

SUMMARY OF THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE MEETING HELD ON 14 - 15 OCTOBER 2000

Summary of Area Emergency General Meetings

North Thames Chilterns Area: It was reported to the NEC that the Area had agreed to close three groups, High Wycombe, Hendon and Edgware, and Slough, Windsor and Eton. The NEC ratified the closure of these groups. Another group within the Area had indicated that they too wanted to close. The Area Chairman was advised to inform the group to hold an EGM, which he must be present at. The NEC were also informed that the Area had put together plans to ensure that groups were encourage to attend each others activities as well as Area run activities.

Northern Aiea: Although the EGM started off on a negative footing, the conference ended on a more positive note. The EGM was attended by over 50 Northern members, where they discussed the current situation within the Area and how to move forward. The conference had decided to keep the current structure of the Area, i.e. two regions and current committee structure. A new committee was elected, who duly noted the comments made at the conference. The Area Chairman reported to the NEC that the new committee had met and now planned events for the next year, and would be reinstigating a monthly communication to groups.

THE FUTURE OF NATIONAL OFFICERS

The National Chairman, Viv Deeley, announced that due to fact that she was now expecting a child, it was not fair to herself or the Federation to carry on as National Chairman. She explained to the NEC that this had been a very difficult decision to reach. However, she believed that this was the right one.

The Honorary General Secretary, Sandra Bradshaw also announced that she intended to resign from all her 18 Plus positions as of the middle of December 2000. She explained that this decision was a completely separate one to the National Chairman's and was based on the fact that she had decided to move abroad. She stated that she had enjoyed her time in the various committee roles within 18 Plus, but it was now time to move on.

The NEC then spent sometime discussing the way forward. It was recognised that there were many national officer positions vacant and maybe it was time to look at the structure of the Federation. However, the NEC recognised that they could not come up with solutions over that weekend. They agreed to set a Working Party that would specifically look at the structure. This would consist of between 3 to 12 members. The Area Chairman identified individuals who may be able to become members of the working party. It was recognised that the Working Party would submit proposals to the January 2001 meeting and therefore, individuals identified would have to make themselves available almost immediately.

The NEC, also addressed the immediate issue of vacant posts on the General Purposes Committee. A possible Honorary General Secretary was identified, who would stand for election at the January 2001 NEC meeting. It was agreed that Tony Burgess, would caretake the role of National Finance Officer until January 2001. Originally, it was agreed that Adrian Barnard would care take the role of National Chairman until the January 2001 meeting. However, later in the meeting, he withdrew from this position and Andrew Bond agreed to care take until January 2001.

All these positions and other vacant positions would be available for election at the January 2001 meeting. These positions are:

- National Chairman
- Honorary General Secretary
- National Finance Officer
- National Public Relations Officer
- National Training Co-ordinator

- National Executive Officer
- TAG 2001 Co-ordinators
- National Spring Holiday Co-ordinator

The NEC recognised the efforts of both Viv Deeley and Sandra Bradshaw by presenting them both with a bouquet of flowers each.

THE ANNUAL NATIONAL CONFERENCE 2001

Two budgets were presented to the NEC. Option one looked at a delegate fee of £68 and a group levy of £36, with a break even budget. Option two looked at a delegate fee of £65 and a group levy of £34 with a loss of approximately £400.

There was much discussion about which option the NEC should accept. The NEC were, initially, concerned that agreeing to a loss making budget was not good practice. However, as this was the Diamond Jubilee ANC, it was hoped that the attendance would be much greater than previous years. It was anticipated, for example, that past Honorary Life Members would attend. The Area Chairmen agreed that this was an important year for the Federation and that they should publicise the Conference widely. Eventually Option Two was accepted as the budget.

ONELIST

Again, this discussion, was a lengthy item. Originally the discussion was based on how to ensure that positive messages or items of misrepresentation were corrected. There was concern that those on the NEC who had access, did not do this.

This led to the discussion about the role of the Onelist within the Federation. There was some concern that events/individuals were being criticised negatively even though individuals were trying their best to ensure their success. There had also been occasions where individuals had been mentioned on the list, even though they did not have access to the list and therefore, would be unaware that they had been mentioned on the list. There was also concern that those receiving the digests, had to sift through many irrelevant messages about mascots, drinking habits etc. to reach messages with ideas and suggestions within them. It was recognised that the list did moderate itself, by individuals pointing when others stepped over the mark. However, it was felt that sometimes the damage had already been done, by time the moderation happened. It was also recognised that groups sought advice on the onelist, although it was believed that this was as add on to the existing network of help. An explanation was given on how lists could be moderated and discussions were held on how to ensure positive messages could be portrayed. There was not any discussion about removing ideas that did not meet National approval.

The NEC decided to withdraw their support of the onelist. This motion was proposed by the London and South East Area Chairman, seconded by the Northern Area Chairman and carried by majority. It was agreed to set up a forum through the website where ideas and positive criticism could be placed. (Note: positive criticism means recognising individuals efforts whilst suggesting better ways of doing things.) This was proposed by the Midland Area Chairman, seconded by the East Anglia Area Chairman.

This brought an issue with the Southern Area Chairman. He did not believe that he was able to carry out the decision, although he recognised his role as a NEC member. He withdrew from being Deputy National Chairman. The NEC decided by majority that he should not be able to vote on future decisions at NEC meetings. This was a difficult decision and originally there were an equal number of votes for and against the motion. The National Chairman pointed out to the NEC that this was not a decision to abstain from. The vote was re-taken and carried by majority.

OPEN FORUM

The National Chairman expressed her major disappointment that this event did not go ahead.

She reminded the NEC that this was an event that they had wanted - not the National Officers. She was astounded that there were only nine firm bookings the Tuesday before the event and could not believe that the Area Chairmen had not sold the event. She explained that the office, HGS and herself had put a large amount of effort into planning for the event, only to be let down by them. We also stood to lose £1000 which is what the Youth Hostel had cost.

TAG

The number of bookings for the event were down on the previous year and therefore, the event was revamped. A price was renegotiated with the venue. The Friday night was a social evening, with a karaoke and bring your own booze. There was a rounders competition and petanque competition on the Saturday, which was followed by a disco. The Sunday was left up to individuals own devices. The relaxed format of the event was well received, It was very much hoped that the event would continue for 2001, although it was recommended that a Midland location be sort.

Sandra Bradshaw
Honorary General Secretary
November 2000