



**AGM 04/2023**

**Minutes of the 110<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of Napo  
held in person at the Floral Hall, Devonshire Quarter,  
Eastbourne and online 13<sup>th</sup> - 15<sup>th</sup> October 2022**

## **THURSDAY 13<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER**

### **1. WELCOME AND QUORUM**

It was confirmed that the meeting was quorate and over 150 members registered and shown as being in attendance at the event. (At 14.32hrs).

### **2. CHAIR'S ADDRESS TO CONFERENCE**

Katie Lomas, National Chair, addressed conference.

### **3. INTRODUCTION TO MONITORS**

In agreement with the Lead Monitor, Humayun Shouib, the Chair gave an introduction to the role of the Monitors during the course of Conference.

### **4. INTRODUCTION TO STEERING COMMITTEE**

The Chair of Steering Committee, Jeanne Peall, gave an introduction to the role of Steering Committee during the course of Conference.

### **5. MINUTE'S SILENCE**

Conference observed a minute's silence in remembrance of colleagues who had passed away during the previous year.

### **6. MINUTES OF 2021 AGM**

The Minutes (**AGM 04/2022**) were **adopted**.

### **7. NOTIFICATION OF ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

Ben Cockburn continues a first term as Vice-Chair (Probation); Nicola Taylor-Ebong continues a second term as Vice-Chair (Cafcass); and Carole Doherty continues a first term as Vice-Chair (Finance); Helen Banner starts a first term as Chair; Duljit Gill starts and Sue O'Mahoney start a first term as Vice-Chair (Probation).

### **8. ADDRESS TO CONFERENCE**

Jo Sidhu KC, former Chair of the Criminal Bar Association addressed Conference.

### **9. FINANCE REPORT (AGM 05/2021)**

Carole Doherty, Vice-Chair (Finance), introduced the Finance report. Questions were put and responded to on:

- The reasons for a fall in subscription income,
- The Welsh Government Project (Wales Union Learning Fund),

- The continuing net deficit and the projected date when a balanced budget would be produced,
- Whether there were still outstanding representation cases with Thompsons Solicitors,
- The current balance in Reserves,
- Monies owed to HMRC and whether they have been paid.

The Vice-Chair (Finance) report was **approved**.

The appointment of Sturgess Hutchinson (Leicester) Limited as auditors for the year ending 2022 was **approved**.

## **10. EDRIDGE FUND ACCOUNTS & ANNUAL REPORT**

Alan Goode, Edridge Chair presented the Edridge Accounts and Annual Report. The Accounts and Annual report were **approved**.

## **11. NEGOTIATING - PROBATION COMMITTEE: Britain Needs a Pay Rise Now.**

On behalf of Thames Valley Branch, John Ennis requested that this motion be withdrawn.

This AGM agrees to go for a ballot for immediate industrial action given at the time of this motion submission in August that no progress has been made with a decent pay rise for Probation staff and that inflation has now hit over 10% and is expected to significantly rise further. Hard working Probation staff have not had a reasonable pay rise for over three years and many staff are feeling intense financial pressures that only can be alleviated with a fair pay rise. This AGM agrees to support other workers in the quest for a pay rise and agrees that Britain needs a pay rise.

Following a vote, the motion was **withdrawn**.

## **12. CAMPAIGNING NETWORK MOTION: Napo supports the 'Enough is Enough' Campaign.**

On behalf of the Family Court section. It was proposed by Nicola Taylor Ebong and seconded by Sue Hassall that:

'Enough is Enough' is a campaign, to fight the cost of living crisis, founded by Trade Unions and Community Organisations determined to push back against the misery forced on millions by rising bills, low wages, food poverty, shoddy housing and a society run only for the wealthy elite.

The five demands to tackle the crisis are:

- A Real Pay Rise
- Slash Energy Bills
- End Food Poverty
- Decent Homes For All
- Tax the Rich

'Enough is Enough' is building a campaign to win these demands by holding rallies, community organising, organising picket line solidarity and taking action against the companies and individuals profiting from this crisis. The demands of this campaign align with our members concerns and fears for themselves, their families and the communities they serve. Napo supports this vital campaign against the injustice and devastation the cost of living crisis is inflicting.

This motion was **carried**.

### **13. ADDRESS TO CONFERENCE**

Liz Saville Roberts MP, Co-Chair of the Justice Unions Parliamentary Committee

### **14. PROFESSIONAL AND TRAINING NETWORK MOTION: Value your experienced staff.**

On behalf of Napo Cymru, it was proposed by Su McConnel and seconded by Pen Gwilliam that:

Probation has a problem. A dire shortage of experienced practitioners, particularly fully qualified Probation Officers, many of whom are retiring early. Napo demands that the employer takes concrete steps to improve the retention of its most experienced staff, for example,

- survey all staff over 50 years of age to establish their wants and needs in the workplace
- enable a sessional staff bank where retired practitioners could be hired flexibly and locally.

**Amendment:** Napo Cymru proposed the following amendment to the motion

After the second bullet point add:

- offer additional training and support to anyone considering leaving, with a view to retaining them in probation,
- open up access to loans and secondments, which are often an antidote to frontline burnout, as another way to prevent staff leaving.

The mover of the motion accepted the amendment. This was put to conference and the amendment was agreed.

The motion as amended was then put to the conference. This motion was **carried**.

## **15. NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE – CAFCASS/PROBATION MOTION: Hands off our pay.**

The proposer, Keith Stokeld (Staffordshire West Midlands Branch) asked that another member be permitted to second this motion. This was put to conference and **carried**.

Keith Stokeld (Staffordshire West Midlands Branch) proposed and Steve Kelly (Staffordshire West Midlands Branch) seconded that:

This AGM is concerned at the rhetoric coming from the hustings of the two candidates for the Tory leadership seeking to appeal to a narrow section of the population in respect of the way in which public sector workers are rewarded.

This union considers that it is insulting to suggest that productivity is limited to a certain locality or section of the workforce whereby other workers are being set up one against another for the purposes of propagating right-wing rhetoric about value to society of the public sector. Including the contribution of workers in the private sector as a spurious benchmark on which to divide society.

This union therefore seeks to instruct its Officers and Officials through the relevant committees to press the case for the retention of national codes and conditions when it comes to pay and oppose at every level any concept of seeking a regional pay structure. This should include ensuring staff are rewarded with a realistic pay deal that recognises their contribution and hard work. Not based on where they work and live which is counterintuitive to the flawed concept propagated by the Tories of levelling up.

This motion was **carried**.

## **FRIDAY 15<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER**

### **16. QUORUM**

It was confirmed there was a quorum.

### **17. MONITORS' REPORT**

Lead Monitor, Humayun Shouib, gave the Monitors' Report.

### **18. ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTABILITY SLOT**

The General Secretary, Ian Lawrence, introduced and presented the Annual Report 2021/22.

### **19. PROBATION JOURNAL REPORT**

Apologies were given for the absence of a verbal report from the Editor of the Probation Journal, Nicola Carr.

## 20. CONTINUATION OF THE ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTABILITY SLOT

Questions were put and responded to on:

- The measures planned to consolidate or expand TUC led training and whether there is scope to extend the collaborative joint training with other individual Unions, to increase the availability and numbers of accredited representatives for members in disciplinary, grievance and sickness absence procedures.
- The percentage of Napo membership voting on the pay deal.
- The lack of ethnic minority Napo representatives and what Napo is doing to recruit them.
- Progress on the motion on Sickness Absence and the use of discretion by managers, carried at the 2021 AGM. If no progress has been made with HMPPS, what are the reasons for this.
- What has happened to the Professional and Training Network in 2021/2022 and what are the plans for next year?
- The actions taken by Napo, now and in the future, to get people from Black and Minority Ethnic groups to be reps, both locally and nationally.
- In the Napo accounts, £22.369 shown as bank loans and overdrafts when there were none in 2020. What are these loans and overdrafts?
- The NEC section of the annual report comments that the General Secretary needs admin support but an internal recruitment was not successful. Why is needing an administrator is a particular problem?
- The possibility of interim policy decisions by the NEC being more fully reported in the future.

The Annual Report including the 2021 accounts, was **adopted**.

## 21. CHANGEOVER OF OFFICERS

Ian Lawrence, General Secretary made a speech of thanks to Siobhan Foreman, who was stepping down as Vice Chair, to Ikky Bhogal, who had stepped down as Vice Chair during the course of the year and to Katie Lomas, who was stepping down as Chair. He then went on to welcome Duljit Gill as substantive Vice Chair, having been elected an interim Vice Chair on the departure of Ikky Bhogal, Sue O'Mahoney (Kent, Surrey and Sussex Branch) as Vice Chair and Helen Banner (Napo Cymru) as Chair.

## **22. ADDRESS TO CONFERENCE**

Mariela Kohon, Senior International Officer, Trades Union Congress (TUC).

## **23. PROFESSIONAL SESSION ONE**

Panel debate on: 'Hidden sentences, the impact of parents in prison' with speakers Lord Fred Ponsonby, Co-Chair Justice Unions' Parliamentary Group; Sarah Burrows, Chief Executive Officer, Children 'Heard and Seen'; Jack Cordery, Director of Operations, Cafcass.

## **24. COST OF LIVING CRISIS – NATIONAL DAY OF ACTION TUC**

There was a photoshoot of Members taking part in the TUC Day of Action.

## **25. PROFESSIONAL SESSION TWO**

Panel Debate on: 'Probation Reform' with speakers Helen Schofield, Acting Chief Executive Probation Institute and Jim Barton, Executive Director HMPPS Change/SRO for Probation Reform and OneHMPPS Programmes.

## **26. QUORUM**

It was confirmed there was a quorum.

## **27. NEC MOTION: Resisting Attacks on Trade Union Rights**

On behalf of the Family Court Section, it was proposed by Adam Harmsworth and seconded by Paul Walker that:

This AGM notes with alarm new legislation allowing business to hire agency workers during strike action; government threats to legislate a mandatory minimum service during rail strikes, that will undoubtedly be extended to other groups of workers as they take industrial action; and anti-union statements from the Conservative Party leadership candidates.

These proposals are in response to industrial action caused by the growing cost of living crisis, affecting the majority of people across the country, including our members and colleagues.

Therefore, to stand up for our members' interests both in defending their democratic rights and fighting to restore decent pay and working conditions, this AGM believes that the TUC should bring together the trade unions with the aim of co-ordinating action and events, including industrial action, in order to push back against the government's agenda of making the working class pay for the economic downturn.

The TUC must be pressured to take a lead. In the event that the TUC do not coordinate effective action, this AGM requests Napo Officers and Officials to contact sister trade unions with the aim of co-ordinating protest and industrial action as a 'coalition of the willing'. Progress should be reported at each NEC meeting.

The motion was **carried**.

**28. HEALTH AND SAFETY NETWORK MOTION: Is your wellbeing initiative making me ill?**

On behalf of South Yorkshire Branch, it was proposed by Sally Penney and seconded by Peter Nowell that:

This AGM is concerned that the Probation Service's over-reliance on the use of counselling services for staff, who report stress and anxiety, ignores evidence such as that presented by Jo Clark. This suggests that rather than helping to enhance resilience, this "blanket approach" may in fact be re-traumatising those it intends to support. Whilst counselling may be useful for some, referrals should only be made by a qualified practitioner, accounting for the individual's personal circumstances, health issues and the cause of stress.

A reliance on counselling does not address external factors causing an individual to become ill. Factors such as workload, limited resources or badly managed change are not the fault of the person affected.

This AGM therefore instructs Napo to:

- explore the work presented by Jo Clark and others, and to use evidence to identify any risks associated with this approach,
- argue for a nuanced, holistic approach to improving the wellbeing of staff,
- put an end to the wholesale referring of staff for counselling whilst making it clear that the Service must take responsibility for the negative impact Probation work is having on its greatest asset - it's staff.

The motion was **carried**.

**29. EQUAL RIGHTS COMMITTEE MOTION: Time for a reality check on staffing and work loads**

It was proposed by Keith Stokeld and seconded by Ralph Coldrick that:

This AGM is concerned at the Probation Service's failure to retain and recruit staff who reflect the community we work in. It is time to assess how increasing workloads with other factors have led to a depletion of staff, including those seeking to leave through early retirement and those struggling to work within the around supporting a shrinking frontline work force or attract staff able and willing to see through PQiP and stay.

This AGM instructs the Officers and Officials to investigate the reality behind this situation and seek to work with HMPPS on formulating a realistic solution.

That it commissions a joint survey to establish the age profile of the workforce and seek other answers about the morale and other factors that influence the resilience of staff. One that seeks answers about how valued they view their role and what would encourage them to remain.



It is time to explode some myths including how individuals consider their contribution accords with their grade, gender, sexuality, and racial identity. That this leads to a service where staff regardless of age or length of service feel welcome and valued.

The motion was **carried**.

### **30. NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE – CAFCASS MOTION: Set Cafcass Free.**

On behalf of the Family Court Section, it was proposed by Steve Hornby and seconded by Nicki Kenny that:

Cafcass was formed by an amalgamation of workers from the civil service, the probation service and local government. Today Cafcass recruits its social work practitioners and managers almost exclusively from local government. In order to recruit and retain staff able to undertake the complex work undertaken by Cafcass practitioners and provide effective management oversight, Cafcass needs to be able to offer competitive rates of pay. The current cost of living crisis has exacerbated the difficulties that Cafcass have in maintaining competitive rates of pay while tied by government to civil service pay restrictions. Cafcass management need to be free to negotiate with the trade unions on the annual cost of living rise and the pay structure in Cafcass without these restrictions, so that Cafcass staff can receive a cost of living increase comparable to that awarded to their colleagues in Local Government.

This AGM calls upon Napo Officers and Officials to coordinate action to persuade the relevant government ministers to release the shackles on Cafcass management and allow them to provide their work force with a pay award that will allow Cafcass to retain existing staff and continue to recruit staff with the necessary skills and experience.

The motion was **carried**.

### **31. CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT 1: Section 14 Annual General Meetings, Section 30 Amendments, Appendix A Standing Order 4**

*The following Constitutional Amendments are proposed to 'tidy up' the Constitution following the move to turn non-constitutional Committees into Networks and remove the barrier and allow for greater participation by Networks enhancing Napo's democratic processes.*

On behalf of the NEC, it was proposed by Katie Lomas and seconded by Carole Doherty that:

#### **14 (e) insert in line 2 'and networks,' after 'or any of its committees'**

**Delete the final sentence in 14 (e) from:** 'The General Secretary ...' and replace with: 'The General Secretary shall circulate to all members the details of all such motions not less than six weeks before the date of the AGM'.

#### **14 (f) insert in line 2 'and networks,' after 'any of its committees'**

**14 (h) subject to Standing Orders 7 re the Emergency Motions ‘and networks,’ after ‘any of its committees’**

Section 14 of Constitution to then read as follows:

**14. Annual General Meetings (AGM)**

- (a) There shall be an AGM in each year.
- (b) Notice of the AGM, giving the proposed date and the particulars of the nature of the business to be transacted, shall be circulated to all members entitled to attend not less than six calendar months before the proposed date of the meeting.
- (c) The Annual Report and the audited statement of accounts shall be presented for approval to the AGM.
- (d) An auditor or auditors shall be appointed by the AGM, shall serve until the next AGM and shall be eligible for re-appointment.
- (e) The AGM shall consider any motion of which notice has been given in writing to the General Secretary by the NEC or any of its committees and networks, a branch, The Forum, or two full or professional associate members, not less than eight weeks before the date of the AGM. 'The General Secretary shall circulate to all members the details of all such motions not less than six weeks before the date of the AGM'.
- (f) Notice of proposed amendments to motions shall be given in writing to the General Secretary by the NEC, any of its committees and networks, a branch, The Forum, or two full or professional associate members not less than two weeks before the date of the AGM. Details of the proposed amendments shall be available at the AGM.
- (g) In exceptional circumstances if it is deemed necessary in the interests of the furtherance of the objects of the Association, the NEC, or the Officers acting between meetings of the NEC, may vary the deadlines in clauses (b), (e) and (f) above.
- (h) Subject to Standing Order 7 the AGM shall also consider any emergency motion of which notice has been given in writing to the General Secretary, or at the AGM to the chair of the Steering Committee acting on behalf of the General Secretary, by the NEC, any of its committees and networks, a branch or two full or professional associate members.
- (i) The Steering Committee shall arrange the order of business and the detailed arrangements, including the timetable, for each session of the AGM.

- (j) Visitors invited by the NEC may attend such parts of the AGM as shall be determined by the NEC, subject to the ruling of the chair of the meeting.

**30 (b) delete the final sentence:** 'The General Secretary...' and replace with 'The General Secretary shall circulate details of any such proposed amendments to all members not less than six weeks before the meeting.'

### **Consequential Amendments to Standing Orders:**

**Standing Order 4 (a) line 4 delete 'or' after 'branch' and insert a comma, then insert 'or network' after 'committee'.**

The constitutional amendment was **carried**.

### **32. CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT 2: Appendix A Standing Order 14**

*This Constitutional Amendment is just to clarify The Standing Orders Section 14 (a) regarding 'Closing the Debate':*

On behalf of the NEC, it was proposed by Katie Lomas and seconded by Carole Doherty that:

As it stands:

A call for the 'the closure' or for 'next business' may be proposed and seconded only by members who have not spoken at any time in the debate. No speeches are allowed on such calls.

Insert in Standing Orders 14 (a):

**After 'in the debate' – INSERT:**

**Members who are raising points of order or requests for information are not deemed to have spoken in the debate.**

The constitutional amendment was **carried**.

### **33. CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT 3: Section 12 (c) General Secretary Election**

*The constitution section relating to the General Secretary election is not consistent with the legislation governing such elections. This CA seeks to remedy this to refer to the appropriate legislation.*

On behalf of the NEC it was proposed by Katie Lomas and seconded by Carole Doherty, that:

**To insert in section 12 (c) in the first sentence after ...every five years... "in line with the Trade Union Labour Relations (consolidation) Act 1992 (noting the exemption from election allowed for in section 58 of that Act)."**

So the section will now read (with the added line in blue):

Section 12 – Appointment of Employees

(c) The General Secretary shall be elected by secret ballot of full members every five years **in line with the Trade Union Labour Relations (consolidation) Act 1992 (noting the exemption from election allowed for in section 58 of that Act)**. The election shall be held at a convenient time prior to the five year period elapsing. She or he shall be eligible for re-election.

**34. Under Standing Order 10 (c) for the Conduct of General Meetings**, there were a number of requests for information from the floor, which were responded to by the proposer.

**35. Under Standing Order 14 (a) for the Conduct of General Meetings**, ‘next business’ was proposed by Jeremy Cameron (London Branch) and seconded by Peter Rowe (Cheshire, Greater Manchester Branch). This proposal was **carried**.

**36. CAMPAIGNING NETWORK MOTION: Cost of Living – People on Probation**

On behalf of London Branch, it was proposed by David Masterson and seconded by Raimondo Carta that:

This AGM understands clients detained in England and Wales may disproportionately struggle upon release with the rapid increase in the cost of living.

Despite the increase to the discharge grant in 2021, this remains inadequate to meet any real expenses for prison leavers.

Clients may leave so called ‘local’ prisons with no travel cards/warrants or bus tickets but they may need to travel miles to reach their local Probation Office.

Prison Governors still retain the power to approve or reject the discharge grant and/or any application for travel warrants, in contradiction to PSI.72/2011 (Revised 16.08.2021).

Due to COVID, applications for State Benefits cannot be initiated and completed from the Prison, Clients are given appointments with their local JCP Office on release and it may take up to 6 weeks to receive payments. Access to support/food/discharge packages varies across areas and there are inconsistent arrangements among PDUs.

This branch calls on Napo to undertake the following:

- a joint campaign with Partnership Agencies to provide emergency release pack support to prison leavers,
- a joint campaign with HMPPS Resettlement Teams to secure adequate funding to support community reintegration upon release,
- campaign for sponsorship and funding for Clients who need adequate clothing for release.

The motion was **carried**.

**37. CAMPAIGNING NETWORK MOTION: Replace the Rehabilitation Activity Requirement (RAR).**

It was proposed by Mike Guilfoyle (London Branch) and seconded by Chris Hignett (London Branch) that:

This conference supports the need to revoke the Rehabilitation Activities Requirement (RAR) currently part of a Community/Suspended Sentence Order and reinstate the two requirements which it replaced in 2015: the *Supervision Requirement* and the *Activity Requirement*. Such a step would necessitate legislative change. In light of the unification of the probation service, we believe such an important legislative change would be opportune and once again enhance the supervisory role of the case manager which is central to effective probation practice. Currently many Sentencers view the RAR as bewilderingly vague, particularly on levels of contact and content of activities, and retain concerns that this requirement is being unevenly implemented and enforced, resulting in a loss of judicial confidence.

We therefore call upon Campaigning and Professional Networks to:

- campaign for this legislative change, by liaising with the Magistrates Association, the judiciary and the MoJ,
- draft an action plan of how this might be supported by practitioners and enacted in a timely manner.

Supervision had been the foundation of probation practice for more than a century. Now is the time to act to restore its evidence based centrality in a reunified service whilst ensuring it is properly resourced and enabled.

The motion was **carried**.

**SATURDAY 15<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER**

**38. QUORUM**

It was confirmed there was a quorum.

**39. MONITORS' REPORT**

The Lead Monitor, Humayun Shouib, gave the Monitors' Report.

**40. ADDRESS TO CONFERENCE**

Ellie Reeves, MP, addressed Conference.

**41. NEC MOTION: Stop the Rot: Professionalism (Probation).**

On behalf of London Branch, it was proposed by Peter Halsall and seconded by Patricia Johnson that:

This AGM notes yet another professional skill/practice has been removed from probation officer roles with the recent changes to the Parole and Review of Re-release processes.

This AGM believes that changes to probation officer roles and responsibilities such as those brought by OMIC, and the move to more 'on the day' reports by PSOs are being done by the 'back door' to de-skill and downgrade our roles and provide 'justification' for poor pay.

This AGM further believes we need to fight for our professional integrity and our professional status before we lose it completely and calls on national Napo to :

- work with other Criminal Justice partners and unions to maintain our professional standards in Courts,
- fight the changes to the Parole process and fight to reinstate our ability to make recommendations,
- support staff involved in open parole hearings,
- continue to fight OMIC especially the line management of probation staff by prisons.
- campaign to take us out of the Civil Service in order to regain our independent professional status.

The motion was **carried**.

#### **42. NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE – CAF/CASS/PROBATION MOTION: Stop the rot: Pay**

On behalf of London Branch, Patricia Johnson requested that this motion be withdrawn.

This AGM believes: that Probation Service and Family Court Services are over worked and underpaid.

This AGM understands that caseloads are climbing and staff numbers are dwindling throughout while pay rises appear to have been almost non-existent over the last 10 years.

This AGM believes we need to be paid properly as a first step to retaining and attracting staff in order to lower workloads

This AGM calls on national Napo to work with other associated Trades Unions to negotiate for a decent pay rise and if this is not forthcoming to ballot our members regarding industrial action.

Following a vote, the motion was **withdrawn**.

#### **43. NEC MOTION: HMPPS Probation Model Irredeemably Flawed**

On behalf of Napo Cymru, it was proposed by Su McConnel and seconded by Kathryn Oakley that:

The consistently poor HMIP inspection reports tell a sorry tale, but the Inspector falls short in failing to say what everybody knows: that the HMPPS governed Probation Service is a model that is “Irredeemably flawed”. It is, after all, one half of the post-TR model that was assessed by the then chief inspector as irredeemably flawed.

Napo will redouble our demands for Probation to be taken out of the civil service, and unshackled from the Prison Service. Napo members will write to their MPs making this position clear. The NEC will draft a suggested briefing note and letter, and Napo will engage in a press and communications exercise, responding to each of the inevitable future “poor” and “needs improvement” inspection report making this position clear.

The motion was **carried**.

#### **44. PROFESSIONAL AND TRAINING NETWORK MOTION: Rethinking the PQiP**

On behalf of the Mercia Branch, it was proposed by Andrea Kocsondi and seconded by Jo Perkins that:

Napo recognises that a significant proportion of trainee probation practitioners have experienced less than adequate support despite what was advertised when they committed to the programme. PQiPs in some PDUs, especially those in amber or red, outweigh the number of qualified practitioners which often means that they have no allocated mentors to guide and support them. This situation is increasingly worrying in many ways. Trainees are not getting the necessary practical learning that a mentor could provide. They are also much more likely to experience burn-out, feelings of isolation and hopelessness. The academic component of the training is predominantly self-directed studying, despite it being advertised as a taught course. Without mentorships to feel confident in developing their practice, and with very little academic teaching, these trainees are still expected to produce work of the highest practice standard.

This programme may not be fit for purpose anymore and requires re-structuring in order to offer all PQiPs the same opportunities for learning. This AGM asks that we see a review of the PQiP 15- and 21-month pathways, with special attention paid to how the ever increasing workloads impact on our trainees’ professional development and wellbeing.

The motion was **carried**.

#### **45. NEC MOTION: Napo Subscriptions review cost of living crisis**

On behalf of Thames Valley Branch, it was proposed by John Ennis and seconded by Bernard Morris that:

This Napo AGM agrees to review Napo subscription rates, particularly for lower paid staff given the cost of living crisis. This review would include targets to increase membership that would cover the shortfall in reduced membership rates.

The motion was **carried**.

**46. PROFESSIONAL AND TRAINING NETWORK MOTION: Qualified then Quit.**

On behalf of the Mercia Branch, it was proposed by Andrea Kocsondi and seconded by Jo Perkins that:

The mass recruitment of trainee probation practitioners has been promised to provide a solution for the rapidly increasing workloads and staff shortages. Napo believes that the focus should be on the more important staff retention problem. It is almost too common to hear about newly qualified practitioners searching for other jobs and handing in their notice, only weeks or months after qualifying. The protection and support promised for the first year of their career is grossly overlooked. Many are handed the entire caseloads of retiring practitioners and/or have to work with complexities they have little experience with. Most are left to do all this in an unfamiliar office and without the guidance of a mentor.

This AGM asks that this be taken up as an issue to protect our newly qualified staff. It asks that policy around protected caseloads and support are reviewed, especially considering what is in place to safeguard new practitioners working in amber and red offices.

The motion was **carried**.

**47. NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE – CAFCASS/PROBATION MOTION: Flexible Working Retention tool.**

On behalf of Thames Valley Branch, it was proposed by Bernard Morris and seconded by John Ennis that:

This AGM notes that probation staff have appreciated the ability to have flexible working, including the ability to work from home which has assisted staff in their wellbeing during the pandemic. Therefore, this AGM agrees to campaign to get flexible working, including working from home as part of Probation/Cafcass terms and conditions which can be seen as a positive retention tool.

The motion was **carried**.

**48. NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE – PROBATION MOTION: Sickness Policies – Unfit for work- Unfit for Purpose.**

On behalf of London Branch it was proposed by Patricia Johnson and seconded by David Raho that:

This AGM believes the current Probation Service Attendance Management Policy is unfit for purpose. It is far too punitive and does not reflect the realities of working in a pandemic or in an organisation where workloads are unsustainable and stress inducing.



This AGM understands people are receiving warnings for being off work with work related stress, COVID and Long COVID and even for absences relating to close family bereavements. People off work with disability related issues are also receiving warning letters instead of support. This is not helping burnout or staff retention.

This AGM is appalled that manager members are no longer confident using their management discretion and instead rely on Human Resources Business Partner advice that is often incorrect.

This AGM calls on national Napo to negotiate a better policy that places management discretion at the forefront through training and processes and revisits the punitive nature of our current sickness management policies.

The motion was **carried**.

#### **49. PROFESSIONAL AND TRAINING NETWORK MOTION: Programmes: Target Operating Model; impact on staff**

It was proposed by Carole Doherty (East Coast Branch) and seconded by Ben Cockburn (Northumbria Branch), on behalf of the Probation and Training Network that:

This AGM notes that consultation on the target operating model for programmes is drawing to a close. However, we also note that the proposals could potentially have a negative impact on current programme staff, in particular those that work in the Divisional Sex Offender Units as well as the wider business. The proposals may well lead to all programme staff being put on to Band 3 irrelevant of whether or not they have a probation qualification, extensive experience or deliver programmes for those that commit sexual offences. This AGM also notes that this could lead to large numbers of staff either being redeployed in the service or leaving altogether despite having an enormous amount of experience in this very specialist work and having dedicated many years to this area of business. It also de-professionalises the work programme staff do, could potentially undermine public protection and impact on the wider business.

We therefore call on Officers, Officials and Professional and Training Network to do the following:

- Raise awareness amongst members of the wider impact and encourage involvement at engagement events and workshops.
- Raise our professional concerns with the programmes teams nationally.

The motion was **carried**.

#### **50. PROFESSIONAL AND TRAINING NETWORK MOTION: Court Probation Staff are not Lawyers**

On behalf of Thames valley Branch, it was proposed by John Ennis and seconded by Bernard Morris that:

Napo notes that PSO Court Workers are being instructed to prosecute contested breach cases. This work is rightfully that of qualified prosecution lawyers. Court PSO's have neither the training nor the financial reward for this work. This demand of our employer, if enacted, will put court staff in a difficult and stressful position. It will also undermine the effectiveness of breach prosecutions, leading to a deterioration of the reputation of Probation in the courts, and an increase in numbers of those accused of breach, choosing to deny, further overloading an already creaking court system.

Napo will oppose this practice, support our court staff in so doing, both in negotiations with the employer and by alerting stakeholders to this issue.

The motion was **carried**.

#### **51. PROFESSIONAL AND TRAINING NETWORK MOTION: Next generation of Programmes**

It was proposed by Carole Doherty (East Coast Branch) and seconded by Ben Cockburn (Northumbria Branch), on behalf of the Probation and Training Network that:

AGM notes with dismay the proposal that probation will disband the majority of the suite of programmes delivered and move to a one size fits all approach. This will see one programme delivered for all clients in mixed cohorts both in prison and the community. We note that this is being done without any evidence being provided to Napo regarding the effectiveness of this approach. We also note that little or no thought is being given to the risks posed to both clients and staff from such a delivery model. We are deeply concerned that alongside the proposed operating model this is a further de-professionalisation of probation and undermines and under values the hard work our members in programmes do to reduce and manage risk. Such a massive change to how we work is being rushed through due to poor planning on the part of the employer. This motion therefore calls for Napo to:

- hold regular engagement events with members affected,
- remind the employer we are an evidenced led organisation and demand sight of all evidence this model is based on,
- if required, reject this proposal in its entirety.

The motion was **carried**.

#### **52. NEC MOTION: Support for the General Secretary**

On behalf of the Family Court Section, Steve Hornby requested that this motion be withdrawn.

This conference recognises the great contribution that our General Secretary makes to promoting our union and defending our members. His strengths in negotiation and effective communication are recognised. This conference is of the view that the General Secretary should focus on his strengths and not spend time completing administrative tasks. We therefore call on the Officers group to ensure that the General Secretary has access to sufficient administrative support to allow him to concentrate on his strengths.

Following a vote, the motion was **withdrawn**

### **53. CAMPAIGNING NETWORK MOTION: Human Rights: Inhuman Treatment**

On behalf of London Branch, it was proposed by Patricia Johnson and seconded by David Raho that:

This AGM believes everyone should be equitable and have autonomy to make their own decisions over their own bodies. It also believes people should not suffer any form of discrimination in the workplace or outside it.

This AGM understands this is not the case and those with protected characteristics are still having to fight to maintain hard earned rights. For example, the repeal of Wade v Roe in the US Supreme Court highlighted that women's rights can be removed if they are not enshrined in law. In this country many rights, have been dependent on 'conscience' votes (non-party lines) in parliament until being enshrined in the Equality Act 2010.

This AGM also understands the government intends to overrule the Human Rights Act which is likely to undermine current Equalities legislation and dilute the rights of those with protected characteristics.

This AGM calls on Napo Campaigning Network alongside Officers and Officials, to strenuously oppose any changes in Human Rights/Equality legislation and campaign for stronger rights under the Equality Act.

The motion was **carried**.

### **54. CLOSURE AND THANKS**

Helen Banner, Chair, closed the Conference. She thanked all those members attending both in person and online with a particular welcome for first time attendees; Steering Committee and all the Stewards; the Monitors; the Napo AGM Organising Team (Keith Waldron, Tay Burke, Jacqui Paryag, Annoesjka Valent) and all the other Napo staff not present at Conference but assisting throughout; Majella, Alex and all the staff at the Eastbourne Conference Centre; Rock Warehouse (Dawn, Gary, John, Beth and Gigi); the DJ Andy Smith for the evening entertainment; stall holders; the Edridge Fund; Julie the photographer; the Officers and Officials; all the speakers at Conference and fringe meetings including all Guest Speakers;

The 2023 Conference and AGM will be an hybrid event taking place from Thursday 19th to Saturday 21th October at the East Midlands Conference Centre in Nottingham.