**Alliance for Finance, notes of meeting held Thursday 28 April 2022**

Present

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| Nick Caton, Chair, Community Union  Stephanie Jones, PCRF  Ania Lomax, Aegis the Union  Elizabeth Boggis, Aegis the Union | Kevin Watts, Secretary,  Caroline Taylor, Honorary member  Gerry Moloney, Advance Union |

Apologies

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| Chris Roberts, Communications Workers Union  Fiona Steele, Treasurer, Aegis the Union | Frank Needham, Honorary member  Dave Matthews, Accord the Union |

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|  | **ITEM** | **ACTION** |
| 1 | **Welcome and introductions**  The Group welcomed Elizabeth Boggis, Aegis Union rep, YBS and AFF’s new inclusion champion as a member of the EC. NC & EB nicely explained that her role would not be a representative on all D&I issues, but someone seeking to look upon AFF’s work through a D&I lens. AL & EB have been able to agree enough time off to allow EB to do the role for an initial 6 months, she will try but may not be able to attend all meetings, (not having the flexibility of a full time official). NC & EB will be developing the role as we progress. It could be shared in future, time will tell. The Group were very happy to have EB on board.  NC also introduced Chris Roberts, CWU, taking on John Nicholas’ role as EC member. Due to short notice and a conflict with the CWU conference, CR was unable to attend today. NC and KW have met CR and confirmed both he and CWU are very enthusiastic about taking up this role.  Both CR and EB were looking forward to contributing and learning from this opportunity.  **Sign off of notes of last meeting** – 23.2.22 meeting notes were agreed. (KW to note the spelling of Ged for future). |  |
| 2 | **Updates from Chair, Treasurer & Secretary**  **Certification Office Request,** will be covered in the agenda, item 3.  **Treasurers report for December**   * GM confirmed he is now signed up as Deputy Treasurer. Again, he was thanked for taking on this role. GM had circulated a couple of documents from FS on the accounts and position with the auditor. Any comment on these documents, please contact GM within the week – **Action All** * GM spoke to the AFF Subs March 2022 anon document. The EC Committee had already agreed the principles and signed off the tariff levels. Referring to the notes GM raised the issue of the question about width of the 1,000 – 10,000 rate and also prompted a potential similarity with the 10,000 – 50,000 rate. After further discussion the group asked that FS and GM takeaway the matter, gather data and assess options and setting out recommendation for the EC to consider. This work needs completing later in the year, target the September EC meeting. **Action FS/ GM.** The document itself was ratified by the EC. * Our auditor has withdrawn with little notice, the AR21 return for 2021/22 is due end of May. The old Accountants/ Auditors cited increased regulatory requirements would make the work too expensive. They did complete the accounts and GM and FS are now in search of an auditor to complete this for AFF. Any ideas of firms/ people who could complete this work to GM asap please – **Action All** * FS has written to the certification office explaining the late withdrawal of our auditors and seeking an extension on our return. Meanwhile the EC supported NC’s proposal that as this is the last year we would need to complete such a return, GM and FS were empowered to spend the necessary funds to complete the task asap. **Action FS/ GM** * GM explained AFF had already received three subscription payments for this year.   **Sub Group updates:**   * Operational Sub Group – NC gave an update on the work of the Sub Group to the Executive Meeting. Copies of notes had been circulated prior to this meeting and no members had any questions * Website Sub Group – NC presented four new logo options, an attempt to refresh and update the website and email look. All members gave their thoughts. Absent members have until 9 May, noon to input their thoughts. Overall trends were clear lettering and image, liking of blue and black together, SJ & NC to check out preferred images, (links or ‘rainbow loudhailers’), didn’t connect AFF inappropriately with another organisation using the same imagery. Agreed SJ and NC to take forward and share final recommendation by email, target end of June. **Action SJ/ NC** * EB noticed the flip in text between ‘AFF and A4F’ in website and email addresses. NC welcomed the comment and explained there were issues as email and domain were fixed. The EC accepted this.   **Consultation returns by AFF update**   * No requests for returns since last meeting. Few requests last year and a priority this year remains building links with organisations like BSA so even with our new (non TU status), our views are sought and we are active in giving a view. NC needs more time to consider the issue of AFF’s future status, would it mean we can still respond as a body or would we need to link in with TU’s on this group and pass our feedback via that route? NC requested time on the next agenda to discuss this further - **Action KW.** Meantime please can all members again come up with ideas and press forward having AFF receive consultation requests. - **Action All** * Menopause Survey issued, though still happy to have a late return from anyone. * Pay Review information – a reminder this is a live survey. You can send in your return at anytime. A new update will be added and that latest version sent to all who participated. This is worth doing. **Action those not yet completed**. Ask KW for the template. * Further survey ideas – a couple came out in the meeting and KW shared one from Mike Calvert, Royal London, relating to any/ the look of policies on **Employees and Transitioning**, what’s needed in the workplace. KW will confirm to MC the survey idea is supported - Done. MC and a colleague of his will sponsor the survey.   **Hybrid working ‘post post’ Covid**, (see item 10) - exploring working from home. SJ had referred to changes and the approach taken by Phoenix, including sick policy, in work, wfh etc. SJ agreed to sponsor this survey working with KW. EC also supported this being done sooner rather than later in the list. **Action SJ/ KW**  **Pension Event** (see item 5) – CT and KW to explore whether a survey would elicit further aspects and current trends that would help shape the event. **Action KW/ CT** will discuss whether this is useful | All  FS/ GM  All  FS/ GM  SJ/ NC  KW  All  Action  SJ/ KW  CT/ KW |
| 3 | **Certification Office and AFF’s future status**  NC confirmed the current position – AFF doesn’t meet the certification and new regulation requirements for a trade union organisation and will be refused membership for the next year period, 2022/23. This position is accepted by the EC.  NC confirmed his recommendation that AFF continue as an ‘unincorporated association, - this would be the same status as a club would use. We can have members, take fees, we’ll be a not for profit organisation and therefore exempt from tax and we must not own property or have employees. Believe KW’s status as elected EC member and consultant – AFF is one of several of his clents - is acceptable.  There is a need to rewrite AFF’s rules to reflect the change and to have clear guidance for all EC members, known rules by which our actions are bound. It’s also an opportunity to update our position on aspects like D&I and key objectives of AFF, like to increase D&I in our own sector and the expectations of EC members and Affiliate leads. We’ll also need to communicate the change and our intentions to Affiliate Leads at the right moment.  NC will bring back a draft set of rules – old and new and share with the EC in advance of the meeting. **Action NC to draft – KW space on the agenda.** | NC  KW |
| 4 | **Diversity and Inclusion of the Alliance for Finance**  NC confirmed he had received Tracy Littler’s report on AFF from her observations of our December meeting. NC had taken the key elements and produced a draft D&I action plan which he circulated just prior to the meeting. **All members are required to comment on the plan.**  There was considerable discussion in relation to the draft document, what to include and its structure. EB agreed to work with NC on pulling together the next draft with everyone’s comments. Note was made that some actions at this point may better be expressed as aspirations, as much would depend on the input of others, which was outside the direct control of AFF.  **NC allocated the same task to each EC member** - to look over the latest version of his draft which would be sent out after the meetings – Done, and:   1. Add any comments on the document or structure – especially EC members who missed this meeting 2. Complete the columns with your thoughts so NC could then compile appropriate inserts for each box in the action plan grid.   **Complete and send to NC & EB by Wednesday 11 May - Action All**  A review of D&I actions since December have been completed:   * Recruitment to Executive Committee – EB as Inclusion Champion, SJ and CR have taken on the roles vacated by AG and JN. * The inclusion panel has contributed to recent AFF communications. Still work to do to further increase the scope of this panel. * D&I is a standing item on AFF EC meeting agendas | All  All |
| 5 | **Learning Calendar for 2022**  The EC had received the latest versions of the i) Learning Calendar and ii) Meeting Structure for 2022  **Future events**   * 19 May Menopause event, speakers agreed, over 50 attendees, following sharing of invite across employers and membership. Please can as many EC members as possible attend. * 21 June Morrish Solicitors Employment Law AFF Event addressing conduct and dismissal * 13 July, D & I event with Baroness Nicky Morgan, Steve Collinson and pursuing other speakers. This will be a F2F event. NC needing to finalise venue with CWU. **Action NC**   26 May NC and other EC members and Affiliate leads are meeting with Ged and Sir Brendan Barber, to discuss closer involvement between AFF and the Banking Standards Board. Also, Sir Brendan’s availability to deliver an event for AFF. GM asked to also be included at the meeting. **Action NC**  Support remained for the end of year event in relation to Pensions – *Are employee bodies savvy enough and promoting best way to benefit from DC schemes. How do we influence employers to prepare our members in the best possible way?* **Action CT and OSG to move forward** – exploring Zurich contact, Aegis speaker, TUC speaker. CT and KW to consider whether a survey on the topic would help elicit key areas of discussion for an event. **Action CT/ KW**  Other ideas still on the shelf for another time: Post Covid, Scottish Independence, Role of business performance in consultation - what employee bodies can ask for, how this works in different organisations, Shareholder value is the most important thing to a financial company, (true/ false, why is it so important?) | NC  NC  CT/ KW |
| 6 | **Actions/ matters arising from previous meetings**  **AFF Contact List –** NC confirmed this was upto date.  **Website photos and biogs –** NC to confirm who hasn’t provided this, (of course EB and CR are not the point of this chaser) – **Action: Those outstanding.**  Leek United – action is paused. | NC/ All  Out-standing |
| 7 | **Building our membership base**  Due to time and light attendance, this item will be a focus on next meeting’s agenda. SJ confirmed she was still considering her action. No word from DM. The actions from the last meeting still remain relevant to members.  ---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------  Update from each Executive Member on contact with other organisations and progress.  LV – Making progress - CT  Leek United – Paused until they make contact  Bank of Ireland – CT is seeking to make contact through FSU  Old RSA and Unite trade union – NC spoke to Dominic Cook, Senior Unite Official,happy to work with AFF on joint issues if opportunity arises, not looking to join AFF.  Affinity TU – CT made several attempts and no response. Will not pursue  Aviva is also Unite and caution counselled about ‘being seen to poach the Employee Body’.  Endsleigh – KW has written to their employee body offering to talk, no response.  West Brom, Newbury and other building societies - **CT/ NC/ AL** to consider if possible to link through other UK Building Societies  DM/ SJ agreed to consider their connections, DM will follow up with Jed Nichols on other bodies that could be approached to join AFF – **SJ/ DM**  **Action: NC** to take the opportunity, when time is right to ask Tim Rose of other organisations he might suggest, could be interested  Paypal/ Fin Tech organisations and associations – NC said finding away to make contact was challenging. However, Visa Europe had made contact through the AFF web-address and he shared his thoughts on his response and the support AFF can provide – **Action NC** | SJ/ DM |
| 8 | **Lobbying and getting involved in responding to consultation requests**  Item already addressed under item 2 of the agenda. Executive Member’s are still asked to pursue any opportunities to foster contacts with relevant regulatory and associated bodies/ links to government.  • Building Societies Association – AL   * Banking Standards Board – NC and others meeting BB on 26 May   • Financial Services Conduct Board – NC talking to Accord who have close links  • Association of British Insurers – NC/ CT have made contact  • Parliaments/ TUC: Scottish/ STUC – FS. English/ TUC – NC/ Community   * Welsh – FS confirmed may have connection with Welsh TUC   • FCA – FS suggested get them to one of our events and build the link from there | All  AL  NC  NC  NC/ CT  FS/ NC  FS |
| 9 | **Governance**  NC had not yet moved forward his actions:   * to talk to Community TU’s Dave Fiddler and see if he would be willing to work with NC, even KW, as to AFF’s obligations. * Completing the ‘behind the scenes’ site on the website for use by the AFF EC. And overcoming the current access restrictions of the system to enable further sub sections e.g. just for Treasurer and Deputy Treasurer without using passwords for all documents. * Need for an unsubscribe option for members on our mailing list, etc.   **Actions - NC** | NC |
| 10 | **Member items**  CT had asked for time on the agenda to discuss - *‘Taking a breadth - How are people coping where we are now with Covid and Hybrid working, what people have gone through, and what more they want?’*  Good discussion on this item and seems many employers are taking action, however from the conversation difficult to determine patterns, some actions are supportive of hybrid working, some reining in previous commitments, some employers have different practices for different areas of the business. Action often justified by business performance metrics.  Agreement that employers are moving to a new ‘post – post covid’ phase. Some engaging employees in the discussion, some issuing instructions.  AFF EC members clear they want employers to engage with them in the discussions, well prior to making decisions, with still around 750 covid related deaths per day, there is individual trepidation, too short term for employers to ignore the considerable benefits for child caring/ caring/ people with reduced mobility – employees will move jobs to keep flexibility. Equally not everyone wants the same thing. There are benefits from working in and across teams in offices. Consequences include: shutting offices, new contracts, everyone now works differently – digitalisation, useful of virtual media for meetings/ hearings  This coalesced into support for an early survey on the post - post covid hybrid and flexible working and this should be a priority item. SJ agreed to sponsor the survey working with KW. **Action: CT/ SJ/ KW**  Next meeting members item – *‘cost of living rises – hardship for employees, what measurers do your employers have for employee’s struggling, what support can your employee body/ union provide. Please share ideas. Are there wider consequences yet to come?’* – **Action KW** | SJ/ KW  KW |
| 11 | **Communications**  **Newsletter**  No newsletter due.  **Website – update on progress**  Covered under item 2 and item 9 Governance |  |
| 12 | **Next meeting**   * Please can we have items for future meetings – **Action All** * Next meetings – KW will cancel his placeholders, NC has now issued formal invites – Done * Wednesday 13 July 2022 - London * Wednesday 28 September 2022, sorry for any confusion, definitely the Wednesday and not the Thursday, venue yet to be confirmed * Wednesday 7 December 2022   Reminder that KW cancelling a placeholder just means you should have NC’s formal invite, IT IS NOT THE CANCELLATION OF THE MEETING. | All  All |
| 13 | **Any Other Business**  Reminder that the next EC meeting, coincides with the Nicky Morgan event, expect a whole day, and invited to F2F in London, (still to finalise venue, but will be London). Seeking to organise so people can opt to use virtual option to join both event and the EC meeting.  EB was asked how she had found the meeting. Very positive, not sure what expected, but liked it, learnt a lot and felt able to participate. Looking forward to more. | All |

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| **Standing agenda items** |
| Welcome to meeting  Sign off of notes of last meeting  Actions/ matters arising from last meeting  Updates from Chair, Treasurer and Secretary   * Treasurers report * Sub Group updates – Operational Sub Group and Website Sub Group * Consultation returns by AFF update   Diversity and Inclusion  Learning Calendar  Member Items  Communications – newsletter, website  Next meeting |
| **Items for next meeting** |
| * Consultation returns, raising AFF’s profile with bodies, our status as a (non TU body) – NC * AFF’s status as an ‘unincorporated association’ and our new draft rules – NC. And lobbying - All * D&I Action Plan – to be circulated prior to the meeting. * Building our membership base * Members item – *‘cost of living rises – hardship for employees, what measurers do your employers have for employee’s struggling, what support can your employee body/ union provide. Please share ideas. Are there wider consequences yet to come?’* – Action KW |
| **Future items** |
| September meeting – Consideration of tariff levels for subscriptions, analysis and recommendation – FS  Live feedback - KW |