

## Agenda – NPS Board Meeting

27<sup>th</sup> November 2021

1:30pm – 3:30pm

Online Board Meeting – Zoom

Join Zoom Meeting



<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89218306641?pwd=V1BUQTY2cThmNHhMdEFHWUVrbE9qdz09>

Meeting ID: 892 1830 6641

Passcode: 362820

Meeting ID: ID: 867 8251 3740

Passcode: 369926

**Note: This Meeting will be recorded.**

	Item	Speaker
1	Welcome	AL
2	Minutes of 2020 AGM	AL
3	Chair's Report (including Secretary's Report)	AL
4	Treasurer's Report	ND
5	2021 - 2022 Trusteeships	AL
6	Constitutional amendments / proposed motions	AL
7	Membership questions (15 minutes)	AL / GS / ND
8	AOB	AL
9	Close	AL

## Item 2: Minutes – NPS AGM Meeting

25<sup>th</sup> July 2020

1:30pm – 2:30pm

Venue: Zoom Online Meeting



Membership Attendance:

Richard Mears – Chair

Hannes Ingo Torbohm – Secretary

Nicole Dumes – Treasurer

Jack Grassby.

Faith Goodfellow

Amanda McBride.

Alan Lynn

Scrutineers:

Ethan Field.

Josh Kaluba

	Item	Speaker
<b>1</b>	<b>Welcome</b>	<b>RM</b>
	Chair welcomes Members, explains the new rules for the online AGM and begins meeting.	
<b>2</b>	<b>Minutes of 2019 AGM and 2019 EGM.</b>	<b>RM</b>
	Minutes for both AGM and EGM accepted.	
<b>3</b>	<b>Chair's report given.</b>	<b>RM</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Secretary's report given.</b>	<b>HT</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Treasurer's report given</b>	<b>ND</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>2020 / 2021 Trusteeships.</b>	<b>RM</b>
	There were 7 trusteeships voted on at the AGM and we voted on 7 candidates before the meeting, and thus all were capable of being retained. All trustees were retained, meaning the 2020-2021 trustees will be:	
	Richard Mears Hannes Ingo Torbohm Rachael Page Nathan Allonby	Nicole Dumes Alan Lynn Amanda McBride

## **7 Constitutional amendments / proposed motions**

Chair Gives summary of the reforms, motions and the amendment.

New Code of Conduct.

i. Ethan Field:

1. The Pass rate is 50%.
2. There were 10 Votes, (+1 Abstention)
3. Passed with a result of 100%.

New Complaints Procedure.

i. Ethan Field:

1. The Pass rate is 50%.
2. There were 10 Votes, (+1 Abstention)
3. Passed with a result of 100%.

Membership Amendment to 9.1.b.i.:

i. Ethan Field:

1. The Pass rate is 75%.
2. There were 10 Votes, (+1 Abstention)
3. Passed with a result of 80%.

## **8 Membership Question Slot (15 Minutes)**

Questions were sent to the secretary in advance, and the chair and secretary responded to them together. The chair noted that we would follow the rules set out in the AGM pack. Thus members would have slots assigned to them in chronological order, but also spaced alternately – making sure that every voice has the space to be heard equally, but those who have more questions than others remain the right to ask them.

Question sent in from Helen Rodgers:

Sent from email: “How encouraging are NPS groups at getting attendees to become members? Your report says that you have 73 formal members yet 150 regular attendees. Why don't more people become members with voting rights? ”

1. Chair notes that we have always welcomed new members, and have invited as many as possible to join. We are proud that now members feel more welcome than ever to join, and we need to keep working to keep that going.

2. However, we accept that becoming a member is not something that all will find appealing, and thus aim to make sure that people are aware that membership is an option but not a requirement. We welcome and encourage membership, but ensure that attendees can feel on an equal footing in groups and thus only have to become members if they want voting privileges.

Question sent in from Faith Goodfellow:

Sent from Email: “I am in complete agreement that the code of conduct needed to be revised and having read the current version I am in general agreement with its content. However, as a group leader I feel nervous about having sufficient knowledge and understanding of the code to ensure it is upheld in all my meetings. How can group

leaders be supported to feel confident about ensuring the code of conduct is upheld and can a Trustee present the rationale behind it and the content to the Women Philosophers group at some point in the reasonably near future? ”

1. Both the chair and the secretary voiced their availability for questions made themselves available to resolve any issues with the Trustees new documents. The chair thanks group leaders for their efforts, and Secretary notes that there is a plan going forward to make their lives as easy as possible.

2. The secretary notes that these documents aim to be present upon need, and thus if a group does not need them (e.g. no one invokes them and no one breaks the law), they shouldn't change the experience of attendance.

ii. Faith thanked the chair and secretary for their response.

Question sent as a test of the online form, but included upon Chair's request Hannes Torbohm:

From form: "Could you discuss ideas on how members will be invited to discuss the reform of our procedures going forwards? "

1. There is an initial plan for a working group for future reforms. The Secretary notes that he has already sent to the Board this proposal and it will be discussed in future board meetings. The proposal is for a trustee led working group, and open consultation, which aims to bring to the next AGM a more comprehensive set of reforms to improve the function of the charity.

Questions sent in an email from Helen Rodgers:

From email: "Having an active campaign to ensure more people become voting members of the NPS might help you with another problem you appear to have – few people willing to become Board members. There are not enough names on the list of people standing for the Board for this to be a worthwhile voting system ."

1. The Chair and Secretary agreed that it would be nice if more voting occurred, and this has been a consistent move to democratization through time. The chair notes that voting on trustees is now allowed at AGMs something which before a few years ago was not allowed, and for the second year ever we have enough candidates to fill the slots in the constitution. This is a long process, one we have shown improvement on, and one we continue to want to improve on. Democracy in charities is crucial.

From email: "Why do we have to wait until after voting to question those who are standing for the Board ?"

1. In good faith and transparency, we have aimed to make the system as fair as possible. We have followed the advice from the Charity's Commission and the Government in having an AGM in the time of the pandemic. It is of course not ideal, but we have done our best to follow the advice.

2. Jack Grassby notes that this is irregular and should be avoided.

3. The Secretary notes that in any other year this would be done differently, and the Chair re-affirmed the importance of attempting to have in-person General Meetings in future – on the caveat that it is safe.

Helen Rodgers notes that, to quote from her email, “I do not believe a decent Complaints Procedure can be written until people writing it have a much wider grasp of what injustice is and other systems of reaching justice that this procedure essentially ignores. I am particularly concerned with the assumptions made that people on the Board are somehow capable of leading on sorting complaints out. More should be made of the idea of reconciliation.” How do you respond to these thoughts about the new documentation?

1. The new documents are certainly far from perfect but are better than the old documents. We will be working on this going forwards as indicated before.

## **9 AOB + Thanks for 16 years of service for Jack Grassby**

a. The Chair noted that no one had sent in any note of other business, he asked those in attendance if they had any – no one voiced such an addition.

b. The Chair awarded Jack Grassby with a trophy for his time serving as a trustee, and made a comment about how he has shaped this charity more than any other individual.

Jack Grassby indicates that he is not going anywhere and thanks Richard for the formal award. He states that it has been a pleasure. He found the charity at the age of 80 and found a great deal of pleasure in the people he has met and the ideas he has encountered. He surmises that it has been an interesting time.

## **10 Close.**

### **Item 3: Chair Report (including Secretary's Report)**

My stepping up

The Newcastle Philosophy Society stands at a crossroads. At this point in the COVID-19 pandemic, society activity remains deliberately reduced. I strongly recommend attending Faith's Women Philosophers group, which is at present the only group running. I am sure our other groups are missed and will be valued when they return.

Currently our membership stands at 88 formal members and 1,670 members on Meetup. Of the groups poised to return, women run three quarters and 35% of our registered members are female.

- \_Philosophical Explorations; Fariba as group leader
- \_Cafe Philosophique; Fariba as group leader
- \_The Rdaical Subject Joshua Kaluba as group leader
- \_Women Philosophers; Faith as group leader

I hope you will join me in wishing good luck to the incoming board of members. I also hope that you do not stop there. The society is rich with knowledge and wonderful people. Reach out to each other and the new board and work together to build anew. Start a group, attend a few, and ask questions about making the society better. The aim of the society is to promote public philosophy. Ask the board questions about that over the coming year; ask them what they are doing to promote it.

It is a short report, it does not contain the usual padding and thanks to COVID-19 there is not a lot of activity to report. How might we work together this year to fill up next years report?

Alan Lynn  
Interim Chair

## **Item 4: Financial Statement - May 2020 to April 27th 2021 - The Newcastle Philosophy Society**

### **Operations:**

All payments are now made electronically through either online banking or by using the debit card held by the Treasurer.

### **Bank account signatories:**

- Nicole Dumes (Treasurer)

### **The NPS operates the following finance:**

Reserves Policy – The board should maintain a prudent level of reserves to enable the NPS to continue as an organisation for a period of time should funding from the Royal Society cease. The level of necessary reserves to be maintained has been set at 90-110% of recurring expenditure.

### **Expenses Policy:**

All expenses should be pre-approved. Specific limits have been set for the reimbursement of Speakers expenses. Claims for expenses should be made using the prescribed form.

### **Finance policy**

All payments made by the NPS should be supported by invoices, receipts or other documentation. All proposals that carry a financial cost must be submitted to the board for approval using the prescribed form so that competing proposals may be objectively assessed. These should be submitted to the board and copied to the Treasurer AT LEAST 14 days before the board meeting for the financial impact to be assessed in advance of the board meeting.

### **Income**

Total income for the year was £1,500. Membership is currently free and therefore there were no 'annual subscription' type membership payments this year. A grant from The Royal Institute of Philosophy of £1,500 was received for the stated period.

### **Expenditure**

Total expenditure for the period was £1615.19. The main expenditure for the period was for IT applications, £1,093.63.

### **Restricted Funding**

There are some restrictions on the use of funds received from the Royal Institute of Philosophy. Further the Board feels that donations taken towards room costs at certain events should only be used for that purpose.

The financial records monitor the use of these funds.

### **Reserves**

Information not available.

### **General**

No remuneration was paid to any trustee.

Information presented is an approximation drawn from financial material for the period of May 2020 to April 27th 2021. The material was originally used for a report to the Royal Institute of Philosophy.

Interim Chair 10/11/2021

**Statement-May 2020 to April  
27th 2021**

Receipts		
Grants		
	Royal Institute of Philosophy	1500
	Other	0
Donations		
	Membership	
	Donations	0
	Cash Donations	0
	Online Donations	0
	Legacies	0
Other receipts		
	Bank interest	0
	Sundry receipts	0
	Unexplained transactions	0
Total Receipts		1500
Payments		
Meetings		
	Room Hire	0
	Refreshment	0
Philosophy Festival Speakers		
	Speakers expenses	0
	Operational Costs	0
Expenses		
	Printing	0
	Publishing	0
	Training	0
	Stationary	0
	IT applications	1093.63
	Sundry Expenses	0
	Miscellaneous	521.56
	Unexplained transactions	0

Continued overleaf



Total Payments	1615.19
Net receipts/(payments)	-115.19
Surplus/(Deficit	-115.19
Balance on 27.04.20	5,369.49
Balance on 27.04.21	5,254.30

#### Assets

Cash at Bank	5,254.30
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Trustee cash in hand	
Uncashed cheques	
Paypal Balance	

#### Liabilities

Outstanding liabilities	0
Outstanding invoices	0

Total Assets	5,254.30
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## **Item 5: 2021 - 2022 Trusteeship Nominations**

### **Gerard Barrie**

I have been a member of the NPS for a number of years and have attended some of the groups regularly. Also, I have served on the NPS board before and have in previous years been involved in charity work.

### **Chandra Vemury**

Since 2014, I have been attending NPS events and on a couple of instances I have even delivered presentations. Despite not having formal education in Philosophy, I consider myself to be an amateur philosopher and I regularly socialise with several NPS members. I have considerable experience of serving on and leading third – sector and membership organisations. I would very much like to support NPS and the expansion of its activities by becoming a Trustee.

### **Peter Wood**

I have worked creatively in care settings with grant funders and regulators to facilitate legally compliant systems that meet the idiosyncratic needs and desires of individuals and organisations. For 6 or so years I was a Trustee of the NPS, and carried out a full organisational risk assessment which generated an action plan with milestones for 1, 2 and 5 years. I was also responsible for overseeing the transition from an Unincorporated Charitable Association to a CIO. I studied Philosophy at University and have maintained an interest in this topic, which has included attending NPS events and participating in them.

## **Item 6: Constitutional amendments / proposed motions**

### **Mailchimp Question 4**

Proposition to readmit Peter Wood into the NPS?

### **Mailchimp Question 5**

Proposed motion (Alan Lynn) of support for new board if constitutionally under strength. This is an acknowledgement that the boards only function is to recruit sufficient members by co-option to fulfil the constitutional requirement for there to be three board members as a minimum. Members interested volunteering to assist the board in this task or those interested in co-option should email: [philosecretary@gmail.com](mailto:philosecretary@gmail.com)