AGM 10/2024

Resolutions Newcastle and Hybrid 2024

**FAMILY COURT COMMITTEE**

**1. Thank you Cafcass**

On behalf of Napo members and other staff working in Cafcass this AGM expresses its thanks and appreciation to Cafcass managers and senior leaders for the actions they took in early August to support staff and respond to situations that arose as a result of abhorrent violent actions by individuals and far right groups masquerading as so called patriots. This AGM asks our FCS reps to convey our thanks to senior leaders and to the Cafcass H&S committee.

We also ask the Cafcass leadership team to build on their positive action by committing to making anti-racism training available to all staff in Cafcass.

**Proposer: Family Court Section**

**HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE**

**2. Wellbeing is not a tick-box exercise**

Staff wellbeing in the Probation Service may be heading towards an all-time low as indicated by the increased rates of sickness and reported burn-out in recent years. The accumulative effects of organisational changes, staff shortages, the aftermath of the pandemic and prolonged periods of extreme workload pressures have all contributed to staff struggling to keep their heads above water and maintaining their mental and physical wellbeing.

Wellbeing initiatives vary across regions, but most appear to be more of a tick-box exercise rather than tangible and meaningful support. Clinical supervision and other practical methods of support have not been available to practitioners for a long time. Instead, staff can give each other virtual ‘high-fives’, access a wellbeing app or organise their own wellbeing events in the office with no budget or protected time from the service.

This AGM calls on Napo:

* to advocate for a national review of the wellbeing initiatives across the Probation Service by surveying staff to gather feedback on what practical support measures they would benefit from;
* to call for the introduction of such wellbeing initiatives, for example additional paid wellbeing days, access to clinical supervision and funding for staff wellbeing events.

**Proposer: Mercia Branch**

**NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**3. Staff Retention**

The Probation Service continues to haemorrhage staff at an alarming rate and faces a serious problem in retaining staff in service user facing roles. From band two upwards both new and experienced employees continue to find they can earn more or equivalent money for a lot less stress and more job satisfaction elsewhere.

The Service’s solution continues to focus on the expensive recruitment of more staff. Retention of staff, which should be an easy win, is an afterthought where tokenistic and divisive rewards and recognition schemes seem to take precedence. The root cause of why people are leaving the service is not being addressed.

This AGM calls on Napo to make retention a priority in its negotiations with the employer by:

* a complete overhaul of the People Survey to provide quality information about why people are leaving;
* exit survey results must be shared and acted upon;
* new staff need to be supported and those in a managerial role must be freed up to do this;
* mentoring and co working must be recognised and time allowed to adequately fulfil these roles;
* the implementation of a retention bonus to be paid at regular intervals through people’s careers.

Most importantly workloads must be manageable and what is being asked of all grades commensurate with the staffing levels at any given time.

Probation aims cannot be achieved without committed employees working in a supportive environment.

**Proposer: South Yorkshire**

**Seconder: West Yorkshire**

**4. Probation: Independent of the Civil Service**

This AGM notes that prison staff working with the early release scheme were given a bonus payment for the extra work. Probation staff in prisons and case management have received nothing.

This AGM believes this reflects the attitudes towards probation within HMPPS which is predominantly prison run, prison focussed, biased towards unequal treatment, and makes the idea of One HMPPS a mockery.

This AGM calls on Napo to:

* continue to champion the removal of Probation from HMPPS and
* to campaign for the newly elected Labour government to make the Probation Service an independent public service free from the Civil Service.

While campaigning for better pay and bonus payments for probation staff.

Proposer: London Branch

Seconder: Thames Valley Branch

**5. For Wages We Can Live On**

Low pay has plagued many workers including Napo members for too long. Napo members in Probation, Cafcass, and Probation Northern Ireland have faced poverty and insecurity, which has only grown during austerity and the cost-of-living crisis.

AGM celebrates the end of the Tory government, and now seeks to push the new government to put poverty pay in the past once and for all.

We seek to ensure that all our members can earn enough to live a decent life from the beginning of their work to the end, and the vital role a decent minimum wage can play in this.

AGM calls on Napo to campaign for the government to:

* immediately increase the national minimum wage to at least £15 an hour, for all ages and without exceptions;
* commit to automatically, annually or more frequently, raising the minimum wage for all ages in line with the higher of inflation or average earnings;
* provide funding to immediately raise proportionately all salaries for employees of the Probation Service, Cafcass, and Probation Board for Northern Ireland.

AGM instructs Napo Officers and Officials to raise these demands with the government at every opportunity, including in formal pay negotiations, and report on this work at each NEC.

**Proposer: Young Members Network**

**6. Probation Values?**

This AGM is appalled at some of the recent decisions made by HMPPS to either give a pay award to Probation staff in certain roles, or to down grade qualified staff in other areas of the service.

We have now reached a situation where the Probation qualification is severely undervalued. Probation Staff from Band two upwards all deserve to have their roles fully job evaluated and remunerated accordingly.

We feel that all Probation qualified staff should necessarily start at a Band 5 thereby pushing the pay bands up rather than down.

This AGM understands the recent job evaluation with Band 4 Facilitators has demonstrated that the JES process is not fit for purpose.

This AGM urges our National Officers and Officials to enter into urgent and immediate negotiations with the employer to instigate a full review of all operational roles and pay Bands and work with our employer to improve the JES process, so that it accurately reflects the complex nature of our roles.

**Proposer: London Branch**

**7. Contested Breach training – Prosecutions on the cheap**

Recently, the Probation Service has proceeded with changes to how contested breach trials should be managed and prosecuted. The proposal is for Court PSOs to prosecute contested breaches.

Should a PSO, with limited training and experience, be expected to do work previously done by trained professionals (Solicitors / Barristers) and face opposition that is not reasonable?

The proposed “training” for PSOs is three half days and then shadowing someone already doing the work.

We need serous consultation with the employer regarding this proposal that is being forced upon our colleagues.

This AGM asks that the Officers and Officials reject this “in- house” contested breach delivery, and:

* approach other Court Probation staff, Court Legal advisors and Magistrates to alert them to this change and to request that they support Napo in opposing the use of unqualified staff prosecuting contested breaches;
* submit a dispute against the employer for deliberate imposition of additional work, failure to consult, and extra stress on PSO staff, when they are currently already at the breaking point;
* request a review of why a ‘legally trained’ Enforcement Officer is to be a Band 3 role. We believe it should be a Band 5.

**Proposer: Court Network**

**8. Don’t let our reps be out of pocket!**

This AGM is very concerned about the current mileage rate paid for official work of our union. Currently this stands at as little as 13.7 and 16.4 pence per mile. It is at least 14 years since this has been reviewed despite the current high inflation rate and well documented increase in motoring costs.

The government calculates that the current variable cost of driving is 45 pence per mile up to 10,000 miles. This is the amount we can claim for doing official business of the probation service.

It is frankly embarrassing to offer our hard-working reps, who chose to commit to the good of our membership, so much less than a journey costs. This is clearly a barrier to the work of Napo.

We have embraced the use of technology wherever possible but sometimes the in-person support or negotiating skills of a union rep is invaluable. In many parts of England, Wales and Northern Ireland it is not feasible to get between office locations within our branch areas on public transport.

AGM requires the NEC to urgently review the current mileage expense rates with a view to adequately reimbursing our reps.

**Proposer: South Yorkshire Branch**

**9. Modernising Napo’s Communication and Engagement Strategy**

Napo’s ability to recruit members and further its campaign objectives relies heavily on effective communication. The past decade has seen a decline in attendance at branch and network meetings as well as training which could be attributed to a number of factors. However, one commonly cited reason is Napo’s dated approach to communications.

Napo relies primarily on emails to communicate with members, but limitations with current HQ technology and HMPPS firewalls means that photos and videos cannot be utilised in an effective way. Our social media presence is also very limited with a lack of appropriate content for those channels being produced. This has resulted in the hard work and daily efforts of national officers, officials, branch executives and reps not being visible to the members and to the public – which in turn has a negative impact on recruitment and retention.

This conference calls on Napo to follow suit of other unions and modernise its approach to social media by investing in the infrastructure, time and resources to deliver compelling social content and member communications including regular video updates by the GS, national officials and officers as well as continuously reviewing and implementing methods of best practice.

**Proposer: Campaigning Network**

**10. Build Support For The Anti-Tommy Robinson Demo**

This Conference welcomes Napo’s endorsement of the National Demonstration to unite against racism, Islamophobia and antisemitism, and to oppose Tommy Robinson and the Far Right in Central London on Saturday 26th October as set out in the leaflet which was included in the Conference packs.

This Conference therefore instructs Napo’s Officers and Officials to build for this demonstration in the Branches, Section, Committees and Networks to ensure the largest possible mobilisation of our members for this demonstration.

Proposed: West Yorkshire Branch

Seconded: South Yorkshire Branch

**NEGOTIATING – FAMILY COURT SECTION**

**11. Cafcass needs a new workload measurement tool**

The Cafcass workload measure, agreed as part of the resolution of a dispute about workloads between Napo and Cafcass in 2008, fell into disuse many years ago. It relied on a bell curve spread of scores rated low red, amber, green, high amber and high red. It became of little use when all staff were almost permanently in high red. Napo has consistently asked for a new workload measure that works and has repeatedly requested that any new workload measure should be informed by a new time and motion study as the expectations and increased requirements of all roles within Cafcass have changed immeasurably since the last study was completed over a decade ago.

Earlier this year, Cafcass announced a new workload measure was to be introduced. In reality the new procedure is merely a direction that managers discuss and agree with each supervisee a range of cases that they will hold. Senior leaders have advised that managers will be told to facilitate staff taking back their TOIL and aim to get caseloads down to 17 or 18.

This AGM instructs Family Court Section negotiators to:

* share its own guidance for members on what features and complexities must be considered in discussions about the range of cases a FCA will hold;
* campaign to encourage members to record and take their hours owed;
* continue to demand that a new time and motion study is undertaken across all practitioner and management grades to inform any new workload tool/guidance.

Proposer: Family Court Section

**NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE - PROBATION**

**12. Pay us what we are worth**

Conference notes the undervaluing of probation staff by successive Governments.

Throughout the ‘austerity years’, probation workers continued to receive zero or below cost-of-living pay rises and when inflation soared in 2022/23 many were left struggling. This has exacerbated the workload crisis, making it increasingly difficult to retain staff.

The election of a Labour Government raised expectations of a better deal for public sector workers with the honouring of recommendations of a number pay review bodies. However, the priority being afforded to prisons, education and the NHS threatens to leave probation workers out in the cold.

Now is not the time de-escalate our long running pay dispute. The Government’s SDS40 response to the prisons crisis is not possible without the cooperation of probation staff. Unless the Government signals its immediate intention to re-enter pay talks we call on Napo to ballot members for industrial action at the earliest opportunity.

**Proposer: Kent Surrey Sussex Branch**

**13. One 2025 Pay deal**

This AGM welcomes the increase in pay backdated to April 2024 and overtime financial increase and notes a positive atmosphere going forward for the 2025 pay deal.

This AGM notes that the Prison Service and other public services have been offered a deal of a 5.5% increase and agrees that this proposal should be offered to Probation Service staff.

This AGM also agrees to pursue Geographical Allowances or increased allowances where the vacancy rates are at its most challenging to ensure recruitment and retention are prioritised.

**Proposer: Thames Valley Branch**

**14. Visor Vetting Review**

This AGM calls on the Officers and Officials to ask the Probation Service to review the vetting procedure for Probation Service staff, many of whom have been negatively impacted in their careers due to failing the vetting, often not of their own making.

This AGM calls for fairness, transparency and understanding of lived experiences when operating a vetting procedure in order to access Visor.

**Proposer: Thames Valley Branch**

**PROFESSIONAL AND TRAINING NETWORK**

**15. Taking account of the cost of PSRs**

In the merry go round of a changing Probation Service, since fast delivery reports were developed as part of the concept of speedy summary justice, the title has long passed its sell by date. The current allocation of hours bears no relation to the time taken to produce these. With the numerous additional tasks required in addition to the interviews and research needed to write a Court report, along with an OASys, it adds to the burden placed on report writers.

Following an increasing exodus of staff, those left are no longer willing to put up with working on a weekend and evening to meet the deadlines. Especially as there continues to be a plethora of additional tasks that are more about meeting the target culture than a professional assessment.

This AGM instructs the Napo’s negotiators to press for a realistic workload measurement that represents the work required to produce a Pre-Sentence Report. With it, a return to a simplified method of measuring risk and an end to the process of calculating case allocation for those sentenced without a report. Something the system has hung onto like an old toy it refuses to relinquish post reunification.

**Proposer: Keith Stokeld (Staffordshire West Midlands Branch)**

**Seconder: Simon Lathbury (Northumbria Branch)**

**16. Probation Practice and Climate Change**

Napo accepts that the circumstances which led to the UK Parliament declaring a Climate Emergency in 2019, have worsened since then, as described by the UK Climate Change Committee 2023 Report.

An increasing number of people are being convicted for protest drawing attention to climate breakdown, then being assessed and supervised by Probation staff. Some of them are being sentenced to custody, even first-time offenders, for peaceful protest. This is a wholly new demographic and area of professional practice, which has no associated risk and need literature or evidence-based practice guidance.

Consequently, this AGM asks the Professional & Training Network to take up the following with HMPPS:

* the professional override within OASys should be used, in order to provide accurate assessments of individuals’ context, motivation and needs as required by existing guidance;
* systemic safeguarding concerns of neglect, physical, social and emotional harms, with reference to imminence, seriousness and likelihood, (using assessment tools such as Local Climate Adaptation Tool - LCAT) should be recognised in Court Reports and Probation records;
* best practice guidance should be developed in consultation with Climate Child Protection and Safeguarding Team - CCPAST;
* training to promote consistency should be developed in conjunction with CCPAST including the literature on eco-distress.

**Proposer: Retired Members’ Network**

**TRADE UNION ORGANISATION**

**17. Improving Napo Membership**

This conference believes Napo has the ability to recruit significant numbers of new members and improve the functioning of branches.

Conference resolves to:

* convene a working party to identify good practice branch practice;
* organise a national virtual tour of the working party to meet with branch executives;
* develop branch plans to increase:

a) attendance at meetings,

b) profile of the union,

c) membership and activity of members.

**Proposer: West Yorkshire Branch**

**CAMPAIGNING NETWORK**

**18. Catastrophic situation in Gaza**

This AGM is deeply concerned about the ongoing catastrophic situation in Gaza, which has been described by the International Court of Human Justice as a ‘plausible genocide’ and notes that the Lancet now estimates that the death toll could exceed 168,000 of which at least half will be children.

This AGM calls on Napo to demand that the UK government undertake the following as a matter of urgency:

* suspend all provision of weapons systems to the Government of Israel;
* restore and increase UK funding to United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), and take all necessary steps to ensure safe access and delivery of essential supplies and medical aid to the Palestinian population in Gaza;
* issue a public statement supporting the implementation of the measures advised by the International Criminal Court of Justice, including the issuing of an arrest warrant against Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu for alleged war crimes.

In addition to writing directly to the Foreign Secretary, Napo will raise this matter at the TUC and support all similar initiatives taken by other member unions.  The General Secretary will report on progress to the next and subsequent NECs.

**Proposer: Retired Members’ Network**

**19. Abolishing Lord Grayling**

This Conference condemns the elevation of Chris Grayling to the House of Lords.

As Justice Minister, Grayling forced through Parliament the privatisation of the Probation Service under the absurd guise of ‘Transforming Rehabilitation’ (TR). This was achieved through use of so-called ‘Henry VIII powers’ and involved no substantive debate in Parliament.

It is now considered to be one of worst, and costliest mistakes made by any Government.

Napo’s campaign again TR exhausted its resources whilst the careers of many colleagues in the Probation Service came to an end.

A once high-performing service was dismantled and reduced to the state it is in now: unable to assess and supervise offenders to the professional standards which we demand of ourselves and are expected by the public and colleague agencies within and outside the criminal justice system.

Conference therefore calls upon Napo’s Campaigning Network to undertake the following:

* issue a public statement of condemnation which links Grayling’s tenure as Justice Minister to the deleterious state of the Probation Service;
* join with other unions to campaign for abolition of a corrupt honours system that allows serial failure to be rewarded.

**Proposer: Retired Members’ Network**

**eQUAL RIGHTS COMMITTEE**

**20. HMPPS is institutionally disablist**

HMPPS claim to be a ‘Disability Confident Leader’ and supportive of requests for reasonable adjustments. If any of this is true, why do members have to return to AGM annually with the same issues?

We note from annual HMPPS workforce statistics (available online) that a disproportionate number of disabled workers are put through disciplinary procedures, a higher number sanctioned than their able-bodied colleagues, also a significantly lower number of disabled colleagues are promoted when they apply for positions. Why is this?

After seeing the same issues repeated annually and management avoidance, I think it’s time we looked at the real cause - HMPPS is institutionally disablist.

This AGM calls on Napo to:

* negotiate with HMPPS to discover why disabled employees are bypassed for promotions;
* question HMPPS on why disciplined disabled colleagues are more likely to receive a sanction or be dismissed;
* liaise with disabled members to ensure reasonable adjustments are being implemented, and if not, why?
* If HMPPS cannot provide reasonable and believable justifications for the above points, admit they are institutionally disablist, hand back their ‘disability confident’ accreditation and create an action plan to tackle this by Napo AGM 2025 to be reviewed by members.

**Proposer: Cumbria and Lancashire Branch**

**CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT**

**CA1**

The following Constitutional Amendment is proposed to enable us to retrospectively ‘approve’ what has happened on a few occasions in the past and to be able to go forward in line with the Constitution. Section 4 (e) states that the NEC at its discretion can grant honorary life membership to “a retired full member”. However, on a few occasions the NEC has granted honorary life membership, for example to Elfyn Llwyd MP and Frances Crook OBE, both ardent supporters of Napo whilst in parliament and as Chief Executive of the Howard League for Penal Reform. The NEC, acknowledging their significant contributions to our union, found them worthy of granting them honorary life membership.

In order to retrospectively approve their status as well as being able to grant this in future where the NEC deems it worthy (in line with Section 2 of our Constitution – Objects), the following amendment is proposed under Section 4 Membership:

**4 (e) insert in line 2 – after ‘retired full member… considered to have made an outstanding contribution to the work of the Association’**

‘, or on an advocate or ally for Probation or Family Courts who has made a positive exceptional impact in helping the Association achieve our aims.’

**Section 4 (e) of Constitution to then read as follows:**

(e) The NEC may at its discretion confer honorary life membership on a retired full member who is considered to have made an outstanding contribution to the work of the Association, or on an advocate or ally for Probation or Family Courts who has made a positive exceptional impact in helping the Association achieve our aims. Honorary life members shall enjoy all the benefits of associate membership but shall not pay subscriptions.

**Proposer: National Executive Committee**

### Abbreviations used in motions

AGM - Annual General Meeting

AT – Assistive Technology

BAME – Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic

CA – Constitutional Amendment

Cafcass – Children & Family Court Advisory and Support Service

CCPAST - Climate Child Protection and Safeguarding Team

CJS – Criminal Justice System

CNC – Cafcass Negotiating Committee

CRC – Community Rehabilitation Company

CRS – Commissioned Rehabilitation Services

ETE – Education, Training and Employment

EVR – Enhanced Voluntary Redundancy

FCC – Family Court Committee

FCS – Family Court Section

GS – General Secretary

GFTU – General Federation of Trade Unions

HMIP – His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Probation

HMPPS – His Majesty’s Prison and Probation Service

HQ – Head Quarter

HR – Human Resources

HSE – Health & Safety Executive

i.e. – that is (Id Est - *Latin)*

IOM – Integrated Offender Management

IPP – Indeterminate Sentence for Public Protection

IT – Information Technology

ITTG – Integrated Through the Gate model

JES – Job Evaluation Scheme

LAO – Limited Access Offender

LCAT - Local Climate Adaptation Tool

MoJ – Ministry of Justice

ND - Neurodiversity

NEC – National Executive Committee

NOMS – National Offender Management Service (predecessor HMPPS)

OASys – Offender Assessment System

OMiC – Offender Management in Custody

OMU – Offender Management Unit (prison)

PBNI – Probation Board for Northern Ireland

PDU – Probation Delivery Unit

PI – Probation Instruction

PIT – Practice Improvement Tools

PO – Probation Officer

PQ – Parliamentary Question

PQiP – Professional Qualification in Probation

PSO – Probation Service Officer

PSR – Pre-Sentence Report

PSS – Post Supervision Sentence

RAR – Rehabilitation Activity Requirement

SDS40 – Standard Determinate Sentence Release after 40% of sentence

SFO – Serious Further Offence

SOGP – Sex Offender Group Programme

SOP – Single Operating Platform (in the PS)

SPO – Senior Probation Officer

SSCL – Shared Services Connected Limited (PS payroll, HR services)

TR – Transforming Rehabilitation

TU – Trade Union

TUC – Trade Union Congress

TUO – Trade Union Organisation Committee

UNRWA - United Nations Relief and Works Agency

ViSOR – Violent and Sexual Offender Register

WCCSJ – Welsh Centre for Crime and Social Justice

WMT – Workload Measurement Tool

YOS – Youth Offending Services