. I wasn't aware of that.

Francis did not get a Secunder for the challenge so the challenge was defeated.

The motion is that the time when the area levy is paid so it can be stated that the dates under Section 4.4. of the National Constitution articles 4.2 point 2.1 to Article 4.2.4 from February May, August and November to January, April, July and October.

The Purpose of the motion is to bring in line the area levies payments in line with the financial year plus rather than running from a February to January period.

He just explained to me what how it was solved it, we'll just tie up the levy payments to me when you have a log a payment for 2021 but actually, you're paying some of the some of the area levies actually into 2022 so this motion will just tie up so when you do budgeting for your area accounts, you're actually your budget your area levies will actually mean 2022 rather than 2021 and one month or 2022 It's just a simple pure exercise of changing, moving other months one by when we start paying area levies again.

Votes 21 in favour of the motion and Carried

Motion 2

Due to COVID 19 pandemic that all memberships expiring between 16th through March 2021. And 15th of March 2022 extended for a period of one year and for the year 2022 and the Area Levy is set to zero.

20 Votes for

### **13. Presentation – Future of the Federation**

There was a discussion about retaining members as currently we don't really anything to offer them.

It was decided that membership cards will not be published this year and that membership would just be carried over from the date of membership at no charge.

Carried 20 Votes for, 1 abstention.

Adam Redshaw Midland Chairman suggested having centralised membership and one date for the whole federation to renew but it was decided it was less work for membership officers if dates are staggered, many people know their renewal date and don't want to change.

Francis said that the insurance is set on the membership reported to the insurance Company

Chris Porter gave a short talk about how Kings Lynn group were running their Zoom meeting and Francesca Barclay spoke about how Redbridge ran theirs.

Groups run their Zoom events on different nights to it is possible to be doing one most nights.

Groups spoke about different events they had held via zoom and offer to swap events between group.

### **14. Facility for National Debate**



## **Adrian Barnard - Membership**

I noticed from being a member of a very large group that we've gone down somewhat, it's not surprising theatres not on and a lot of the members are in connection with theatre. Now to describe exactly what we do, we ask the member to reapply that they wish to renew their membership along the same lines as last year such that it works out with GDPR. And we then forward that on such that there's a paper trail to the membership officer with the full details. Were upon the photocopy of the card. And the card is then issued out whenever the batches are done.

Ah, very difficult I find to get people to just say to an email. It really is. It's quite a chase so in consequently gone down from 60 of members

Mark Hewson

We just automatically renewed don't bother asking them because as Adrian says, you won't get a reply. So we just automatically renew, anybody that is new, just gets there for your free membership and then we'll be automatically renewed next time. So until we get back to normal that's the way I consider it to be done.

One issue that we have is about two thirds of our members didn't work tick the GDPR box and so I'm not actually allowed to email them and even some that have ticked the box complain when I do so. It's a bit of a sore point that we actually can't contact about two thirds of our members by email anyway.

Lis Buller

In Lincs Quest, I mean, the majority of Midland area membership is our group. We've got 83 members, and the way Mark does it has worked very well for us. And I work on the theory we email members if you don't want to be a member, please let me know. I'd rather work on that principle that work on the principle let me know if you still want to continue.

Nowadays, you have to opt in to membership email is not an opt out, We have to be compliant with the law.

## **Francis Wallington Lichfield Delegate – Living with Covid**

I'd like to talk about preparing for COVID now and the post COVID world which to some extent, we have been discussing. Someone like me who's a tactile, to be able to touch curly, not to be able to touch Curly is awful. When I remember when he had nice long curly hair, when I meet a neighbour in the street, or my bubblemaker Chris Malloy, That's our current condition. Let me be clear, we all have friends who have suffered from the virus COVID 19, let's it not defeat us.

We as an organisation, are actually years old and have had members that face disease such as TB and polio yet we still had fun. We will use our imagination and be inventive.

In our use of technology to be on social and group nights using Zoom. We held a wonderful quiz in aid of women's aid, organised by Lincs quest and prior to lockdown I was able to visit a cinema with my friends with Mr. Malloy and a friend and eat a meal or watch a film, seasonal conditions will mean that we will be able to hold events outside systems and management to hold those events for our benefit of members and to protect those members already exists.

I encourage you to use the tool of risk assessment on the forms and submit it to the finance officer and contrary to whatever the NEC may say, we are insured.

Of course we have to respect the guidance of public health of England and Wales wherever we happen to be holding that event and that I hope to be doing a walking event or walking on Adventure weekend and I will respect the terms and conditions for Wales.

We can't prepare ourselves the post COVID world now. We can prepare ourselves by promoting our groups on social media and in our locality. There's nothing to stop it's going for a long walk and putting up posters in local co ops. Plan your active and imaginative outdoor programme, steal ideas.

Let's look at prepare a budget that way, you can look at the ways you can support those members who are not physically as able as you are that don't/cannot drive who may have a disability that restricts their mood, their movement and enable them.

Start collecting and spending money this allow us to use our imagination and allow us to function. I am going to run an active 18 Plus group and inspire you and I'm going to have fun doing so'

When, COVID-19 was occurring, we were just on the threshold of opening a group within Midland area and that was possibly going online. It is recognising the fact that to support an open a group from my homes, you need results and money to be able to do it in a in a physical way and you also need a resource in terms of people and willing.

Erik Bean – We will have a big relaunch when the time comes but it will likely be short notice

**15. Announcement of Election Results of National Chairman to serve from 1<sup>st</sup> March 2021  
Dealt with earlier in meeting**

**16. Announcement of Election Results of National Officers to serve from 1<sup>st</sup> March 2021**

Dealt with earlier in meeting

**17. National Chairman's Address  
Thank you everyone for coming and having a productive meeting.**

**18. Election of Honorary Officers**

a. Independent Examiner of the 2020 Accounts

Katie Hawkins elected, there was concern that she wasn't independent as she was in Plus but she hasn't had anything to do with the accounts created by James or Ben and she is independent from the NEC

Adrian Barnard Didcot Delegate said that the last time we had the account externally audited we were charged £2163 and the conference didn't accept them that's why we have used someone internally since.

b. Vice Presidents

Ian Crawshaw, Adrian Barnard and Gerry Edwards elected  
17 votes for, no abstentions

**19. Any Other Urgent Business (not Promotion of Events)**

Erik Bean mentioned that people be cautious about putting information in the public domain, eg publicity materials and posting items on social media. Just think before publishing

Rachel Grant said that she found the Zoom meeting a lot less daunting, she wouldn't necessarily get up and speak at a conference but over Zoom she's happy to speak.

Ben Allen Said Since we have all the area chairs here, by February can everyone get their members to confirm if they are still happy with their sharing arrangements at Holbourne

The Plus 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary event 12th of June this year. 35 pounds each which includes a 12 hour event to come for as you want, including disco buffet and a massive room in the hotel. So that's going ahead at the moment. We've got a few people attending. We're just getting some figures and we're speaking again to the hotel beginning in February after announcement on Monday to see what the plan is to see what the maximum is we can have attending if it is able to go ahead this year. If not, I'm going to be postponing it forward for 12 months to 11th of June next year but I'm letting people know that doesn't change. But if you want to join, let me know and I'll give you some information.

Francesca Barclay comments that her group are likely to carry with Zoom even after they can meet as it still has a place but please be weary of who you let in to the Zoom meeting a hackers are around as many have experienced.

Adam Redshaw Midland Chairman asked what was happening to, Gerry said there would be awards and music, James will send a link out later.

Adrian Barnard said as we no longer have yahoo groups, let me know if you want to be included in the National Directory. Matt Dickenson said yahoo groups have been replaced by googlegroups so join them, let him know if you are having any issues.

Mark Hewson said, this situation isn't going away for a long time, we have to adjust to the new normal and do a mixture of Zoom and in person events.

Ian Crawshaw Hillingdon delegate said we have to keep it inclusive maybe next years MAGM will be both virtual and face to face.

## **20. Announcement of the Date of the Annual General Meeting 2022**

19<sup>th</sup> February 2022

## **21. Presidential Closing Address**

I just want to pick up some points. I think today's meeting has been far more engaging, I've been keeping a tally of who've spoken a lot more people are taking part and I understand what Rachel and Andrea said for example, they prefer zoom. We've had more people take part today that normally do so that's a really good bonus. I think we might have more people attending today because not all groups have got full delegates, but nevertheless it's been a very good AGM.

I guess we've probably done as much and as good discussion as if we were there in the flesh so I'd like to thank everybody for taking part and for the presentations by Francesca and Chris. I think that shows what can be done and there's no doubt a lot of groups are really benefiting at the present time. The technology is there for us to use.

Mark's not right that will never get back to normal, but I'm hoping we'll get to a mixture where we can start doing things pretty well so I'm keeping my fingers crossed for the year ahead. We will start developing, getting out but don't forget to use this technology as the next year's and AGM where maybe we can have a mixture of both.

I've been to conferences where we have a mixture of both and maybe that's the future who knows but I'm sure the area chairs and the NEC will come up with something.

Anyway, congratulations to everybody who took part today. Thank you all for taking part today. Thank you having such enthusiastic debate. It's wonderful seeing Gary back because Gary has come up with some wonderful sayings today and catch everybody on their toes. So Gary, please come back and in future on Zoom it that's the way we can get you there.

I look forward to seeing you all tonight. I think we're starting at half past seven. James is going to be sending out the link later. I'm not quite sure exactly what composition and night is going to be but I know we do in the awards at eight o'clock.

Thank you, everybody and see you somewhere soon that just leads me to say thank you very much for everyone who joined today. It's been great to see everyone to hear your viewpoints and to consider the future. Take care yourselves. Hope to see you tonight and if not sometime face to face in the future.

## **22. Closure of Meeting by the National Chairman**

Thanks everyone for coming