

Dear Member

### **NEXT GROUP MEETING**

The next meeting of our group will take place on **Thursday the 7<sup>th</sup> December at 2pm** at St. Mary's Centre 82-90 Corporation Road Middlesbrough TS1 2RW. We aim to finish by 3-30pm. Please note that the meeting has been brought forward by a week to avoid it being too close to Christmas.

Since our last meeting the national AGM has taken place in Coventry. Unfortunately, I was unable to attend through ill health. However, Keith Yallop was there in his capacity as a member of the Standing Orders Committee.

He was able to ensure our group's motion on cuts to public services was debated and adopted by the meeting. The meeting itself was a success and was the first for our new General Secretary Sally Tsoukaris. A full report on the Coventry meeting will be carried in the next issue of the Pensioner-out soon!

One of the areas where the CSPA regularly helps members is in cases of alleged overpayments. This is where Civil Service Pensions contacts a member claiming repayment of what can sometimes be sizeable amounts. Our Personal Pensions Case Manager at HQ Christine Haswell has a wealth of experience dealing with such cases. If you should be contacted then please contact Christine or me in the first instance. We may well be able to help you. If you have contacted MyCSP and still need assistance with a query or difficulty with your civil service pension, please contact CSPA HQ on:

Tel: CSPA HQ **0208 688 8418**  
Email: CSPA HQ at [enquiries@cspa.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@cspa.co.uk).

Do you fall under the post 2016 state pension arrangements and have gaps in your National Insurance history?

Any men born after 5th April 1951 or women born after 5th April 1953 with National Insurance record gaps are able to top up their State Pension with voluntary contributions. Those who were in contracted out schemes and paid reduced National Insurance may want to check their record.

Normally individuals are only allowed to make up contributions going back a limited time, however due to demand, there is a window to go back further. This was due to close in July 2023 but now is open to April 2025.

Visit the Voluntary National Insurance site, for more information. Check your state pension summary on HMRC's pension forecast.

For more information and to pay, visit the Voluntary National Insurance site, including more information to help you plan your retirement.

CSPA HQ plan to use the soon-to-be-launched Later Life Ambitions' pensioners' manifesto entitled "Standing by Pensioners" as part of our Autumn campaign to ensure that the Triple Lock is duly applied to State Pensions in the Autumn Budget and that the Civil Service pensions increases subsequently adhere as they should do to the September CPI rate, to properly reflect cost-of-living increases. This handy document sets out all the main demands of our core campaigns and is being sent to all sitting MPs and other decision-makers, and it will be launched officially at an event in the House of Commons on the 21st of November. If you would like to receive an electronic copy of the manifesto, please email [enquiries@cspa.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@cspa.co.uk) to request one.

We were all pleased to hear that MPs on the Transport Committee had written to the Rail Minister, Huw Merriman MP, outlining concerns about the proposed closures of rail ticket offices and the likely impact on disabled travellers and those with other access needs. The CSPA is now even more pleased that, following sustained campaigning on the part of unions, age sector organisations, disability rights groups and others, the Government has just announced the scrapping of plans to close hundreds of ticket offices around the country! It really shows what can be achieved by determined campaigning.

Anyway, Christmas is now very much in sight, and I hope you've all made a start on your Christmas shopping, and that you are able to spend time with friends and family.

Don't forget that the members benefits scheme continues to be available at the CSPA website [www.cspa.org.uk](http://www.cspa.org.uk) For members without internet access a leaflet is available from CSPA head office providing information on all of the benefits that can be accessed by telephone. Call: 020 8688 8418 for a copy.

As for our meeting I and the other officers very much hope you can come along. A warm welcome is assured as well as the customary tea, coffee and biscuits.

Yours sincerely  
**John Butler**  
**Group Secretary**

## **AGENDA**

1. Welcome from the Chair.
2. Apologies for absence.
3. Minutes of 14<sup>th</sup> September 2023 (Meeting-see below).
4. Matters Arising.
5. Secretary's Report.
6. Treasurer's Report.
7. Membership Report.
8. Regional NPC Report.
9. Report from the AGM at Coventry
10. Any Other Business.

# **MINUTES OF THE GROUP MEETING HELD ON THE 14<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2023 AT MIDDLESBROUGH AT 2PM.**

## **Present**

John Butler, David Barry, Christine Foxton, Marj Bellamy, Linda Fordy. John took the chair.

## **Apologies**

Ken Bellamy, Keith Yallop and Betty Hocking.

## **Minutes of the Group Meeting of 8<sup>th</sup> June 2023**

The minutes were taken as a true record. There were no matters arising.

## **Secretary's Report**

John said he was still sending out info to people who were on his email list. The new General Secretary Sally Tsoukaris was now in post.

## **Treasurer's report**

Christine reported that total funds of the Group amounted to £927.14p in the bank account and £33.47p was cash in hand. Total £960.61. 33 members had contributed £124 to Group funds. All cheques issued had been cleared. The report was accepted with the thanks of the meeting.

## **Membership report**

Keith had told John that the latest figure was still 149.

## **Agenda for the Coventry Annual Meeting.**

John introduced the agenda booklet which had been distributed to all members as an insert in The Pensioner.

Andy Aitchison was the only nomination for the regional representative on the Executive and was therefore deemed elected as were all our other nominees for the various positions. Our motion was included in the agenda. The meeting agreed that John should exercise his discretion as to which motions to support.

## **Any Other Business**

John closed the meeting at 3-05pm.