



National Association of  
NFU Group Secretaries

**AGM  
2020**



**Minutes of AGM 2019**



## **MINUTES OF 62nd ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF GROUP SECRETARIES TO THE TO THE NATIONAL FARMERS UNIONS OF THE UNITED KINGDOM HELD AT THE BRITANNIA ADELPHI HOTEL, LIVERPOOL, MERSEYSIDE ON THURSDAY 7TH MARCH 2019**

The Chairman welcomed members to the 63rd Annual General Meeting and reminded them that the AGM was a closed session. He asked Members to sign the attendance register and record any apologies as appropriate.

### **IN ATTENDANCE**

Chairman – Aled Griffiths  
Vice Chairman – Gemma Heal  
General Secretary – Philip Cornish  
Members of the Association

### **MINUTES**

The minutes of the AGM held at the Britannia Adelphi hotel, Liverpool, Merseyside on the 8th of March 2018 were approved and signed as a true record. They were proposed by Esther Pritt and seconded by Cathy Davies.

### **FINANCIAL REPORT**

The Treasurer Nick Bent presented the accounts for the year ending 31st of October 2018. The Chairman thanked the treasurer for his ongoing diligent work and sound presentation.

Nick drew reference to the additional, ongoing expenses incurred by agents who have purchased additional monitors for their team. He suggested £100 per person has been an estimate spend and felt that the NFU Mutual should offer some compensation for this.

Nick Bent invited any questions - there were none.

### **APPOINTMENT OF AUDITORS**

Nick Bent proposed the reappointment of the MG Group Partnership as the Association Auditors.

### **EDUCATION WORKING PARTY REPORT**

Dana Hamlin presented the report as summarised below.

The EWP committee has worked tirelessly to put together a conference which is both valuable, memorable, educational and yet filled with fun. Thank you to the following:

- The EWP committee – thank you for taking time out of your busy schedules to help organise the Conference. Appreciation goes to each one of you, Tom Shepherd, Izy Shaw, Amy Walker, and Tom Murray.
- A huge thank you goes to the indispensable Alison Atkins, our secretary, without whom the Conference would take up a lot more of our time.
- To Jo and Eric Gilbert for all the work they continue to do and for keeping us in check!



- The Conference would not be possible without our Sponsors, who have continued to support and contribute their time and money year after year. Please make time to visit the stands and repay their support whilst at the conference.
- Thank you to our partners, NFU Mutual and NFU guests for taking time to participate and attend the conference, we appreciate your patronage.
- To our fellow colleagues who have agreed to take part in the business sessions, host our sponsors and guests and numerous other roles.
- Our thanks go to Richard Buer for his hard work in organising the golf again this year and for offering to resurrect the NAGS website.

Finally, thank you to all of you who continue to support the conference by attending. NAGS Conference is a great opportunity to network with fellow colleagues share business ideas, learn new things, and be inspired but also let your hair down and have fun.

### **MUTUAL LIAISON GROUP**

Cathy Davies thanked all previous members of the Agent's Liaison Group and also welcomed new members to the group. Cathy reported that the NFU Mutual are currently reviewing their motor product offering which will be shortly follow by a commercial package product review. She suggested that typically these reviews tend to be conducted every few years to try and bring us in line with the market.

She explained that NIS has been working quite well and although the renewal process is not as smooth as they would like, they communicate well and were seeing some good results. She reported that the NFU Mutual are also seeing some good results with regards to the CRM (Microsoft Dynamics) system. She explained that as it currently stands there are only 50 agents that have not used or opened MSD which is a vast improvement to where we were six months ago. Cathy expanded by saying that she personally uses MSD for her agency dashboards which she finds extremely useful.

Unfortunately, LCI/GCB were not functioning as they should and are the recipient of a very unfavourable ICE survey. As such they are very much in the spotlight and their processes and controls will be under scrutiny this year to try and improve.

Cathy reported that Nick Turner and his new business engine has had his target downgraded from £90 million to £83 million. This is largely due to several agency network factors such as lack of sellers, the number of reviews, the lengthy recruitment process and the NFU Mutual's own rating factors. She explained that the motor product range is especially poor, which has been fully acknowledged by the NFU Mutual. This has been highlighted by the volume of CMA that has been needed in order to secure business.

Cathy explained that the Health Check issues have largely been resolved, however she made clear that there can never be enough data captured from agents. The more information the ALG can capture, the more weight they have behind them when meeting with the NFU mutual.



A question was raised by Ray Foster-Morison about the future of NIS and where it is heading? Cathy responded by saying that it is a recurring item on the agenda and as such it is a point that is continually raised. She predicted that in 10 years time we will not be dealing with any Motor and Personal business within the agency network, but instead, advised commercial policies so NIS would be pivotal. Helen Kirby added to Cathy's comments by saying that the NFU Mutual are potentially looking to white label some of the NIS risk themselves.

Kim Brake asked a question regarding the new Ifaces replacement and what will this look like? Cathy explained that the NFU Mutual have agreed to organise a small group of agents, agency staff and CSC which will help to design the new system. She continued by saying that once the new system has been completed it will incorporate MSD so once again, she pleaded for all agents to be proficient at using this MSD system.

## **GENERAL SECRETARY'S MEMBERSHIP REPORT**

The Chairman was very pleased to introduce Rupert Barnes as new General Secretary.

Rupert introduced himself and said how nice it was to be back in the role of NAGS General Secretary and he looked forward to working with everybody during his time over the next couple of years.

There are currently 513 NAGS members which represents 91.2% of all commissioned agents which is a great position to be in, but it could be better. He asked all members to identify those agents who are not part of NAGS and to report their names up to the council for them to then approach.

The NAGS website has had an uplift and has now been brought into the 21st-century. He advised everyone to visit the website ([www.nagsonline.org.uk](http://www.nagsonline.org.uk)) and to get familiar with the layout as this will be the source of NAGS literature and templates (including partnership agreements) going forward. He advised that in order to gain access you may need to reset your password which is a straightforward process by inputting your NFU Mutual password and clicking the 'forgot password' link. He said that if anybody was struggling with the website then just to give him a call.

The Vice Chairman suggested for everybody to join the Office 365 Yammer group which shares useful hints and tips. She said it is extremely interesting and by far the easiest format to communicate.

The General Secretary asked the room whether NFU diaries were still distributed to NFU members and after a show of hands, it was clear that diaries are still being sent to their NFU membership.

A point was made regarding the number of diaries available for Group Secretaries to distribute. The question was posed regarding why, if some regions do not send diaries but others do, then why can't the diaries be prioritised for those who do use them?

Rupert responded by saying that as he understands it this is down to advertising and it purely depends on how well they do to the number of diaries they have available.



## TRUSTEES' OF THE BENEVOLENT FUND REPORT

Helen Kirby reported that the number of trustees has increased to 8 thanks to their new, Northern Ireland contingent. She continued by explaining exactly who the trust is for, how it can be used by current Group Secretaries/agents as well as retired ones. Helen wishes to spread the word about the Benevolent Fund to ensure everybody is aware of its existence.

Helen explained that there are currently seven beneficiaries who are extremely grateful for the support they have received.

She continued by saying that there are only six members that do not donate to the charity at present and they will be contacted in due course. She explained that everybody donates through their NAGS membership and is automatically set to donate unless you opt out of doing so.

Helen concluded by offering huge thanks to Virginia Stollery for all of her support and then asked whether anyone had any questions - there were none.

## RESOLUTIONS

There were no resolutions presented to the Secretary prior to the AGM Notice and Meeting.

## ELECTION OF OFFICERS

In accordance with Clause 4(ii), the only nominations from the Regions or Council for Officers of the Association were as follows:-

**Chairman:** Aled Griffiths (North Wales) Proposed by Mervyn Roberts – Mervyn explained that Aled runs a successful agency with a great team and is well supported by his wife and his fellow local agents.

Seconded by David Blackwell

**Vice Chairman:** Gemma Heal (South West) proposed by Mark Ley – Mark said that he had known Gemma for a long time, she does great things and has no doubt that she will be a great asset to the team. Seconded by Kim Brake

**General Secretary:** Rupert Barnes (West Midlands) proposed by Rob Lamb  
Seconded by Peter Foulds

**Honorary Treasurer:** Nick Bent (Central Region) proposed by Rupert Barnes  
Seconded by Aled Griffiths

There were no other nominations and the above were elected unanimously.



## CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT

### Aled Griffiths

Welfare- The Chairman was pleased to announce that following the recent legal negotiations, there has been some fantastic progress with regards to welfare. He reported that there is now a clear complaint process in place for any agents who wish to go down this route without fear of losing their agency. He explained that there is a new 'ways of working' document, that is extremely informative and would be very beneficial to new agents. The Chairman highlighted the fact that there is now a Safecall number for anyone who feels that they are getting bullied in any way shape or form by NFU Mutual.

The Chairman commented that it was great to see such a strong representation from Northern Ireland at this year's conference. He reminisced about his recent trip to Ireland and how well he was received.

Aled reflected on the last year and how busy it has been as Chairman. He explained that he has travelled far and wide, from meetings in head office to shaking the hands of colleagues around the country. He wanted to thank Phil Cornish for helping him so much at the beginning of his time as Chairman and for everybody's support and best wishes when his son was taken to hospital in May. Aled gave his thanks to his team and his business partner Richard for all their hard work and support. He also paid tribute to his mother who is well remembered and sadly passed away last year.

He then invited questions from the floor - there were none.

### ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 12:05

SIGNED.....DATE.....