

SCOTTISH RETIRED TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday, 16th October 2019
At EIS Headquarters, 46 Moray Place, Edinburgh.

MINUTE

1. Apologies: Shetland, St Andrews/N.E.Fife
2. Sederunt: Douglas Currie, President; Irene Bates, Vice-President/ PSPC; Kenneth Deas, Treasurer; Moira Fleming/ Borders, Secretary; Lynwen Greavey, Aberdeen; Jean MacDonald, Kath Mands, Dundee; Irene Noble, Edinburgh. The President welcomed Irene Noble as the new representative of Edinburgh Branch.
3. Minutes of National Executive Committee Meeting of 20th March 2019
Errors had been noted in Section 7, Recruitment and Publicity. The amended text is as follows. Line 6, etc: "In Dundee there were various activities. While the main venue was Broughty Ferry, groups in other places also had meetings. However, all agreed that it was often embarrassing having invited speakers when there were very few to hear them."
Minutes approved. Proposed: Irene Bates, Seconded: Jean MacDonald.
4. Business Arising. Items were noted for discussion under later headings.
5. Secretary's Report
The Secretary reported that,
 - a) **The EIS website entry for SRTA** had been updated and the Secretary had thanked the Head of Communications at EIS for making these changes.
 - b) An email had been sent to all Branch Secretaries as a result of discussions at the AGM, asking that, along with branch members, they consider, i) whether members would be more likely to attend meetings if lunch were provided. ii) signing the AgeScotland/UK petition to the Westminster government concerning the proposal to end the policy of making tv licences free to those over 75. No responses to either item had been received from branches so far. The meeting agreed that the provision of lunch would not encourage better attendance.
 - c) The letter sent to Branches regarding the inclusion in Branch Constitutions of a section setting out the action to be taken in regard to the disposal of funds should the branch close. No responses had been received so far.
 - d) **Website**: errors which had been noted in the text of the website had been corrected by the Secretary and the web designer.
 - e) **AgeScotland/UK (www.ageuk.org.uk/campaigns)** had recently flagged up three issues:
 - i) The news that the new PM had responded to questions about the tv licence issue, that the BBC should "cough up".
 - ii) People over 75 had been receiving SCAM emails asking for money for tv licences. These should be ignored.
 - iii) There is a campaign to persuade the Westminster government to ensure that elderly people in privately rented accommodation could not be evicted at short notice when no offence had been committed. The Scottish situation may differ. (www.scot.gov.uk)
These items could be viewed and responded to on the relevant website (see above) .
 - f) Requests had been received via the website on the following subjects: a retired teacher seeking to make contact with a former colleague; a post-doctoral research student looking for help with an oral history project relating to the 1960s and 1970s; VisitAberdeenshire seeking volunteers. These items would be passed to relevant Branches.
6. Treasurer's Report: the PSPC levy has been paid.
7. PSPC Report (www.publicservicensioners.org.uk)
Irene Bates commented on the most recent National Executive Committee (13/8/2019) Meeting.
Items:
Para 3. *AGE Platform Europe* were holding off on paying the affiliation fee until Brexit was settled.
Para 3.2 *Inflation Indexation*. It was concluded that the Government (Westminster) was reluctant to lose RPI, though it is deemed to be inappropriate. The PSPC would continue to campaign to

have a new inflation index that was both accurate and consistently applied. The Office of National Statistics was working on developing the *Household Costs Index*.

Para 3.3. *Affiliation Issues*: The PSPC is concerned to recruit public service organisations to affiliation with PSPC, e.g., RCN and PCS ARMS and the BMA. There were issues around payment of dues re UNISON.

Para 5. *State Pension*: There were concerns re: the raising of the State Pension Age and the transitional arrangements for women affected by the Pensions Act 2011 and the hardship which ensued. The judgement was awaited at this point in time. (Subsequently delivered, 5/6 June, did not find in favour of the 'Backto60' campaign. It was found that the changes regarding women's pension age were not discriminatory).

Para 6. *Universal Pensioner Benefits*: Free TV licence for over 75s. Only those pensioners receiving Pension Credits would be eligible for a free licence under the current proposals. However, only 60% of those eligible for pension credits claim them. The Office for Budget Responsibility estimated that additional public spending of £100m per annum would arise from an expected higher uptake in pension credit claims for over 75s from June 2020. The PSPC campaign continues.

See the PSPC website for further information: www.publicservicepensioners.org.uk Or via SRTA website /links.

The meeting was concerned as to how **Pension Credits** could be claimed. The best website that the Secretary has found is that of Citizens-Advice: citizensadvice.org.uk/benefits

7. Recruitment and Publicity:

The meeting discussed the need:

- to recruit those about to retire/ just retired
- to make retiring teachers aware of current issues affecting public service pensioners
- to provide examples of need affecting retired teachers.

Ideas from branches would be sought.

Contact with schools through EIS reps. was important. But only those schools who have this representation in place could be contacted and would receive the relevant literature.

8. AOCB

9. Next Meeting: Wednesday, 18th March 2020. A room number would be provided.