



British Pensions in Australia Inc.

ABN 42 186 383 389

Minutes of the 2019 Annual General Meeting

**Held at Sydney Mechanics School of Arts, 280 Pitt Street, Sydney NSW 2000
on Thursday, 28th November 2019**

- Attending:** 15 members including J Edelsten by Skype
- Apologies:** Committee member Tony Walsh and various members via email.
- Welcome:** Welcome by the Chairman and introduction of Committee Members.
- Minutes of 2018 AGM:** Accepted and confirmed
- Business arising:** There were no specific matters that would not be covered in the rest of the Agenda
- President's Report:**
- Thanked Committee members for their hard work and efforts over the last 12 months
- Passed our condolences to Mrs Stone in relation to the death of committee member Bernard Stone who died suddenly from a short illness in October
- Special thanks to Geoff Dunsford (Membership Officer) for coordinating volunteers every week to help with member admin.
- Also 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.
- Tendo Consulting Limited, our specialist Public Affairs and Campaigning Agency in London has worked hard to promote our cause however a number of ventures have been thwarted by the uncertainty around the UK political scene.
- ICBP has been unable to follow up on the successful visit to Westminster by Anne Puckridge, a 93-year old frozen pensioner from Canada.
- While Westminster is in this state, the plan is to relaunch the publication of a booklet named "Broken Faith" which gives examples of over 25 veterans from the Commonwealth who suffer from frozen pensions.
- In Australia we have just appointed a Public Relations company, Fifty Acres, who have a reputation for working on behalf of humanitarian interest causes.
- Fifty Acres has advised us on the presentation and delivery of a letter from BPiA to Scott Morrison explaining the loss to the Australian economy as a result of the UK not paying the full UK pension entitlement to residents of Australia. This amounted to approximately \$500 million each year.

This letter was personally delivered by one of our members, Robert Haley (aged 94) to the Cook Constituency office on Tuesday 26th. It was then circulated to all MPs and Senators and a short media release to about 60 outlets.

**Jim Tilley's
Address:**

Jim Tilley Address

Encouraged members to continue to point out the salient facts concerning the cause against the discrimination by UK government against UK pensioners who live in Australia

Reiterated the frozen pension issue and its impact on Australia.

- There are 12 million UK State pensioners, all of whom contributed similarly to the compulsory British National Insurance pension scheme. Of this 12 million, approximately 1.2 million live abroad.
- 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.
- The other 550,000 have their pensions "frozen" simply because of where they have retired, and half of these live in Australia!
- £600 million per annum is needed to unfreeze our pensions, just 0.7% of the £80 billion pension budget.
- The damage to the Australian economy is around \$500M per annum lost in foreign exchange, and around \$200 million in extra pension payments by Centrelink.

Once again drew attention to the Commonwealth Charter "*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.*"

All members were encouraged to attempt to persuade friends and relatives to join our cause and fight the UK government on this matter.

**Election of
Officers:**

The committee for 2019-20: Brian Owles (President), Jim Tilley (Vice President), Cheryl Harvey (Secretary), John Edelsten (Treasurer), Francis Keegan, David Rumball, Tony Walsh.

There were no nominations from the floor. This leaves 2 possible vacancies

**Financial
Report**

Accepted and approved.

Agreed by those present that there is no need to audit the account at a potential cost of \$800.

Membership fees remain "frozen" \$20 pa (\$30 for couples) but donations at the time of renewal are very much appreciated.

**Any other
business**

Nil.

Closing

There being no further business the meeting closed at 3.00 pm.