

## Minutes from Members' Council meeting 25<sup>th</sup> April 2023 at 10.00am via Zoom

**Present:**

Lorraine Taylor, Chair Ros Lobo, Vice Chair  
Michael Bennett, Sue Williams, Loreen Smith, Judith McMurray, Sharon Slack, Barbara Kolator, Jenniffer Sharp  
George Kempton, NHSRF Chair  
Chris Kitchin NHSRF Vice Chair

**In attendance:**

Mike Seaton, Chief Executive  
Debbie Arnold, notes

Apologies : Suzanne Taylor, Pat Oliver

**Action**

0015	The Chair, Lorraine Taylor welcomed Members, George Kempton, Chair of the Board of Trustees and Chris Kitchin Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees	
0016	<b><u>Apologies</u></b> Apologies were received from Suzanne Taylor and Pat Oliver. Unfortunately Jenny King, was unable to join the meeting due to problems logging in.	
0017	<b><u>Draft minutes from Members' Council meeting 21.01.23</u></b> Minutes of the meeting were accepted and can now be published on the Fellowship website	DA
0018	<b><u>Matters Arising</u></b> Regional meetings The Chair of the Trustees confirmed that Central Office will pay the cost of venue hire for Regional meetings but not for refreshments or travel. Branch members should claim travel back from their branch	
0019	<b><u>Reaction of branches to increase in capitation fee</u></b> Letters and emails relating to the increase in fees which were sent to Central Office were passed to the Fellowship Chair and the Chief Executive. Judith McMurray commented that in Scotland, members were dismayed by the lack of communication prior to the announcement of the increase but were now accepting it, particularly as the Scottish Federation had agreed to subsidise the branches. Discontent regarding the absence of any warning regarding the financial situation, and the need for an increase in the capitation fee, were echoed by other Regional Representatives at the meeting. There was also agreement that there now appeared to be a level of acceptance of the required increase. A number of branches have closed since the beginning of the year, but this was not solely down to the increase although it was a factor in at least one closure. Sue Williams commented that it would not be until the collection of capitation fees in June 2023 that the number of members lost as a result of the increase could be calculated. Sharon Slack reported that no branches had closed in her area although discontent was expressed by some members.	
0020	<b><u>Update on Financial position</u></b> The Chief Executive informed the meeting that the year end figures were currently being compiled. The Fellowship budget and spend were in line with expectations. The impact of the capitation fee increase on branch membership numbers will not be known until the end of June when the fees are collected. Debbie Arnold and Sherry Smith are monitoring the postal member renewals – currently the level of renewals for those due in April	

	is just over 25%. Small numbers are still renewing daily and new members are also still being added.	
<b>0021</b>	<p><b><u>AGM and Conference 2023</u></b></p> <p>The Chief Executive has been in contact with IOW Tours regarding the 2023 AGM and conference. Hotel prices have increased significantly due to the cost of living rise and other pressures on hotel availability. Availability of venues in North Lincolnshire are currently being explored avoiding the dates of half term holidays and Remembrance Day. Proposals will be discussed by the Board at its meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> May 2023.</p> <p>A funding bid is being prepared to offset some of the costs.</p> <p>The Vice Chair enquired if any southern locations had been considered. The Chief Executive replied that 5 options were considered but that hotels in the south of England were roughly £100 dearer per person, than those further north.</p>	<b>Chief Exec.</b>
<b>0022</b>	<p><b><u>NHS75/RF45 Celebrations</u></b></p> <p>Sue Williams is a member of the Fellowship steering group chaired by Mabel Saw. The Vice Chair and Jenniffer Sharp are also part of this group which, in addition, includes Lucia Hiden who sits on the NHS England 75 steering group. Sue reported that the Retirement Fellowship 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations are planned for the 2023 conference.</p> <p>Lucia has asked all branches to inform her of plans for NHS 75 celebrations. Regional Representatives are asked to encourage their branches to complete and return these, even if nothing is planned.</p> <p>Lucia has also received 20 submissions from members which are being included in NHS England publicity for the event. Links to these and the NHS Big Tea publicity have been included on the Facebook page and will in due course, be added to the website.</p> <p>A service to celebrate the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the NHS will take place in Westminster Abbey. 2500 people will be invited to attend.</p> <p>2<sup>nd</sup> July 2023 is national Charities Together coalition day to thank those who go the extra mile to support communities. The NHS is part of this.</p> <p>The Prime Minister's office contacted the Department of Health with a view to some involvement in the 75th Anniversary celebrations. Lucia has suggested inviting the Prime Minister to Northallerton Branch to take part in their NHS75 celebrations as Northallerton in Rishi Sunak's constituency.</p> <p>A Mount Snowdon hike is planned by Wales and the Northwest branches on 13<sup>th</sup> July and other branches and postal members will be invited to join them. This is part of the NHS 1000 miles initiative</p> <p>There will be a George Cross (awarded to all NHS staff past and present) tour around the country as part of the 75th NHS anniversary. It will be visiting the South West (details TBC), the Science and Industry Museum in Manchester from February 2024 and the Bradford Media Museum from July 2024. It will also be on display in Scotland (probably the National Museum in Edinburgh) and Wales (details TBC). There will also be a special evening event at the Science Museum in London on 27<sup>th</sup> July this year. Lucia will provide updates on the dates and venues as they become available.</p>	<p><b>All RR's.</b></p> <p><b>LH/ DA</b></p> <p><b>LH</b></p>
<b>0023</b>	<p><b><u>Development Officers' Report</u></b></p> <p>The report from the Development Officers was received. The branch membership figures are taken from the capitation fee payments received in January 2023.</p> <p>Sharon Slack enquired how the total of branch member (5742 Dec 31<sup>st</sup> 2022) compared to the previous year. Debbie Arnold replied that the number was very similar (5765 Dec 31<sup>st</sup> 2021)</p> <p>The Vice Chair of the Fellowship indicated that a change to using the term 'capitation fee' has been discussed in the past with the suggestion of calling it a 'members fee'. The Chief Executive answered that no decision had been taken regarding this. The Chair and Michael Bennett suggested that such a change would only serve to confuse members.</p>	
<b>0024</b>	<p><b><u>NHS RF National Holiday 2023</u></b></p> <p>The Chair has organised the 2023 Fellowship Holiday to Switzerland from September 10<sup>th</sup> 2023 with Newmarket Holidays. Satisfying the agreed criteria proved difficult.</p> <p>The details have been published on Facebook, the website and in SE News. The Chief Executive will also include information in his next newsletter. 20 people are needed to have booked the holiday before the end of May to avoid the holiday going on general sale</p>	

<p><b>0025</b></p>	<p><b><u>Postal Members communication</u></b></p> <p>Jennifer Sharp reported on a productive meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> April at which communication between the Postal Member Representatives and postal members was discussed. Both Jennifer and Barbara Kolator have now been provided with nhsrf.org.uk email addresses to enable them to make contact with postal members and vice versa.</p> <p>A communication has now been sent to all postal members who use email and this incorporates a short survey with the aim of identifying specific requirements of these members. Barbara reported that 245 responses have been received so far. The closing date for responses to the survey is 19<sup>th</sup> May 2023. Trustee Janine Brooks was thanked for her assistance in setting up the survey on SurveyMonkey and for her help in analysing the responses.</p> <p>The Chair of the Fellowship thanked Jennifer and Barbara, together with all those involved in working to develop communications with postal members.</p> <p>An indication of the level of engagement and possibly some of the suggestions received, will be provided for the Board meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> May 2023, although the full results will be unavailable until after the closing date.</p> <p>The Chair commented that this was a very positive step in terms of the aim to give the postal members a voice, and she added her thanks to Jennifer, Barbara and Janine.</p>	
<p><b>0026</b></p>	<p><b><u>Any Other Business</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jenny King had sent a number of enquiries from her branches in advance: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Peterborough branch questioned why Insurance paid by Central Office.</i> The Chief Executive confirmed that there is a legal requirement for all branches to have Public Liability insurance and that this is arranged centrally as part of the Fellowship insurance. He added that there is no personal accident insurance for members</li> <li>2. <i>Branches contributed to present for John Rostill and want to know what he was given?</i> The Chair of the Fellowship reported that branches and members had been very generous in contributing to the collection and confirmed that celebration would take place at the May meeting of his local branch – Walsall . This would include the presentation of a cheque.</li> <li>3. <i>Concerns expressed by Norwich branch regarding branch membership recorded on the database and notification of new members</i> – Debbie Arnold confirmed that Sherry Smith has now dealt with this.</li> <li>4. <i>What is the process for resigning as Regional Members Representative, how much notice is required?</i> The Chair confirmed there was currently no notice period. The Chief Executive suggested that as much notice as possible should be given to enable recruitment of a replacement to begin. Processes for recruitment and resignation will be discussed outside of the meeting.</li> </ol> </li> <li>• Michael Bennett raised the topic of role descriptions for Member Representatives as circulated in advance of the meeting by the Vice Chair of the Fellowship. These are still considered to be too business like, over long and complicated, and as such, are likely to make recruitment hard. The Vice Chair of the Fellowship replied that a presentation by himself and the Vice Chair of Members' Council will follow the meeting and role descriptions will be included in this.</li> <li>• The difficulty in easily identifying postal members in particular areas e.g. when proposing new branches, was discussed. Current systems require data to be manually manipulated by Central Office staff which is a time-consuming process. Ensuring GDPR compliance is a also a crucial element of this.</li> <li>• Michael also queried how the Postal Member Reps can communicate with their members when they do not have access to their contact details. The Chief Executive confirmed that the channel for communicating with large numbers of postal members would be through Central Office. The email which was sent on Friday 21<sup>st</sup> April was handled in this manner. Jennifer and Barbara's emails were included in this communication and therefore online postal members now have the ability to contact these Representatives.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Chair /Vice Chair/ Chief Exec.</b></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The topic of regional meetings was also raised by Michael – it was confirmed that these should continue (this includes country meetings in Scotland and Wales) and that expenses for venue hire would be paid from the central budget.</li> <li>• Michael commented that collecting the capitation fees in June in June could result in branches benefitting financially. Any new members joining after May 31<sup>st</sup> would pay the full branch subscription (which includes the £30 capitation fee) but no payment of the capitation element would be required by Central Office. This will also apply to late payments from existing members. The Chief Executive confirmed that the Hon. Treasurer had agreed that there would be no further collection of capitation fees after June 2023 until June 2024.</li> </ul>	
	<p><b>Date of next meeting 5<sup>th</sup> September 2023 via Zoom</b></p>	

The meeting closed at 11.10am

Following the meeting, an induction presentation was given by the Vice Chair of the Fellowship, Chris Kitchin and the Vice Chair of Members' Council, Ros Lobo

Debbie Arnold  
26.04.23

Chair ..... Date .....
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