

Public Service Pensioners' Council

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To: Secretaries of Constituent Organizations

May 2016

Dear Colleagues,

Brief Report on AGM 2016

I am writing to give a brief report of the AGM which was successful and speedily conducted. It was a pleasure to see representatives of so many constituent organisations present. I hope that even more representatives of constituent organisations can attend next year.

Two constitutional amendments were carried to deal with (a) the distribution of funds to constituent members should the PSPC disband in the future and (b) the appointment of officers should a vacancy arise between AGMs. The 2016 constitution will be circulated to constituent members in due course.

A Motion moved by the Executive Committee to make permanent the arrangements for the PSPC Secretariat was carried. During his financial report, the Treasurer reported that subscription income was not covering the charges for the Secretariat. It was agreed that there would be no increases to subscriptions this year (in line with public pensions increase (CPI) but that in future increases would be considered to ensure that the PSPC could continue to afford its administrative functions.

The Financial Report and Audited Accounts were agreed and adopted. Mr. W.G.H. Tickner agreed to continue as independent examiner and to audit the accounts for the following year, 2016-17.

The Officers and Executive Committee members for the coming year were elected unopposed and are as follows:

Officers

Chair: Brian Sturtevant	(Civil Service Pensioners' Alliance)
Vice Chair: Carole Regan	(National Union of Teachers)
Treasurer: Steve Edwards	(National Association of Retired Police Officers)
General Secretary: Lisa Ray	(Civil Service Pensioners' Alliance)

Executive Committee

Mike Duggan	(Civil Service Pensioners' Alliance)
John Pitt-Brooke	(Forces Pension Society)
Ian Potter	(National Association of Retired Police Officers)
Nick Kirby	(National Union of Teachers)
Andrew Ruffhead	(Prospect)
Philip Burgess	(UCU)

General Secretary: Lisa Ray

ASSOCIATIONS REPRESENTED: Association of Retired and Former HMI Schools • Association of HM Inspectors of Schools (Scotland) • Association of Local Authority Chief Executives • Association of Teachers and Lecturers • Association of School and College Leaders • British Broadcasting Corporation Pensioners Association • Civil Service Pensioners' Alliance • Civil Service Pensioners' Alliance (Scotland) • Educational Institute of Scotland • Forces Pension Society • Foreign and Commonwealth Office Association • GMB • MDP Retired Officers' Association • National Association of Head Teachers • National Association of Retired Firefighters • National Association of Retired Police Officers • National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers • National Federation of Occupational Pensioners • National Union of Teachers • Overseas Service Pensioners' Association • Prospect • Public and Commercial Services Union • Retired Police Officers' Association (Scotland) • Retired Prison Governors Association • Retired Teachers' Association (Northern Ireland) • Scottish Retired Teachers' Association • UNISON • University and College Union

The PSPC Manifesto remains very relevant. The AGM heard that the following campaigns would continue: single-tier pension, universal benefits, indexation, pensions for dependents who remarry or cohabit, and rights for overseas pensioners. The EC had also agreed to support the WASPI campaign during the year. WASPI is taking action to protest on behalf of those women affected by the increases in state pension age, giving them insufficient time to prepare for a reduced income.

The AGM also heard that despite promises made before the last General Election, pensioner groups could not be complacent about the threat to universal pensioner benefits. Transfer of responsibility for funding free TV Licences for over 75s from central government to the BBC would happen from 2019. Groups such as the Taxpayers Alliance and Intergenerational Foundation and enquiries being conducted by the Work and Pensions Committee into “intergenerational fairness”, were all putting forward the view that pensioners were not taking their fair share of austerity.

The AGM heard that the prospect of a return to RPI as the index to be used for increases in State Pensions, both Basic and Additional was still looking remote. A motion put forward by the Prospect Retired Members Group that the Executive Committee should consider supporting a new Household Inflation Index, was carried unanimously. The EC will await the decision flowing from the consultation: *Measuring Consumer Prices*, before formulating next steps on this area of policy.

Under any other business, the AGM also heard about concerns that rail companies were intent on introduction of virtual tickets which would mean the end of paper tickets. PSPC is primarily there to protect public sector pensions and unfortunately does not have the resources to expand into other policy areas. It was agreed however, that the EC would consider this issue when it next meets, and pass on to constituent organisations information on digital exclusion campaigns already underway.

Business at this year’s AGM was dealt with especially swiftly, and it was suggested that next year the EC consider also inviting a speaker to the AGM to lead discussion on a relevant issue.

We have a busy year ahead. Please feel free to contact me if you have any issues that you would like to raise.

Yours sincerely,

Lisa Ray

General Secretary