



National Federation of Plus Area

7th Annual General Meeting Minutes

Held at the Beverley Hotel on Saturday 20 April 2013

1.0 Open Meeting

The Deputy National Chair Matt Dickinson (North Thames & Chiltern Area Chair) open the meeting at 10.30am ask conference delegates to be up standing for the National Chairman, Corinna Teale Honorary General Secretary James Oliver and Vice Presidents Gerry Edwards and Francis Wallington.

1.1 Opening Remarks By National Chairman Corinna Teale

Corinna Teale thanked conference for the welcoming and thanked the Deputy National Chair Matt Dickinson ask conference for a minute silence for the following members of the Federation who died unexpectedly during the past year **John Priestly of Reading Plus, Ben Ash of Didcot Plus and Nicky Finch of Sutton Coldfield Plus**. Corinna also announced as the North Thames and Chiltern Area, report was not issue, until last night, this will not be voted, upon at this AGM.

2 The Presidential Address by Vice President Gerry Edwards

First of all may, I welcome you all to this, 72nd Annual Meeting, of The National Federation Of Plus Groups, and I hope that all of you will enjoy, every minute of your time here.

72 years! That's 72 years of this organisation which we are celebrating this weekend. Ok numbers are a lot less, than when I first joined Plus, but that's what life for all social groups, is nowadays, and that's what we, have to compete in. Plus may be somewhat smaller, than when it was at its peak but the quality of our product is still there and I know I still enjoy that wonderful feeling of anticipation whenever I attend a plus event. I'm sure you all do too or you wouldn't be here today! This meeting must consider how Plus is to stay fresh and continue to attract new members. This is not easy in the internet age and we may have to accept that we are never going to attract a huge membership in current times, particularly in tight financial times when everyone has to decide to spend what money they have very carefully. The one great thing that plus has in its favour is that we have always believed in producing a quality product for as reasonable a price as possible. If this were not true WASH, BREAN, SADY, FAB etc would never have survived. Isn't WASH doing so well, with such a quality event, attracting such, good numbers every year. Finally this weekend, gives us all a chance, to meet members, from other parts, of the country, and have fun! Because after all, isn't that what Plus, is still all about. I will leave with one thought, I never say no to a beer

3 Election of Tellers

3.1 Nomination of Two Volunteer from the body of Observers

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The following observers to the meeting was elected as tellers after the floor agreed to reduce this number to two

Tina Bunyan of Didcot Plus, was proposed by Didcot Plus
Mark Hawkins of Barnet Plus, was proposed by Barnet Plus

Seconded by Lichfield Plus

Carried Unanimously

3.2 Determining the Voting Strength of Conference

The voting strength of conference was determined to be 22 representing 15 Plus groups

4 Election of Ballot Paper Counters

4.1 Nomination of two volunteers from the Body of Observers

Alison Jones of Southern Area
Ian Crawshaw of Chiswick Quest

Proposed by Reading Plus
Seconded by Barnet Plus

Carried Unanimously

5 Apologies for Absence

The Honorary General Secretary has received the following apologies,
King Lynn Plus
Richard Thomas (HLM)

There were no other apologies.

6 Acceptance of the minutes of the 6th Annual General Meeting held at the Beverley Hotel on the 18 February 2012

6.1 Points of Accuracy

Ian Crawshaw of Chiswick Quest thanked James for spelling his group correctly in the minutes. No other points of accuracy or praise were mention.

6.2 Acceptance of the 6th Annual General Meeting Minutes

The minutes of the 6th Annual General Meeting were

Proposed by Hillingdon Plus
Seconded by Sutton Coldfield Plus

Against – 0
Abstention - 6
For – 16

Carried Unanimously

7 Matters Arising thereon

There was no matter arising from the minutes

8 Presentation and Acceptance of the Federation reports for the year 2012 excluding North Thames and Chiltern Area

Matt Dickinson of NTCA apologized for the late issuing of his report to the conference. Martin Posnor was questioned, by Francis Wallington (Lichfield Observer, HLM), on the statement

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about recruitment Martin, responded saying that, what he meant, to write both King Lynn and Redbridge, do have large membership base. A question on the Southern Area was answer by Nicky Ansell, as Southern Area representative, regarding some of Kath Good comments. Corinna Teale was ask by Fil Bettis Lichfield delegate, did she enjoy her year as Chairman, Corinna said yes, that the internal survey, was a good idea, to find out what members want, some of the results surprised Corinna. James Oliver (HGS) was asked about his report namely the section about Local TV stations, James respond that these new local TV station are all listed on the OFCOM website. Mention that at first these channels audiences, will be very small when compare with other channels, offer opportunity, for PLUS at a local level to advertise it self in a medium we would not think that we can afford, all these new TV channels, have to a local input, written into the licence for at least the first year. Adrian Barnard (AGM Co-ordinator) said that what James was saying was right gave an example of a TV station in Didcot.

Motion to Accept the Federation Reports excluding North Thames and Chiltern Area were

Proposed by Slough Plus
Seconded by Didcot Plus

Against – 0
Abstention - 1
For – 21

Carried Unanimously

9 Presentation and Acceptance of the Federation Accounts for the year 2012

James Oliver as stand-in NFO, was asked about the outstanding Area Levies, James said that he was, chasing the monies from the missing area's, this was due, to invoices not been, sent out to the individual areas concerned. Another person asked about the Anglesey Walking Weekend James responding said that National had to issue an emergency cheque to cover the event; however, National had the monies back AWW soon afterwards. James said that we are chasing, for an address, to get the remaining amount, from the 2011 holiday.

Proposed by Stevenage Plus
Seconded by Leeds Plus

Against – 0
Abstention - 0
For – 22

Carried Unanimously

10 Election of National Chairman to serve from 1st May 2013 to 28 February 2014

Nomination - Mike Clarkson of Solihull Plus Group

Deputy National Chairman, Matt Dickinson, announced that there is one nomination, of Mike Clarkson of Solihull Plus group for the position of National Chairman, and asked Mike, to come up, to give his, nomination speech.

Mike Clarkson said that he has been in Plus since 1989, firstly joining Castle Bromwich Plus, then later Solihull Plus. Mike said you may ask, yourselves and I have, been asking myself, why I'm standing for this role as National Chairman. Mike continues that he stills enjoy attending, every group, area, and National scale, events. I have enjoyed Plus, from the start, and I thought well lets give something back to Plus. When I join Castle Bromwich there were around there were 25 groups in the old "Mid West Area".

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There is something special, about our organisation, from all the others, groups / organisations, its' friendlier as well that's' what I believe, over the years' each of the Area's and National, has put together, some excellent, events on.

Individual members, doing things to help, the Federation stay, on course, and keep moving, along and not going stale, by even going as far, as asking it's own members, from within the different areas about doing training courses within the federation which you can add to you portfolio and help you along the way in life,

Mike mention the training courses, which PLUS runs for its members, to attend, so as to help members, carry its groups along, and make them run, more smoother. I would like to thank, those involved, with these training courses, over the recent years, including Francis Wallington, thank you for putting your own time, and effort, into helping others, out also some one else, who I have always had time, for over the years, Gerry Edwards, for all your hard work over the years as well.

This is our organisation, is there for a purpose, and that is to help people, enjoy life to the full. Do things that they, would not normally do. I still cannot believe Plus has been going since the early 1940's and is still going today. I hope it carries on for many more years to come. We have all, got to do our bit, and that's everyone. Teamwork and communication get, these right and all is plain sailing.

Ian Crawshaw (Chiswick Quest observer) said that Mike speech remind him another aspect overlook from the National Chairman Job that of ambassador role for the Federation. Adrian Barnard (AGM Co-ordinator) welcomed Mike speech to the conference.

Mike Clarkson was proposed by Solihull Plus and seconded by Lichfield Plus

Corinna Teale announced that the election for National Chairman, would be done, by secret ballot during the lunch break.

11 Election of National Officers to serve from 1st May 2013 to 28 February 2014

Corinna Teale then went for the other National Officers positions for election.

11.1 Honorary General Secretary – Erica Knight of Sutton Coldfield Plus

Erica Knight was propose by Lichfield Plus, and seconded by Stevenage Plus.

Erica stated, that she had been doing the NEC administrator role for the last year, since James is not standing for the role as HGS she Erica was stepping up for the as HGS, Erica went on that, she has the past experience of been a previous Area Chair for Midland Area.

11.2 National Finance Officer – James Oliver of Solihull Plus

James Oliver was propose by Solihull Plus, and seconded by Didcot Plus.

James in his speech has been acting NFO for a few months now, has now the bank signatures up to date and restored the facility for BACS payments, Fil Bettis Lichfield Delegate ask James about the comment in the report about time management James said doing the NFO role would see my paperwork reduce.

11.3 National Training Officer

This position went unfilled

11.4 National Activities Coordinator

This position went unfilled

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11.5 National Public Relations Officer

This position went unfilled

11.6 National Internet Coordinator – John Smith of Leeds Plus

John Smith was propose by Lichfield Plus, and seconded by Hillingdon Plus.

John Smith that work on the new website will continue after this AGM, also mention the Internet workshop tomorrow [Sunday] with training on the new website.

11.7 National Publications Officer / Plus News Editor – Adam Redshaw of Lichfield Quest

Liane Browning (Haverhill Quest Observer) suggested that Adam Redshaw stand due to his magazine for Geocatchers in UK. Adam agreed, however as Adam was a Quest member and not a PLUS member Adam nomination would have be held over to the next NEC meeting, however Hillingdon Plus proposed that this requirement be postpone for this position Barnet seconded this proposal.

The motion was then put to the conference to suspend the constitution to allow Adam to stand for the position of Plus News Editor now, due to Adam been a Quest member not a Plus Member.

Against – 1

Abstention – 1

For – 20

Carried by Majority

Therefore conference gave Adam permission to stand for Plus News editor,

Adam was proposed by Didcot Plus and seconded by Solihull Plus

Adam mention his work for UK Catch Mag believed that Plus can have a magazine once a year of similar quality but it relies on the members giving articles. Ian Crawshaw Chiswick Quest said as a former PLUS News editor he was always asking for articles and should always be asking for articles at every opportunity. Adam response was "Give us your articles"

11.8 NEC Administrator

This position went unfilled

After the elections have concluded Corinna mention that the unfilled positions, will be carried over to the Next NEC meeting, then invited Adrian Barnard to come and explain the procedure, for Lunch and reminded delegates, about Mike Clarkson voting slips during Lunch break.

After Lunch Corinna Teale welcomed back the delegates, after the voting strength of conference was set at 22, Corinna went on to the, motions for debate.

12 Motions for Debate

12.1 4.2. ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEE

4.2.1. The annual membership fee for Member Areas shall be determined by the NEC from time to time, solely in accordance with the procedure laid down in Article 8.6.

4.2.2. the annual membership fee will be payable quarterly, thus:

4.2.2.1. One-quarter on February 1st;

4.2.2.2. One-quarter on May 1st;

4.2.2.3. One-quarter on August 1st; and

4.2.2.4. One-quarter on November 1st.

Proposed by Sheffield Plus Group

Seconded by Leeds Plus Group

Matthew Reilly of Sheffield Plus group proposed this amendment to the National Constitution to removed the £600 figure, this is a purely technical motion, does not effect groups. Fil Bettis Lichfield Delegate ask Matthew Reily why the NEC is not proposing this motion, Matthew response that he proposed it first also this motion takes into account the fact that Northern Area closed during 2012 and from 2013 the area levies will increase.

Against – 0

Abstention - 0

For – 22

Carried Unanimously

12.2 Southern Area Propose that The Area Constitution 2008 to be amended.

8.3.1 Full membership shall be through a group only.

8.3.2 Associated membership shall be through a group only.

This should be amended to:

8.3.1 Full membership shall be through a member group in normal circumstances. However in exceptional circumstances, direct membership to the Area will be accepted subject to approval by the Area Committee.

8.3.2 Associate membership shall be through a member group in normal circumstances. However in exceptional circumstances, direct membership to the Area will be accepted subject to approval by the Area Committee.

Proposed by Southern Area

Francis Wallington on behalf of Southern Area, said this motion reintroduces, direct membership for areas, which had been, lost under area lead option. Although it is not national direct membership, it allows areas, who cover large areas' to have members, who live miles, from the their local group, to be members, of the Federation. Fil Bettis Lichfield Delegate said that he saw problems with this motion in who we let in to be members of the Federation Fil also ask why was this motion before the Age range motion James Oliver HGS response was that should this motion pass then the new 8.3.2 would be deleted. Gary Schwimmer of Hillingdon PLUS Delegate agreed with Fil comments. Francis Wallington (Lichfield Observer, HLM) mention that it solves a problem of something that was useful under National lead, mentions that we need to grow, the membership up, and encourage people to join us. Other delegates spoke for and against the motion

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Against – 11
Abstention - 3
For – 8

Motion lost

12.3 We propose that one of the following options be adopted by this AGM by means of the exhaustive voting system;

1. OPEN AGE RANGE

Under this option Membership would be available to all adults between the ages of 18 and 60 with membership expiration at the age of 80. This age has been dictated by our Insurers as they will not insure anyone over the age of 80. Second Tier and Plus would be a single organisation paying a standard Membership Fee. They would have equal voting rights and be eligible to stand for all Group, Area and National Committee positions.

2. DEFINITIVE ORGANISATIONAL SPLIT

Plus Membership would be for Members 18 to 40

Quest Membership would be 41 to 80 Plus Membership would expire at 41. Full voting rights for Plus within the Plus arena and full voting rights for Quest in the Quest arena if desired.

Membership of each organisation can invite Membership of the other organisation to events but it is not an assumption that Members from one tier automatically have the right to attend an event of the other tier.

3. STAY AS WE ARE

Proposed by the NEC

Corinna Teale announced that Gerry Edwards would now speak as it was Gerry Edwards who setup Quest nine year ago, which is therefore affect by this motion

When I founded Quest, several years ago now, I believed that it could, be a very successful concept, and Lincs Quest, amongst others, have proved this to, be the case. However, I never really, anticipated that it could, become the major stakeholder, in Plus. Maybe it should or maybe it shouldn't, but what we need to realise, is the short time, that it has taken, to reach this position.

Gerry Edwards said to the conference, that he hope that, the delegates would, make the right decision today, believes that the argument, has gone on too long, in Plus. Matthew Dickinson and Nicky Ansell spoke for the merits of option 1. Lisa Ward spoke in favour of Option 2 and then Martin Posnor, spoke in favour of Option 3. Erica Knight Sutton Coldfield Delegate proposed, changing the cutoff membership age to 65, in line with the current retirement age, for option 1 Erica's amendment, was seconded by Lichfield Plus

Against – 0
Abstention - 1
For – 21

Carried Unanimously

Therefore the motion now read as follow

1. OPEN AGE RANGE

Under this option Membership would be available to all adults between the ages of 18 and 65 with membership expiration at the age of 80. This age has been dictated by our Insurers as they will not insure anyone over the age of 80. Second Tier and Plus would be a single

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3. STAY AS WE ARE

Proposed by the NEC

Erik Bean Stevenage Plus Delegate, spoke in favour of option 1 mention a similar motion that he had tried to pass a couple of years ago. Jeff Rea from Hillingdon Delegate in his maiden conference speech to delegates said that he believes that the first two options would destroy Plus and Quest since the first would change the ethos of the Federation and second would mean that Plus could not survive with its older members and the new Quest would not last long. Therefore the only option with be third option which continued the status quo until such time as PLUS and QUEST could split. Geoff Buller Linnco Quest asked was any Quest members consulted. Corinna Teale said on behalf of the NEC that definitive direction for both our futures was required.

Gavin Peachey Solihull Plus Delegate said that his group supported option 1. Other delegates and Observers spoke in favour of one of the three options.

Voting Round One

A 75% Majority Required

Option 1 - 19

Option 2 - 2

Option 3 - 1

Therefore, Option 1 is pass



Gary Schwimmer (Hillingdon Plus Delegate) asked about the membership fee currently paid by members Corinna Teale response on behalf of the NEC that this will reduce to £20.00 and back dated to 1st January 2013 be for all members, Plus and Quest, this will be action, at the May NEC meeting coming up.

At the end of these, debates' Corinna Teale, National Chairman, called for a break for tea and coffee and a chance for delegates to get some fresh air.

13 Facility for National Debate

13.1 Electronic Surveys Tools in Plus

Adam Redshaw Lichfield Quest (Observer) mentions that there, now exists websites, and software for PLUS, to hold regular surveys, of members ideas, and aspirations, for its members, and also allow event organizers, to have feedback from PLUS, events these can be Group, Area, or National Scale events. Adam mention some, of the more high power, analysis tools, which must to be paid for, Adam hold up the example, of the internal survey, for what can, be achieved, in PLUS, Adam mentioned a website, called Survey Monkey, which are used a lot, and is the market leader, for this type of analysis.

13.2 Open Space Forum

John Smith gave the conference a short presentation on the Open Space Forum as alternative method of planning and decision making in PLUS.

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13.3 Proposed £9,000.00 External Survey

Erik Bean of Stevenage Plus Delegate, then told the conference that his PLUS group is a traditional PLUS which recruits members they do this by holding meetings, in a back room in pub. Erik urged other groups to do the same, there is no need for the Federation, to spend up to £9,000.00, on an external survey, if it wants to recruitment members.

13.4 Richard Thomas (HLM) Message to Conference.

Francis Wallington (Lichfield Observer HLM), read out a message, to conference from Richard Thomas (HLM), who could not, be present at today meeting. Richard wrote, "That I see from the agenda, that delegates are dealing, with some extremely complex, and fundamental issues, I hope that the debate is full open and constructive and a successful debate, that is able to reach an acceptable, clearly defined consensus that will see the organisation move forward positively. Reminded delegates to respect the proud tradition of PLUS, and the legacy, you have been given, and do you utmost to ensure it can be and will be, passed on to those, who have yet to find its joys. Richard continues that hard decisions never come easily, and wished good luck to all. Richard will try to make next year AGM to hear the positive action from this year AGM. Richard also wrote that read with interest the results of the survey undertake, Richard believed this was the right course of action".

14 Risk Assessments

Francis Wallington Vice Presidents announced that doing a risk assessment is very important in the management of risk when an event organizers plans for such an event. It helps us make sure you are aware of the dangers. James Oliver HGS spoke saying an event was recently refused insurance cover, as our insurers did not like the risk involved however this decision came after the event had run and was due to late submission of a risk assessment form. James Oliver urged, you to get your forms, in early, when you plan an event, all group nights and most trips out, don't need a risk assessment, but some activities, which are classed by the insurer as "dangerous" would required a risk assessment.

15 Announcement of the Election results of the Position National Chairman as from 1st May 2013

Mike Clarkson was duly elected as National Chairman to serve from 1st May 2013, Mike thanked the conference delegates for the honour

16 Announcement of results of election results of the National Officers to serve from 1st May 2013

Earlier in the meeting conference agreed to have National officers elected by show of hands rather than secret voting method due to precedent of 2012 election. The following officers voted in elected

16.1 Honorary General Secretary – Erica Knight of Sutton Coldfield Plus

16.2 National Finance Officer – James Oliver of Solihull Plus

16.3 National Training Officer - None

16.4 National Activities Coordinator - None

16.5 National Public Relations Officer – None

16.6 National Internet Coordinator – John Smith of Leeds Plus

16.7 National Publication Officer / Plus News Editor – Adam Redshaw* of Lichfield Quest

* Special permission of the conference was given to Adam to stand due to Adam been a Quest member.

16.8 NEC Administrator – None however position was filled, at the May NEC Meeting.

17 National Chairman Address

Corinna Teale said she was very emotionally at this point congratulated Mike Clarkson been elected as National Chairman believes he has a very good team behind Mike. Thanked the conference for making a decision about the age range. Will hope that life in Plus will now calm down a little. Corinna thanked everyone for the very good debates we had, during the course of the day. Corinna Teale then presented gifts for the following people for working with her during her term as National Chairman,
her husband Richard
Gerry Edwards
Francis Wallington
Adrian Barnard,
Ian Crawshaw &
James Oliver

James Oliver on behalf of her NEC gave a gift to Corinna Teale for her work during 2012

18. Elections of Honorary Officials of the Federation

18.1 Independent Examiner of the 2013 Accounts

The NEC proposed the following as Independent Examiner of the Accounts

Katie Hawkins of Barnet Plus

Carried Unanimously

18.2 Vice Presidents

The NEC proposes the following as Vice Presidents

Gerry Edwards of Hillingdon Plus
Francis Wallington of Lichfield Plus

Carried Unanimously

19 Any Other Urgent Business

- Corinna Teale mention that the revised membership fee will be action at the next NEC meeting starting from 1st January.
- Adam Redshaw was thanked for organizing the recent FAB holiday

20 Announcement of the Date for the Annual General Meeting 2014

Date is February 2014 the venue TBA. Time of start of meeting 10.00am

21 Presidential Addressed by Vice President Gerry Edwards

Gerry Edwards congratulated Mike Clarkson, on been elected as National Chairman, in succeeding Corinna Teale, also thank the delegates, for making a resolution, of the decisions which need to make, ask everyone not to take the arguments from today session, into the evening celebrations.

21.1 Best PLUS Group

However before he hand over to Corinna Teale to close, Gerry along with Vice President Francis Wallington, presented the, Best Plus Group Trophy to Erik Bean representing Stevenage Plus who were not going to the evening celebrations.

22 Closure of the meeting by the National Chairman

Corinna Teale closed the meeting at 5.20pm