

# Retired Prison Governors Association

A section of The Prison Governors Association

## Minutes of the Committee Meeting held at HMP Woodhill Learning Centre on 21st March 2017

### **Present:**

Graham Smith (Chairman)  
Jan Thompson (Minutes)  
Graham Mumby-Croft  
Harry Brett  
Jenny Adams-Young  
Bob Duncan  
Dave Taylor  
Ray London  
Paul Laxton

### **1. Apologies.**

Apologies were received from Alan Hall.

### **2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting.**

The minutes of the meeting held on the 18th October 2016 were approved.

### **3. Matters Arising and Action Points.**

<b>Reference</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Progress</b>
13.10.14	Contact Retired Police Groups to see what benefits they offer their members.	Graham Smith	Ongoing

Reference	Action	Responsibility	Progress
7a.10.16	Add to April 2017 Meeting Agenda an item to discuss providing a RPGA Membership Stand at the PGA Conference	Ray London	Done
7b.10.16	Add to April 2017 Meeting Agenda an item to discuss assisting the PGA Officers with Personal cases.	Ray London	Done
12.10.16	Write an article for the next newsletter regarding the establishment of a mutually beneficial link with the CSPA.	Graham Smith/Harry Brett	Done
14.10.16	Investigate a venue for the 2017 AGM on the 14th June 2017.	Jenny Adams-Young/Harry Brett	Done
15.10.16	Book HMP Woodhill Learning Centre for March Committee Meeting.	Ray London	Done

#### 4. Treasurers Report.

Graham Mumby-Croft distributed a Financial Summary of the 2016 Financial Year. The main points highlighted were:

Income was down by £300 - £350 whilst Expenditure was up by almost £1000, mainly due to the cost of the two Newsletters (£2085.08), leaving a deficit of £573.59.

Diary costs were £1042.60 (125 diaries ordered).

The Subscription Exercise, including postage, (hopefully a one-off cost) added an extra expense of £291.95 and Travel and Subsistence costs were up by £245.82.

There had been five donations (each @ £25) over the year although one recipient had asked for the donation to be put into the Benevolent Fund which currently stands at £5578.36. A further £28 is to be donated to the Benevolent Fund by a member who was due a refund from membership over-subscriptions.

The TOTAL money in the bank at the end of 2016 was £7322.49 - this is the sum of both the Barclays and Lloyds accounts. The Treasurer went on to explain that Barclays is the main account and Lloyds is a historic account, although £173 had been paid into it in 2016 which G M-C thought was from deceased members' accounts. This may have come about due to the history of the bank accounts:

The Barclays account was opened in 1997/8 and the main transactions were transferred to this although it appears that some subscriptions were still paid into Lloyds. In 1999, it appears that when the subscription rate was reduced from £20 to £17 some members failed to change their Standing Orders.

G M-C stated that he was hoping to close the Lloyds account at the end of 2017 and asked the committee to agree this action. This action was proposed by Graham Smith and seconded by Ray London.

The Chairman thanked G M-C for his hard work and diligence in sorting the finances as stated above.

Benevolent Fund: G M-C stated that he had received an email from a member, Neville Joseph, asking if anyone was aware that Mr Joseph was still the representative of the Benevolent Fund for the West Midlands as he had never been called upon to make any assessments. Dave Taylor asked if we should seek out any other area representatives of the Benevolent Fund to bring it all together.

**ACTION**: Ray London to liaise with Jan Thompson and forward a list of nominated Trustees.

## **5. Membership Report.**

Harry Brett confirmed that the total membership currently stands at 427, of which 118 people receive diaries. It is still a target to increase membership and it is hoped to have a promotional stand at this years' PGA Conference. Jenny Adams-Young stated that early retirement at age 55 had come to an end now so the new retirement age is 60 although many people are choosing to continue working beyond this age.

## **6. PSPC Report.**

In the absence of Alan Hall, Paul Laxton stated that he had received communication from the PSPC and the next AGM is to be held on Wednesday 3rd May 2017. He recommended sending a representative - Alan Hall and Jan Thompson are to be put forward to attend. PL has a draft copy of the agenda and asked if we had anything to add to it, although he couldn't think of anything that wasn't already on the agenda.

A discussion took place about the new State Pension System (the Single Tier system) and the previous Pension System and it was mentioned that the gap between people on the two different systems will get bigger. It appears that some people on the new rate will not receive any more than some people on the old system.

The PSPC CAMPAIGNS UPDATE - Number 64/2016, which PL recently received, highlighted some points in regard to the new State Pension (nSP) which was introduced in April 2016 and provides, for those entitled, a single pension without any Additional Pension (AP). This means that there can no longer be any indexation of the Guaranteed Minimum Pension (GMP) paid through the AP.

The PSPC Executive Committee have agreed to support the Pension Justice Campaign which is being led by the National Pensioners Convention. The Campaign seeks:

- The inclusion of existing pensioners in the new state pension from April 2016 on a no-detriment basis.
- To ensure those women affected born between April 1951 and April 1953 are not disadvantaged by the changes in the state pension age.
- To ensure that fair indexation arrangements apply to both the existing and the new single tier state pension.
- To introduce equal pension rights to same sex partnerships.

Following the last Campaigns Update in December, the PSPC Executive Committee will be including a motion for discussion reference Indexation of Pensions on the 2017 AGM agenda.

The latest update also commented on Intergenerational Fairness, stating that there appeared to be an ongoing campaign in the media to demonise older people as the main reason why younger people are experiencing difficulties in securing employment and housing. The findings of a recent enquiry by the Select Committee recommended that the triple lock became the double lock by removal of the underpinning 2.5% guaranteed annual increase and also said that Universal Pensioner Benefits (UPB) should not be off the table when considering cuts. The Government response to this report was to extoll the virtues of the triple lock in lifting many pensioners out of poverty and UPBs

were not even mentioned. The PSPC Executive Committee will continue to campaign to keep both the triple lock and the UPBs.

## **7. Website Update.**

DT asked if we could put the RPG Newsletter on our website through the PGA website. He was advised to make enquiries through Shaun Williamson. R L added that if this was possible it may help to reduce the cost of publishing and sending the newsletter out to members, although J A-Y expressed concern at private email addresses being published on the website. HB that if the newsletter was sent to DT he could amend/delete email addresses before the document was published. It was mentioned that our website also needed updating as it still shows Mick Roebuck as part of the committee.

**ACTION:** Dave Taylor to liaise with Shaun Williamson reference publication of the Newsletter on the website.

## **8. Newsletter.**

HB pointed out that his email address was published incorrectly. Bob Duncan mentioned the distorted photos of the the committee members and both J A-Y and PL thought that it may be better to remove them. It was agreed that general photos are of interest to members and are therefore nice to include.

An in-depth discussion ensued about the content of the 'Editorials' printed in the newsletter, including those mentioning the State of our Prisons; Michael Spurr and Brexit. Some committee members were concerned that RPGA members do/may think this is the view of the committee rather than that of the editor and stressed that it is important that we present a professional image through the newsletter and it is not our remit to comment on politics. This was accepted by the editor who apologised if his editorials had offended anyone. It was pointed out that a few members had resigned recently and this is thought to be the reason for their resignations. BD stated that he had corresponded with these individuals on a personal level. It was agreed that if anyone wished to voice an opinion in writing for the newsletter this would then only be attributed to the writer and not the committee as a whole.

**ACTION:** The Editor and Sub-Editor to jointly review editorials prior to publication: PL & DT

## **9. RPGA & CSPA.**

Graham Smith reported on a meeting he and Harry Brett had in February in Manchester with Don Makepeace and Mike Lawler from the CSPA and distributed a summary of the issues discussed. The conclusion from this meeting was that whilst remaining separate, the two organisations should enter an agreement that would cover working together with the prime aim to improve recruitment.

GS also distributed a draft copy of an agreement on a possible link between the RPGA and the CSPA setting out the aims, especially in areas on Liaison, Recruitment and Campaigns/Lobbying. It was noted that we already have two representatives on the RPGA Committee who are links with the CSPA: Harry Brett in Lancashire and Paul Laxton in West Yorkshire. It was agreed that the possibility of this agreement would need to be put to the RPGA membership at the 2017 AGM to see if the members wish to go forward with establishing a link. A few of the benefits for members would include legal advice; discounts on travel insurance and cheap holidays.

G M-C and PL led a discussion on joining the CSPA and if so, whether we would therefore need to be separately affiliated to the PSC which, if not, would save us £83 annually plus the cost of sending one/two delegates to London each year.

**ACTION:** (i) GS to ask Don Makepeace to attend the 2017 RPGA AGM.  
(ii) PSC Membership to be added to the RPGA Committee Meeting Agenda in October 2017.

## **10. Obituaries.**

A discussion took place in regard to pen picture obituaries for inclusion in the newsletter when a member passed on. Some committee members were in favour of each individual furnishing the committee with their own pen picture of their career but other committee members were not in favour of this approach and thought it would be better for the obituary to be written at the appropriate time by others who knew the individuals. It was pointed out that an obituary serves as an acknowledgement of the deceased's career.

**ACTION:** An article regarding the above to be included in the autumn newsletter along with the membership report: HB

## **11. AGM 2017.**

As per the action point 14.10.16, J A-Y reported that she had spent a long time investigating possible venues suitable for the 2017 AGM, although they

all presented problems of either cost or parking. J A-Y thought that the options open to us were:

- (i) Newbold Revel
- (ii) Hotel - at an increased cost to the RPGA
- (iii) Hotel - asking attendees to contribute to the cost

J A-Y was of the opinion that we needed somewhere that offered other things to attract more people to attend, e.g. Stratford, as it was pointed out that we have tried giving members the AGM at no personal cost and they still don't attend!

BD brought up the possibility of Barnes Close Conference Centre near Bromsgrove which can accommodate up to fifty people at a very competitive cost.

After further discussion it was agreed to return to Newbold Revel for the 2017 AGM and explore Stratford as a venue for 2018. Details of the 2018 AGM are to be included in the autumn newsletter along with an application form for interested parties to forward to G M-C.

**ACTION:** (i) J A-Y to make enquiries reference hotel rates for the 2018 AGM to be held in Stratford on Wednesday 13th June.

(ii) RL to book Newbold Revel for the AGM on the 14th June 2017 (if still available).

(iii) HB to inform members of the 2017 AGM date/venue once confirmed.

(iv) RL to book speakers for the 2017 AGM.

## **12. Subsequent Committee Meeting Date.**

The next committee meeting will be on Tuesday 10th October 2017. It was suggested that this could take place at the East Midlands Radisson Blu Hotel during the PGA conference.

## **Summary of Actions.**

<b>Reference</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
13.10.14	Contact Retired Police Groups to see what benefits they offer their members	Graham Smith

4.3.17	Forward a list of Benevolent Fund nominated Trustees to Jan Thompson.	Ray London
7.3.17	To liaise with Shaun Williamson reference publication of the Newsletter on the website.	Dave Taylor
8.3.17	The Editor and Sub-Editor to jointly review editorials prior to publication.	Paul Laxton/Dave Taylor
9i.3.17	To ask Don Makepeace to attend the 2017 RPGA AGM.	Graham Smith
9ii.3.17	PSPC Membership to be added to the RPGA Committee Meeting Agenda in October 2017.	Ray London
10.3.17	An article in regard to pen picture obituaries to be included in the autumn newsletter along with the membership report.	Harry Brett
11i.3.17	Make enquiries reference hotel rates for the 2018 AGM to be held in Stratford on Wednesday 13th June.	Jenny Adams-Young
11ii.3.17	Book Newbold Revel for the AGM on the 14th June 2017.	Ray London
11iii.3.17	Inform members of the 2017 AGM date/venue.	Harry Brett
11iv.3.17	Book speakers for the 2017 AGM.	Ray London