



## British Pensions in Australia Inc.

ABN 42 186 383 389

### Minutes of the 2018 Annual General Meeting

Held at Sydney Mechanics School of Arts, 28 Pitt Street Sydney

on Tuesday 27th November 2018 at 10:30 AM

- Attending:** Approximately 16 members.
- Apologies:** Committee member John Edelsten (Treasurer) and various members via email.
- Minutes of 2017 AGM:** Accepted and confirmed
- Business Arising:** At the last AGM our strategy was to get the frozen pension issue raised at CHOGM in April 2018. ICBP sent letters to all Commonwealth heads of government with this suggestion and BPiA had a meeting with Malcolm Turnbull on this subject. ICBP organised a billboard van to drive round London during CHOGM to broadcast our message. The ICBP Chairman attended CHOGM and raised the issue in the sidelines.
- President's Report:** Introduced 2017-18 Committee members  
Special thanks to Geoff Dunsford (Membership Officer) for coordinating volunteers every week to help with member admin.  
Special thanks to all volunteers for their ongoing help.  
Plea for additional computer-literate volunteers to assist with member admin and database maintenance once a week.  
Reaffirmed our objective is to attain full pension parity (with UK pensioners resident in UK and many other counties) by annually indexing our UK pensions.  
Through our joint organisation ICBP, BPiA continues to work with CABP and other Commonwealth pension groups in a united effort to overcome frozen pensions. Our ICBP Chairman is now John Duffy from Antigua.  
In July ICBP appointed Tendo Consulting Limited, a specialist Public Affairs and Campaigning Agency in London Tendo ran the successful Gurkha Justice Campaign with the involvement of Joanna Lumley as their "celebrity champion".  
ICBP again sent a small group to Westminster in October, this time spearheaded by Anne Puckridge, a 93-year old frozen pensioner from Canada. Our objective was to raise awareness of our cause to end "frozen pensions". Tendo generated considerable media interest in this event and a video clip was shown at this AGM. The group also consulted lawyers for strategic advice.  
The plan now is not to lose momentum from this visit, and to organise a follow-up delegation early in the new year.
- Treasurer's Report and** Accepted and approved.

<b>Financial Statements:</b>	<p>Agreed by those present that there is no need to audit the account at a cost of \$800.</p> <p>Membership fees remain “frozen” \$20 pa (\$30 for couples) but donations at the time of renewal are very much appreciated.</p> <p>A letter was read to the meeting from a nonagenarian who has kindly donated \$1,000 to BPiA. A member of the committee will formally acknowledge this.</p>
<b>Election of Officers</b>	<p>The committee for 2018-19: Brian Owles (President), Jim Tilley (Vice President), Cheryl Harvey (Secretary), John Edelsten (Treasurer), Francis Keegan, David Rumball, Tony Walsh, Bernard Stone.</p> <p>This leaves 1 vacancy as there were no nominations from the floor.</p> <p>A formal vote of thanks was given.</p>
<b>Jim Tilley’s Address</b>	<p>Reiterated the frozen pension issue and its impact on Australia.</p> <p>There are 12 million UK State pensioners, all of whom contributed similarly to the compulsory British National Insurance pension scheme. Of this 12 million, approx 1.2 million live abroad.</p> <p>Approximately 650,000 of these pensioners live in countries such as the EU, USA, Israel and Turkey. They receive the same annual cost-of-living increases as pensioners still living in the UK.</p> <p>The other 550,000 have their pensions “frozen” simply because of where they have retired, and half of these live in Australia!</p> <p>£600 million per annum is needed to unfreeze our pensions, just 0.7% of the £80B pension budget. An increase in NI contributions of 40p/week would cover it!</p> <p>The damage to the Australian economy is around \$500M per annum lost in foreign exchange, and around \$200M in extra pension payments by Centrelink.</p> <p>Promoted our Advocacy Campaign and encouraged members to write to their local MP citing this potential \$1B savings to Australia over 4 years.</p> <p>Again drew attention to the Commonwealth Charter <i>“The Charter expresses the commitment of member states to the development of free and democratic societies and the promotion of peace and prosperity to improve the lives of all peoples of the Commonwealth. ....We are implacably opposed to all forms of discrimination, whether rooted in gender, race, colour, creed, political belief or other grounds.”</i></p> <p>Again drew attention to a 2013 UK Supreme Court case, where it was clearly stated by the judge, <i>“budgetary considerations (costs) cannot justify discrimination”</i>. This appeal against the claimed discrimination was upheld and yet each year (through the Social Security Benefits Up-rating Regulation 3), the British Parliament annually legalises discrimination against 550,000 of its pensioners, justifying this action by a saving of some costs!</p>
<b>Any other business</b>	<p>Nil.</p>
<b>Closing</b>	<p>There being no further business the meeting closed at 12.30 pm.</p>

