

**Women in the Fire Service UK  
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**Sunday, 23 June 2019**

held at

The Fire Service College  
Moreton-in-Marsh,  
Gloucestershire GL56 0RH

**Attendees:** Dany Cotton *Chair* **DC**, Jules King *Vice Chair* **JK**, Caroline Anderson *Vice Chair* **CA**, Louise Brown **LB**, Amy Webb **AW**, Nicola Lown **NL** & **Cheryl Rolph CR**.

**1 Meeting to be opened by WFS Chair**

**DC** opened the meeting at the meeting at 0935.

**2 Apologies**

No apologies noted.

**3 Minutes of AGM 2018**

Minutes of the 2018 were read and agreed as accurate. DC signed copy.

**4 Matters arising**

No items arising.

**5 Chair's Report**

**DC** provided a brief update on WFS activities highlighting the following points but in the interests of time did not read her report fully which is provided below

I am pleased to welcome you all to the 2019 Annual General Meeting, it hardly seems a year ago we were here and yet how time rolls by. As you will all know this is my final year as Chair and I look forward to welcoming a new Chair into the role. I hope to continue with the WFS as a Director, if you want me to. Anyway, to business.

During the year the number of individual members has increased from 339 to 386 with the number of corporate members increasing by 2 from 31 to 33. We have held 6 programmes for the Women to Work events being held in London, Humberside, East Region, South East Region, South Yorkshire & West Yorkshire. In total 97 delegates have attended the programmes and the mentoring pilot in South Yorkshire with 20 delegates has also started.

Last year we reset our business plan to one which was more achievable, and I am delighted to advise that good progress has been made – see attached. We have focussed on ensuring, as a company, we remained solid in governance and complying with legislation as well as seeking to improve our profile, increasing our membership and therefore our funding as

well as supporting and encouraging women in the Fire Service. Our Treasurer will comment further on funding and finances, but I do want to highlight that our prudence over the past years has enable us to develop a new post and recruit a new employee. Nathalie Holden joined us on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 as our Comms and Marketing Assistant and working alongside the Honorary Officers, NEC and Karen, we hope that Nathalie's experience, skills and enthusiasm will further assist us in developing profile, reputation and footing. I am sure that you join me in wishing Nathalie well and to thank the Honorary Officers for their time and efforts behind the scenes in developing the recruitment & appointment process. We also spent some time last year trying to ensure that we met the GDPR legislation as well as the more exciting of times with Alex Johnson representing me in New Zealand and it's fair to say her "big girl pants" are now internationally known and talked about. We have continued to make an impact with our involvement with other women's networks and importantly as we know from Friday's presentations, a significant effort & achievement on the humanitarian front. I was also pleased to have been part of the Irish network launch and wish them well as they start their journey.

It was also a job long overdue that our values and mission were looked at and in December, the NEC led by Jules King spent a day reworking the statement & words which set out our heart and spirit and what we stand for. We have been relaunching these gently during the year and it is planned that following this AGM a promotion drive.

During the year again it has been eventful with women in the fire service being front and centre of the stage. From the wonderful Esme in West Midlands and the great response from WMFS and others, to the ignorant Piers Morgan from the outdated Fireman Sam and Peppa Pig. Indeed, we even heard that NASA can't find spacesuits to fit women astronauts. Again, and again we have to correct the media's terminology as well as in our own Services and keep the profile of women in the fire service, whatever the job or contribution or role. But as I look in the audience, think about the faces in my own Service and those of women up & down the country and across the seas, I remain buoyant about the future.

Congratulations to all the women who were rightly recognised during the year in the Queens Honours and to those who were successful in promotion and or career advancement/enhancement. A big thank you and shout to everyone who supported the raffle, an amazing £1,160 was raised which will be donated to the Firefighters charity and Forces Children's Trust

In ending my Chairs update, I want to thank each and every one of you, encourage you not to give up and to have a serious think about how you can make a difference. I stepped up in 2000, have never regretted it and have the most marvellous memories, and friends. Thank you.

## 6 Treasure's Report

WFS operates as a not-for-profit organisation which relies on income from its events, corporate and membership subscriptions to cover its costs each year.

I am pleased to report that the WFS finances remain in a healthy position, with a small profit of £509 for the year and assets of £65,897.

Turnover has again improved, showing a 25% increase since last year. In addition to the annual training and development event, WFS has been collaborating with Fire and Rescue Services to deliver women's development programmes and these have generated additional income. We also received a significant charitable donation of £10,000 during the year.

Other than the cost of delivering events, our overheads are low, and we employed an Administration Manger throughout the year to organise everything on behalf of our members.

Whilst our income increased, so did our expenditure, reducing our net profit to £509 (£13,981 for 2017/18). Several items contributed to this; we invested in a strategy development day with most members of the National Executive Committee where we redefined our purpose and values and set our improvement journey. Our events made a lower surplus than last year, and membership income fell by £6k. Small spend in improving our ICT systems was also incurred.

Of the £66k of assets at the year-end, it is recommended that £17k of this is held back as a minimum reserve, meaning that the remaining £49k will be available to invest. In order to further develop the WFS offering we will be investing through the Communications and Marketing post.

In response to a question from a member for South Yorkshire FRS, the Treasurer confirmed that the £10,000 donation came from the Worshipful Company of Firefighters for the Lebanon project

**AW** asked for sign off of the accounts, accounts ***approved***

## 7. APPOINTMENT OF AUDITORS

As a member's organisation we require your approval to appoint auditors for the coming year. It is recommended that Nick Westbury LLP is retained. Appointment of auditor **approved**.

## 8 Business Plan 2018-2020

CR advised the AGM that of the 13 projects for 2018/2019, 11 had been completed and 2 had been rolled forward for completion in 2019/2020/. It was noted that GDPR compliance had been worked towards and apologised for lack of delegate list which had not been produced due to concerns about releasing data. The progress of the plan was noted. Items for 2019/2020 were tabled in front of the AGM and CR advised that there was a mix of projects, both governance and WFS progression. Specific mention was made into the proposal to research and run girls' camps. The 2019/2020 Business plan items were **approved**.

## 9 Election of National Executive Committee

Following submission of nomination forms which were approved and seconded (please ask WFS Administration Manager if you would like to see) the following people were unanimously elected into post for the forthcoming year

NEC Re-elections 2019		
Honorary Officers	Role	Elected
Jules King	Chair	Unanimous
Caroline Anderson	Vice Chair	Unanimous
Amy Webb	Treasurer	Unanimous
Nicola Lown	Regional Support & International	Unanimous
Cheryl Rolph	Company Secretary	Unanimous
Louise Brown	HR Advisor	Unanimous
Alex Johnson	Corporate	Unanimous
Dany Cotton	Patron	Unanimous
Executive Members		
Sara Hall		Unanimous
Jenny Hill		Unanimous
Lynsey McVay		Unanimous
Divine Zake		Unanimous

Co-opted members		
Miriam Heppell		Unanimous
Gina Gray		Unanimous
Nicky Thurston		Unanimous
Regional Reps		
Joanne Henry	North East	Unanimous
Clare Hesselwood	Yorkshire and Humberside	Unanimous
Jenny Nangle	North West	Unanimous
Hannah Lodder	Wales	Unanimous
Sara Hall	West Midlands	Unanimous
Bex Sims	East Midlands	Unanimous
Carley-Jo Rackley	East	Unanimous
Hannah Singleton	South West	Unanimous
Fleur Wilks	South East	Unanimous
Serena Benassi	London	Unanimous

**JK** formally closed the annual general meeting at 0956.

Signed.....

Name.....

Date.....

