

**The Cheshire Area of NAFAS**  
**Virtual Minutes of Area Council Meeting on Zoom**  
**Thursday 16 July 2020 at 7pm**

**Officers Present:** Chairman – Nicky Wylie, 2nd Vice Chairman – Louise Jones, Treasurer – Tracy-Anne Clancy, Secretary – Morag McCord, Minutes Secretary – Shiona Fosh.

**36 Participants**

**1.APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:**

1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chairman – Chris Gibbons, RCCS floral marquee chairman - Joan Wilkinson, Area Speakers rep - Kathleen Williams.

**2. Chairman's remarks – Nicky Wylie**

Chris Gibbons is stepping away from NAFAS due to family matters.  
Sadly Helen Wickham of Elworth FC. was killed just before lockdown.  
The officers have been meeting every few weeks by zoom.  
The officers have tried to keep in touch with the clubs by phone call.

Actions:

- NAFAS has sent out information about the situation at H.Q.
- The clubs in Cheshire are against giving a loan to H.Q.
- H.Q. are thinking about taking a business interruption loan from the Government. The time length has not been decided but after a year it has an interest rate of 2.5%.
- Osborne House is fully owned by NAFAS at a value of 4- 4 half million pounds.
- They are deciding whether to rent/sell or meet somewhere else which is less expensive.

Two studies are taking place:

Analysis of strengths and weaknesses of NAFAS

Financial feasibility study about Osborne house to seek the best solution.

- Nicky mentioned that doing the Westminster Abbey flower arrangements do not cost area anything.
- NAFAS new website will soon be on line and the office staff are going to maintain it.
- Two directors have resigned Craig Bullock and Pam Ferguson for unknown reasons.
- Muir Simpson has resigned from the Flower Arranger magazine.
- Pat Martin, Michael Bowyer have been co-opted onto the board until the AGM.

It was thought that H.Q. had not been behaving in a business-like manner e.g.

Nobody was furloughed at the beginning of lockdown, that the Flower Arranger magazine nafas news wasn't stopped or put on line thus potentially saving £8,000 a year. That VAT was continuing to be paid for membership fees. (This point is being argued by the accountants.)

**QUESTIONS**

- Anne Bingham –Jones: pointed out that HQ had a lack of control over costs, that staff hadn't been trained and there were no budgets for the events.

Nicky Wylie: National show had a lack of control, no contracts were written up, all the finance was guess work, no overseeing of budgets. HQ still does not know how many members they have got as members belong to more than one club.

Cheshire area needs to address the numbers of members situation so that they can predict how many will come to an event.

C.E.O. has got this point in hand and is also setting proper budgets. Also getting in experts to help them.

- Pat Wood: it took her 3 weeks to get an answer from HQ. which does not inspire her with confidence.
- Elizabeth Lindsey: Do they think that HQ are treating us with respect? Renting Osborne House is not a good idea as it is a minefield! It should be sold.

- Nicky Wylie: The board is taking this very seriously. There will be a lot of money if the house is sold and this will have to be managed carefully. It is also their only financial asset.
- Bernard Preston: Lease the property over 20years? What about Strategic matters and their ability to deal with it?
- Sharon Nolan: You may have heard that I am doing some work for HQ, I am endeavouring to draw up a high-level plan of what needs to be done and to pull together the requirements for a replacement for Osborne House. I am tackling this work as a project manager and am endeavouring to pull together objective information which will help in the decision-making process. If anyone wants to know more, call me. Please do not send me your views on what should happen to Osborne House - send them to the CEO or Trustees.
- Carol Sargent: Pointed out that the public needs to know who NAFAS is!
- Nicky: Steve CEO is very well aware of this.
- Bernard Preston: Journalistic representation is needed.

### **3.Treasurer – Tracy-Anne Clancy**

- The balances on the accounts as at 16.07.2020 are as follows:

Barclays Bank - Current Account (F&GP) £19,329.94

Barclays Bank – Savings Account £26,892.47

Leek United Building Society - £10,000 (2yr Bond – matures in July 2020)

JDS&E Current Account £8,769.68

- Budget for 2020

We had planned to spend £15,000 this year funded partly by Affiliation Fees (£7,653.15) with the balance from savings. We have actually spent £11,645 so far (pre lockdown) as our financial year starts on 1st August. The analysis of budgeted / actual expenditure is:

<b>Description</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Actual</b>
Travel Expenses / Hall Hire /Printing & Postage	£3,000	2,300
New Website	£3,500	£3,500
Support for Area Events:		
Area Lunch	£1,300	£5,845
Area Social Day	£2,000	£0
Area AGM	£2,200	£0
Shows (Arley, RCCS etc.)	£3,000	£0

- Contribution to Area

The Officers of Cheshire Area of NAFAS recognise that keeping in line with current government guidelines on gatherings and following discussions with most of you, it is almost impossible for clubs to accurately predict what club membership is / will be for the forthcoming year. With this in mind, we will not be requesting the usual Affiliation Fees this year. We do however request that your Club makes a donation to Area, equivalent to 50% of last year's Affiliation Fess, to be paid ideally by 30th November but by 31st March at the latest. If paid, this would amount to approximately £12,000 in total. Although we do have healthy bank balances currently, we need to recognise that we will need funds to invest in our future, post lockdown, to grow our membership. We would also like to be able to resume some of the events, planned for 2020, when it is safe to do so. Additionally, in order to retain our NAFAS Affiliated status we would also need to make a donation to HQ, although the amount will be determined in due course, when we have further information on the financial situation.

- Area Lunch Refunds

I am still awaiting bank details from the following clubs, such that refunds can be made: Tarporley, Mid Cheshire, Stockport, Ashton Hayes & Tarvin.

Would those club's treasurers please advise me of their club's bank details so that a refund can be BACS direct.

## QUESTIONS

- Pat Wood: Do we send 50% donation instead of the affiliation fees?
- Tracy-Anne: Yes
- Pat Wood: What about the Demonstrators fees?
- Tracy-Anne: Think of your fees split in two one half for demonstrations and the other half affiliation fees. Treat your demonstrators individually and see what they are charging.
- Nicky Wylie: Each club is different.
- Sharon Nolan: What is HQ doing about the affiliation fees?
- Tracy-Anne: Some clubs have sent their fees already but Cheshire have not sent theirs.
- Tracy-Anne: Cheshire is still deciding what to do.
- Bernard Preston: How many members are in NAFAS?
- Nicky Wylie: In Cheshire we are going to make a list of all members in April 2021 and collect data about which clubs they belong to.
- Carol Sargent: Congratulated everyone on the board for working so hard. Wondered why we had to pay £6,000 for the area lunch after we had cancelled it.
- Tracy-Anne: We cancelled 4 days before the event and just before lockdown, so we had to pay the full amount. But we have rebooked 12 July 2021 with a credit against the meal.
- Jean Jones: Suggested that area releases a statement to each club.
- Tracy-Anne: We are going to put out an explanation and census form to each club.

### **4.Judges, Demonstrators, Speakers & Education-Nicky Wylie**

Demonstrators are getting in touch with clubs. Each club has a different situation and therefore will have different negotiations. Virtual demonstrations are a possibility. Need to get a media presence out there on Facebook. We need to keep our members informed and connected.

### **5.Finance and General Purposes –Nicky Wylie**

The area website will be up and running by next week.

Clubs need to publicise their upcoming events direct to Mike Gallagher on:

[website@nafascheshire.org.uk](mailto:website@nafascheshire.org.uk)

- The web site is iPhone and iPad friendly
- Programmes to be sent to website manager.
- There is an inventory of all the equipment that Cheshire has.
- 'Hands on' is still available.
- Minutes of meetings.
- Members can subscribe to the website and be sent all the relevant information.
- Events are going to be advertised once a month.
- New information for this site will be sent to clubs by August 2020.

### **6. Social– Louise Jones**

- Golden Area Lunch - has been moved to 12 July 2021 – Application forms to be sent to clubs in the New Year.
- Floral Catwalk - Fashion Show – will be held in March next year. To allow for those who work/mind grandchildren etc... this will now be an evening event.

Hoping to have our workshops towards end of this year – Mark Entwistle has some fabulous ideas and I am sure we will all have fun and learn so much.

- Flower arranging videos – we are arranging to have short flower arranging videos on Cheshire website and Facebook pages. All demonstrators and judges have been asked to consider this.

This is now being extended to anyone in our area – please promote it round your club – being an optimist I am hoping to have a new video on every week from August to Christmas. I need to make sure we have videos in the pipeline.

All those who submit a video can claim up to £25 towards their flowers.

Looking forward to belatedly celebrating our Golden Anniversary next year.

## **QUESTIONS**

- Irene Preston: Asked about distancing at the Area lunch.
- Louise Jones: Staging and distancing are being discussed.
- Irene Preston: Workshops can be expensive. They need more direction and a list of materials.
- Louise Jones: We can provide flowers e.g. £10 or a structure could be made at the workshop and the flowers filled in at home.
- Pat Wood: Was worried about if they had to change the time of their lunchtime group.
- Louise Jones: Things that work well for your particular club keep. Each club is different. Think about how you could encourage younger people.
- Sue Clissold: Demonstrations with materials provided works well for a small fee.

## **7. REPORTS**

### **Judges-Sue Clissold**

- National Judges Meeting reports have been received for 14/1/2020 and 10/6/2020
- Judges Conference at Dromantine, N Ireland, has been re-scheduled for 14/15/16 May 2021. All who booked for this year will receive priority booking forms and new applicants please contact Sylvia at Head office to go on waiting list

Judges training is still on-going via zoom, email and post. Tests dates have been provisionally agreed:

7 Sept. 2020 Mocks  
4 Oct. 2020 Period flower arranging  
5 Oct. 2020 Interim day - feedback on Mock tests  
26 Oct. 2020 Actual Test

- As meetings held via zoom are proving very effective possibilities, Judges Rep. days and A & I meetings could happen on one day but no final decision has been made.  
Provisional dates for next year:

Reps. day 15/6/2021

National Committee meeting 16/2/2021 via zoom

A and I meeting 16/2/2021

All subject to confirmation nearer the time.

- Good activity on Judges Facebook page and Instagram account. Contributions from judges very welcome.
- Show work for Beginners leaflet on hold for the moment but will be put on Judges Facebook page when ready.
- Percentage marks for judges' tests were agreed at 60/65% for Area tests and 70/75% for National tests.
- Next National judging committee meeting will be by zoom on 22/9/2020

### **Demonstrators – Diane Fair**

- The National Demonstrators Committee meeting was held on 16th June 2020 via Zoom.

- National Test and Pre-National Assessment- Northwich Memorial Court.

The National Test was cancelled due to Covid on 23rd and 24th April 2020, rescheduled to take place on 21st and 22nd April 2021. 12 candidates will be confirmed nearer date.

Vanessa Keys at HQ. is selling tickets @ £12 per ticket per day. [vanessa@nafas.org.uk](mailto:vanessa@nafas.org.uk)

Cheshire Area required to provide 2 helpers per day to assist with unloading at rear of hall and 1 person to help with parking and directing to car parks. Cheshire will organise the raffle each day, provide the Plant ID bottles, and drapes for long tables in main hall.

- The Demonstrators Symposium is being planned for 21st-24th April 2022 venues are being investigated.
- The Demonstrators Bulletin was discussed and has since been issued and I have sent it out to all demonstrators on our Area List.
- Next Demonstrators Reps. Day is being planned for 25th January 2021- this will be confirmed in September.
- D form D3b has been revised concerning Extreme conditions has been updated and every club and demonstrator should have received this along with the flow charts regarding a club or demonstrator cancelling a demonstration.
- Next National Demonstrators Committee meeting is on 15th September 2020

#### AREA REPORT

- The Demonstrators Refresher day took place on 15th March 2020 only 8 Area demonstrators attended due to health worries.
- The Pre-Disciplines course organised for this spring had to be cancelled but will be re-arranged when things return to normal. It was encouraging to see we had 8 people interested.

Dawn Weaver has recently moved house and her new address is-

2 Gorstella Cottages,

Welsh Rd.,

Gorstella,

Dodleston,

Chester

CH4 9LL

Tel.-01244 660286

Mobile remains the same

#### **Speakers – Kathleen Williams**

- The national speakers met by zoom on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020
- The National Speakers Test was scheduled for August 2020 in the Cheshire Area but due to the lack of candidates it has been cancelled. Efforts will be made to encourage more Area Speakers to participate but this will not happen until it is financially viable and also when things settle down regarding the pandemic.

#### **Education- Chris Gibbons No report**

#### **Royal Cheshire Show –Joan Wilkinson**

Nicky Wylie read information from Joan who could not attend the meeting.

- Thanked everyone who made the Cheshire show 2020 successful on line.
- There were many more entries this year for the virtual flowers.
- Next year all entries for 2020 cancelled show will get an invitation next year.

#### **Flower Arranger – Catherine Bower**

Thank you to club officers for distribution of Summer and Autumn editions on time.

Two 2020 subscription payments outstanding

There have been changes to the Editorial team, Muir Simpson has resigned and Ann Harding is the new director. The Editorial Team discussed the option of giving members free access to online version of the magazine, but the Board did not support this.

The magazine was delivered on time.

- 2021 the Flower Arranger orders  
2021 club subscription rates held at £12.80 for 4 editions  
(Cover price remains £4.60 or £22.00 postal subscription)  
Order form sent to Morag 7<sup>th</sup> July to be forward to club email contacts.
- The Flower Arranger Award

1st Wistaston & District FC

2nd Leek FC – offset against 2020 subscription

This year, members of F&GP supported my proposal for an award for highest number by club purchased - Disley & District FC (with 30 subscriptions)

- **EOY Accounts**

I sought clarification of arrangements e.g. actual or scanned copies of documents.

**RHS & Photography – Pam Mosedale**

No RHS

The closing date for the national photography competition is Monday 31<sup>st</sup> August. There is no charge to enter, images should be emailed in a JPG format to:

nafasphotography2016@gmail.com. The class titles and a full list of rules are available from the national website - <https://www.nafas.org.uk/nafas/photography/>

**Publicity – Sally Melvin   None**

**Junior Liaison – Judy Gratton   None**

**8. A.O.B.**

- Nicky Wylie: AGM will be happening with reduced numbers. One representative from each club in September. There will be possibility of no demonstrator.

**QUESTIONS**

- Sharon Nolan: Chaffinches - One affiliated member has renewed but two have not, reducing the number of affiliated members to 4. The membership fee has been reduced to cover only the HQ part of the payment for this year only. I have tried to restart classes in my garden and offered small group tours and garden plant material workshops. No takers.  
If any club would like to visit me at Tarvin, please give me a call first to discuss and then book. You can find my contact details in the Cheshire Book under demonstrators.
- How are demonstrators feeling about coming back to clubs?  
Difficulty about numbers and social distancing, financial viability, shielding, teas and coffees not allowed and raffles.
- Apparently, you can get raffle apps on line which are easy to deliver.
- Nicky Wylie: Try to be positive, keep members informed, social media, monthly flower competitions etc. keeping members interested. Try to think of new ways of managing the club.
- Chris Middleton: Asked club whether they wanted to come back or not, it was 50-50% members for returning in October 2020.
- Anne Bingham –Jones: How have you managed to do your AGM?
- Diane Fair – We have rolled over for the next year at Chester Club.
- Catherine Bower – Mentioned that U3A had written to all their members for AGM and then had a paper-based vote and then followed it up with a Zoom social meeting and sign off of paper work. The club had training on how to use zoom.
- Carol Sargent – W1 have communicated every day, poetry items, socialising etc.
- Nicky Wylie – Emphasised about keeping in touch and engaging with members.

Meeting Closed 9:30pm

**7. Date of Next Council Meeting:**

Signed.....

Dated.....