



## MINISTRY OF DEFENCE POLICE RETIRED OFFICER'S ASSOCIATION

### MINUTES OF THE 31st ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD IN THE KINGS MANOR HOTEL, EDINBURGH SATURDAY 12th OCTOBER 2019

**Apologies:** Patron Jack Aspinall QPM, Steve Love QPM, Neville Carter, Albert & Lily Scales, Peter Smith, Lionel Roslyn, Harry & Betty Norwood, Ian Cuthill, Les Cracknell, Richard Prior, John Taylor, Bill Duncan, Graham Jewell and Angela Harney.

#### **Chairman's Opening Address**

The Chairman opened the meeting at 10am welcoming everyone present including those attending for the first time along with guests CCMDP Andy Adams QPM, Mitch Batt, General Secretary of the DPF and Superintendent Sandy Stewart the Force Liaison Officer. He went on to list the names of those 16 members who had passed on since our last reunion and asked everyone to stand in silent tribute to their memory. Afterwards he drew particular attention to the passing of Johnny Johnston aged 96 who had been tragically killed in a road traffic accident a few days previously.

In his opening remarks the Chairman stated that at this time we have 973 members of which 45 were present at today's meeting. During the past year the committee in general have assisted a number of members with problems as far as possible or directed them as to where help could be found. He wished recorded his personal thanks to Assistant Secretary, Ken and Sylvia Hicks for their attendance at all the Pass Out Parades as representatives of the ROA.

In conclusion he reminded everyone that ROA members are entitled to 10% discount from Hoseasons and Cottages4U and a 20% discount from Staysure Insurance.

#### **Minutes of the 2018 Annual General Meeting**

The minutes of the 2018 meeting were accepted by the members as a true record. There were no matters arising.

#### **Secretary's Report**

The Secretary began by welcoming everyone to the Kings Manor Hotel, Edinburgh recalling that this is our 3<sup>rd</sup> visit the last time being just after the Referendum (better together, delighted to be united) yet here we are some 5 years on and the debate continues.

Since the last reunion some **30** new members have joined and that is encouraging. To those who are here for the first time I hope you enjoy the weekend as it's a good social gathering which is what it's all about. It is unfortunate that for a variety of reasons attendance is a bit lower this year but there isn't much we can do about that.

As Secretary I continue to deal with routine enquires - some by telephone but mainly by email - covering a variety of subjects such as change of address, membership and pensions. We also occasionally receive requests for financial assistance but, as you know, that is not something which is in our remit. In such cases we do however recommend other avenues that may be able to assist. Your Committee has met on 3 occasions since last Conference - November, April and August. Meetings are held centrally in London courtesy of Thompson Solicitors who provide us with excellent facilities at no cost. We are grateful to Solicitor Doug Christie for his assistance with this arrangement.

Communication with members is important and we do that by posting items on our website - for example, information on membership services, details of the reunion, and sadly all too often

Obituaries. My thanks go to staff at DPF Head Office for their help in updating the site. It is much appreciated.

Our Newsletter No 4 was published in June and the next one will be out in a few months time. As I've said before, it is finding sufficient articles that would be of interest to members to fill the pages that are sometimes the problem. That said we will continue to do what we can.

There was one item of concern (reported in the Newsletter) that had come to light earlier in the year when a few retired officers had been contacted by Civil Service Pensions - advising that there had been a miscalculation of their pension and lump sum at the time of retirement around 2004/5 and consequently they had been overpaid by several thousand pounds. MyCSP were seeking to recover the overpayments but what they failed to do was give a proper explanation as to how this mistake had occurred. Our advice to the members was to write back to MyCSP seeking a detailed breakdown of how the miscalculation had occurred. In one case MyCSP finally admitted that they had got things wrong and the member - in fact owed nothing. I have one other case which is ongoing at the moment but aware of others but who are not ROA members.

I should point out that this did not relate solely to MDP Retired Officers but to the wider Civil Service. It seems that the Civil Service pension administrator MyCSP had undertaken an internal audit of Civil Service Pensions in Payment which they are obliged to do from time to time, and found that around 2000 had been paid in error. This resulted in letters being sent out to individuals where an overpayment had been identified - but with no explanation of the reason for the overpayment and how it had occurred. The CSPA has raised concerns about this with the Cabinet Office.

Can I say I'm grateful to the DPF General Secretary Mitch Batt and Pension Guru, Paul Hunter for their help and assistance with this matter.

On a related pension issue - as a result of a reconciliation exercise in 2017 on the increases in the GMP element of civil service pensions - it came to light that some individuals had been paid more than they were entitled to. However on this occasion the Cabinet Office agreed to write off overpayments - but there was a legal obligation to make adjustments for future payments. Individuals affected by this have been written to.

A few things on Membership Services - we mentioned in the Newsletter about the Blue Light Discount Card. Costs £4.99 for a 5year period. It covers a wide range of products at varying discounts.

Also mentioned in the Newsletter was about The Police Treatment Centres at Harrogate and Auchterarder and how retired members can join the scheme for as little as 65p a week. If you were not a member of the scheme during your service you have to pay the Retired Officers donation for 12months before being eligible for treatment subject to clinical assessment. The facilities on offer at both locations are excellent. Members can also take advantage of B&B at both locations during weekends - £120 for a double room Friday & Saturday or £100 for a single subject of course to availability. (See info pack and details on the website).

Can I mention briefly the 'My Document Locator' Booklet copies which have been distributed this morning.

It was a friend of mine who gave me a copy of a Document Locator he had been given from the Company he worked for. I thought it a good idea to do something similar for our members, the Committee agreed and with some adjustments have had it produced in the form of a booklet. It will also go on our website and can be downloaded.

It is not a Will - but simply a check list of personal documents that records where your key personal records, assets and papers can be located in the event of death or incapacity.

Finally, as you know any increase to the Civil Service Pension is based on the September CPI figure which is then applied from April the following year. This year the increase was 2.4% and took effect from Monday 8<sup>th</sup> April.

What can we expect for next year! Difficult to say, the index for August was 1.7%. The September figure on which next year's increase is based will be released in a few days time. With regards to the Basic State Pension, the 'Triple Lock' mechanism continues to be applied; this ensures it goes up by the highest of; average earnings, the consumer price index, or 2.5%. This meant an increase of 2.6% from April 2019.

With a General Election looming it will be interesting to hear if there is a commitment from the Political Parties to continuing with the Triple Lock!

### **Treasurer's Report**

In presenting his report Peter Haddock said, that since taking over as the ROA Treasurer in 2017, he has introduced improvements to the maintenance of the Treasurer's records following extensive computerisation of the documentation required to provide the necessary effectiveness and efficiency that members have come to expect. The ROA has an excellent relationship with Lloyds Bank and Wilkins Kennedy our auditors. This relationship has been improved by a closer personal contact with the relevant staff of these two organisations.

After the 2018 Reunion & AGM held at Cardiff, the two working accounts stood at:

Treasurer's Account a Balance of £3,786.27p; Reunion Account a Balance of £454.51p. Now as at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2019, these two accounts have a Balance of: £4,761.51p and £12,124.51p\* respectively. \*The Reunion Account will reduce to £24.51p after the Kings Manor Hotel Bill is paid during the 2019 Reunion period.

The Treasurer's Account Balance at £4,761.51p is healthier than this time last year when it stood at £3,786.27p, a slight increase of £975.24p. This situation has been helped by the 405 members who paid their annual voluntary subscriptions promptly. Subscriptions and new members are slightly up on the 2018 figures. In 2018, there were 6 members who did not renew their subscriptions. During 2019 gentle reminders were sent to those 16 members who have not made their voluntary subscriptions, plus the late payers. Some respond, others do not.

Details of the **32 Day On Call Account** are as follows:

Balance as at 31<sup>st</sup> October 2018 = £22,243.65p; Balance as at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2019 = £22,397.07p.  
Interest = £153.42p

### **Annual Audit**

As usual, all of the ROA accounts and associated papers for the financial year 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019 were taken to our auditors Wilkins Kennedy at Fareham for the necessary audit. Our financial position for that period was found to be in order. Their report is available for all members to scrutinise. Given the accounts are in good order the Treasurer recommended that his Finance Report be put to the meeting. Acceptance was proposed by Ken Hicks, seconded Mick Bone and carried unanimously. A copy of the audited accounts is held on file.

### **Address by CCM DP**

Mr Adams firstly thanked the ROA for being represented at the Pass Out Parades. He stated that the Government proposal for new Police Officers would mean approximately 100 extra officers for the MDP. The aim is now 2900 officers although at present there is a shortfall of about 300, this should be covered over the next two years, the force is in a good position with recruitment and transfers in from other forces. The force has welcomed a new DCC in Gareth Wilson from the Suffolk Constabulary and a new ACC in Andrea Bishop from Kent. Regarding the future of Wethersfield, H Q should be going to Wyton in 2020/21 and Training to Portsmouth. There are ongoing negotiations regarding personal fitness levels and shift patterns

### **DPF Report**

Mitch Batt, DPF General Secretary then addressed the meeting regarding pensions and the ongoing claims re discrimination of which the outlook is positive. He also stated that they are trying to have the retirement age of 60 reinstated whereas at present it is 68, explaining that Loughborough University is assisting by carrying out a study into the effects of age and gender on physical fitness levels.

There then followed a question and answer session with the CCMDP, DPF Gen Sec and Force Liaison Officer. Supt Stewart stated that it is intended to re-trial the use of email addresses for communications. A trial run had been undertaken earlier in the year but encountered some technical difficulties and work was underway to resolve.

### **Election of Officers**

The election of the following officers for 2019/20 then took place.

**Chairman:** Geoff Heal proposed by Richard Waters, seconded by Roger Conner  
**Vice Chair:** Roger Conner proposed by Ken Hicks, seconded by Sylvia Hicks  
**Secretary:** David King proposed by Keith Heather, seconded by Mick Bone  
**Treasurer:** Peter Haddock proposed by Richard Waters, seconded by Roger Conner  
**Asst. Sec:** Ken Hicks proposed by Peter Haddock, seconded by Roger Conner  
**Member:** John Barber\*  
**Member:** Chris McComb\*  
**Member:** Neville Carter\*  
**Member:** Jenny Heal\*

\* Elected unopposed 'en bloc', proposed by Roger Conner, seconded Trevor Thomas

All above members were elected unopposed and will form the committee for the next twelve months.

### **Any Other Business**

Gwen King thanked all the members for their continuing support with respect to her fundraising for her local hospital, also stating that this year she is also selling handmade poppies, proceeds being split between her charity and "Help for Heroes".

### **Closing Remarks**

The Chairman said that next year's ROA reunion and AGM will be at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Kings Road, Harrogate HG1 1XX Friday 9<sup>th</sup> to Monday 12<sup>th</sup> October 2020 @ £255.00 per person.

In drawing matters to a close he expressed his disappointment in the low numbers attending this year and it was questioned whether the time of year may be a factor but this was dismissed as the AGM and Reunion has in recent years always been the 2<sup>nd</sup> weekend in October It was thought that the location, Edinburgh, was more a factor as it was too far for many to travel, however it was hoped that Harrogate would prove more popular.

To conclude the Chairman thanked the Chief Constable and the DPF Secretary for the continuing excellent relations and assistance given to the ROA committee and closed the meeting at 12.15pm.

**Next AGM/Reunion: 9th – 12th October 2020 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Harrogate.**