

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the North West Translators' Network
held on Zoom on Tuesday 9 June 2020**

Committee members present:

Heidi Kerschl (HK - Chair)

Andrew Wilson (AW - Treasurer)

Mike Hanson (MH - Events Team Leader)

Laurence Bisot (LB - Membership Secretary and Events Team)

Janice Crossfield (JC - Update Editor, Academic Liaison and Events Team)

Kate Lo (KL - Co-working Coordinator and Events Team)

Katell Sevellec (KSev - Academic Liaison and Events Team)

Kat Slater (KSI - Communications Officer)

Apologies received from:

Andrea Dewhurst (Minutes Secretary) – Minutes were taken on this occasion by Janice Crossfield

Meeting began: 7.30 pm

1 Minutes of last year's AGM

HK explained that AD was unfortunately not able to attend the AGM and that, consequently, the minutes of last year's meeting were not available.

2 Chair's report

HK reflected on another successful year for the NWTN, which had included winning the ITI Network Award and staging our first online events. New members were recruited and links were reinforced at ITI HQ and with other networks.

HK asked how people feel about the new NWTN website and opinions were favourable. It is proving very useful in allowing us to speed up the communication process, and administrating it ourselves has given us freedom and saved the network money. HK reiterated that the website is, and should be, a work in progress. Future developments might include the creation of a members' discussion forum.

We have improved our ties with the ITI bulletin and with Radhika, with the result that NWTN and its activities are prominent in the ITI bulletin. It was unfortunate that the ITI and Friends event at which JC and KSev were to represent the NWTN had to be cancelled. We have also made inroads with the CloL. HK has helped to market their events, earning kudos points for NWTN.

HK was delighted with our success in developing our social media marketing. Under lockdown, in particular, traffic to our Facebook and Twitter accounts is very encouraging. Statistics are available in HK's report on the NWTN website. Thanks to KSI's arrival as Communications Officer, we now have a joined-up social media presence.

The NWTN mentoring scheme currently has 4 mentor-mentee pairings and continues to prove a success. We expect that the academic liaison programme coordinated by KSev and JC will consolidate our work with local universities.

HK offered her thanks to MH for all his work as Events Team Leader and congratulated the new-style team on a successful year of events, both physical and online.

She also expressed her gratitude to AW for keeping us all on the straight and narrow with regard to financial affairs and to Hilary Wilson for validating our accounts, as per NWTN rules. Thanks must also go to Andrea Dewhurst for her amazing minutes and to Marcus and Angela who have made a huge contribution to events and to the website.

3 Treasurer's report

AW reported that our finances are fairly healthy, with a total of £19,000 in our current and savings accounts. Income exceeded expenditure this year (as we saved money on the website). We had previously paid £60.00 per month for a dubious service.

Income from subscriptions appears to be down. This is because we extended the membership year by six months to September, so there has been a drop-off in income during the COVID-19 lockdown.

AW raised two important points:

- committee members appear reluctant to claim the nominal sums for their efforts. They should be aware that they can do that.
- members appear equally reluctant to claim their £25 training grant. In fact, AW has only paid out two this year. Members are reminded that they may claim £25 (i.e. half of their subscription) for attendance at any approved event.

AW confirmed that he had enlisted the services of Hilary Wilson, a qualified accountant, to audit our accounts, as per our regulations. This year's accounts have now been audited and signed off. There was discussion as to whether we should declare our income to the HMRC. AW will look into this and deal with it.

AW proposed that Hilary Wilson be given free membership for her efforts. The suggestion was agreed.

Full NWTN accounts are available in the members resources section of the website.

4 Membership Secretary's report

We now have 155 members, an increase of 17.4% on last year. 18% of these are full members and 30% students. We now have slightly fewer associate members.

Since April 2019, we have gained 50 new members, 24 four of whom are students. However, some of our previous student members vanished, so we need to work on retaining our student members at the end of their courses and encourage them to upgrade to full membership. We also have new VIP members, that is members of the committee, Hilary Wilson, and people who have provided training.

Our membership fee remains unchanged at £50. This year's renewal campaign was complicated by the Coronavirus issue and the decision to extend current memberships until September. In March, only 25 members had renewed which has led to a fall in revenue. More payments will, of course, be made in September. Only four members decided not to renew - two of these have retired and two have changed career.

LB had carried out a survey and it appears that more than 50% of our members are in the Greater Manchester area and most of the others have easy access to Manchester. There are still a few members who are isolated and so, in the future, it is possible that we could organise some combined online/physical events.

5 Events Team report

MH took over as Events Team Leader one year ago, with the other members of the team volunteering their services at last year's AGM. They were later joined by KSI as Communications Officer.

MH reflected on a busy year which included the Translation for Tourism Event, a summer walk, the French Connections event, two talks to students at universities in the area, a business session, and the Word Wizardry event.

Then, however, we found ourselves under lockdown and were forced to put our programme of planned events (Boost Day, Creative Writing Workshop, 35th Anniversary Dinner) on hold. These events are, however, 'oven-ready' for when lockdown is lifted. The Boost Day has been provisionally rescheduled for 26 September. Should this not be possible, consideration will be given as to whether this can be held as a Zoom event.

The planned joint walk with the West Midlands group has unfortunately been cancelled, but it is hoped that we can arrange something again with them and possibly also with the YTI group.

The ITI and Friends Event, which was to be held in Bristol in June, and at which the NWTN was due to give a presentation, has also been cancelled.

During the lockdown, NWTN events have successfully gone digital. Four virtual pub quizzes have taken place so far, with a "War of the Roses" quiz against YTI to be held on 11 June. This could well lead to an ITI quiz league during lockdown! JC and LB recently organised the first online Bookchat, which was well-attended (12 participants). The intention is for this to continue as a regular event.

The Events Team is also looking into organising a number of professional development events, the first of which will be a talk on note-taking for interpreters.

MH emphasised that the Events Team welcomes members' ideas for events.

In response to a question, he confirmed that a walk was organised last year near Rochdale. A joint walk with the West Midlands group is currently on hold. There is also the possibility of a joint walk with YTI in future.

MH thanked all his colleagues in the Events Team for their hard work. As he will be working abroad more often in the coming year, he is now handing over the reins to KL.

5a Co-working

Until March this year, a regular group of people was attending co-working sessions, so they were increased to a fortnightly basis. New members were encouraged, including people from abroad who had seen them advertised on Twitter. New attendees were recruited as NWTN members. Various Manchester venues have been used including Colony, Work.Life and Ziferblat, which is still the preferred venue.

Occasionally, sessions were held at Bruntwood, which offered free workspaces once a month at venues around the North West – Manchester, Warrington and Liverpool. The committee managed to save members money by combining meetings with Free Workspace Wednesdays. Meetings were also held in Warrington, which attracted some different members. Patricia Brakus organised co-working sessions at Bruntwood Liverpool. These had just started before the lockdown came into effect. Other locations may be considered in the future.

During the current lockdown, co-working is being replaced by our weekly Bake-Off sessions.

5b Academic Liaison

At the last AGM, we discussed the need to let students know just what the NWTN can offer them. We have, therefore, taken several steps to do this.

In October, Angela gave a presentation at Manchester University on the practicalities of working as a translator, and this was followed by a Q&A session featuring a panel of NWTN members. Many questions were asked and it appears that the event was successful, as we received positive feedback and gained four new student members.

In March, HK and JC ran a similar session with students at UCLAN. Again, good feedback was received and three of the student attendees joined the NWTN immediately afterwards.

Contact has been reinforced with lecturers in the Translation and Interpreting department at Manchester University. They have been invited to join the network and speak at some of our events – for example, Maeve Olohan at the Boost Day. Discussions have been held with Rebecca Tipton as to the possibility of leading a note-taking workshop for interpreters. We now have a good pool of potential speakers and the possibility for NWTN members to attend certain translation events at Manchester University.

The benefits of this collaboration, both for the students and for our network, formed the basis of our successful proposal for the ITI and Friends event in Bristol in June. The event has unfortunately had to be cancelled but we hope to be able to conduct our project and present it at some stage in the future.

6 NWTN communications

Due to technical difficulties, KSI could not be heard on Zoom so HK read salient points from her report which is available on the website.

KSI volunteered in November 2019, took on the Member Monday campaign and ran with it on Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn and the NWTN website. 22 members have been featured so far, and there are two more in the pipeline. HK appealed to other members who have not yet been featured.

There is not as much interaction on LinkedIn as on our other communications channels. There has, however, been a general uptick in engagement in 2020, and this marketing is producing tangible benefits.

HK encouraged attendees to consult KSI's report on our website.

7 NWTN update

It was decided in autumn 2019 that a monthly update featuring short items of news should replace the existing newsletter which was produced two or three times a year. It was agreed that the update should work in tandem with the website by announcing events, referring to items which had recently been added, and providing links to encourage readers to consult the site for further details.

There have now been four issues and, judging by feedback, it seems that it has been well received. It has proved a useful vehicle for information about online events and activities during the current period of lockdown.

Some items have been passed on by other committee members and these have been supplemented by other material from the website, Twitter and personal searches on the Internet. Contributions would, however, be very welcome from our wider membership. We should, of course, cater for all members and all their different languages and so any information members can provide relating to languages other than French, German and Spanish will be very welcome for future issues. Similarly, when life returns to some sense of normality, it would be useful to have information from members about relevant events all around the North West.

JC asked that members note the new email address for ideas and suggestions for the update: update@nwtn.org.uk

8 Election and appointment of network officers and committee members

All current committee members confirmed that they are happy to carry on.

MH is stepping down as Events Team Leader but will continue to serve as a member of the team. KL has volunteered to take over. KL was proposed and seconded, along with the rest of the current team.

AW was proposed and seconded as Treasurer.

Since HK is sadly stepping down from the post of Chair, a new one is needed. LB was proposed and seconded as our new Chair.

Sarah Bowyer was proposed and seconded as our new Membership Secretary.

HK mentioned that the NWTN Chair has normally also been Mentoring Coordinator. It will be left to LB to decide what she wants to do about this.

AD was proposed and seconded as Minutes Secretary.

KL was proposed and seconded as Co-working Coordinator for the time being.

KSev, JC and KSI were proposed and seconded in their Academic Liaison, Update Editor and Communications Officer roles.

9 Honoraria and benefits for committee members

a - Benefits

Committee members already receive free membership. HK asked whether committee members should be entitled to one free paying event (not the annual dinner) per year. This must of course, be balanced against paying members. HK's suggestion was put to the vote and was passed. It was suggested there could be a cap on the number of free places for any particular event. HK suggested that this should be 10% of available places.

b - Honoraria

Committee members are not aware of the small annual honorarium which can be claimed from AW. He felt that this should now be rethought given the different structure of the committee. HK suggested organising a committee meeting to discuss this and review the structure.

10 Straw poll of members' thoughts on what they want in terms of online events

Consideration was given as to what could be offered as online events, particularly online CPD such as note-taking for interpreters, well-being sessions... KL will think about this issue and get back to us on it.

KL pointed out that eCPD webinars has now been acquired by CloL and that plenty of online material is available there. We need to check, however, whether these are available to CloL members only and whether we can advertise them in our update.

KL spoke about the Survey Monkey questionnaire which is to be distributed to members.

MH spoke about the possibility of holding the Boost Day online. The speakers had not initially been keen on this idea, however. It was discussed whether the event could be spread over a number of days or possibly two half-days. HK suggested that it could be recorded for download and then a plenary session held later on Zoom.

AW felt that in the medium term we probably need to look to online events as, even when physical meetings are allowed, there is no knowing who will actually turn up in terms of speakers or audience. He reminded us that we have paid for a year-long Zoom subscription, so we should make the most of it.

11 Any other business

MH paid tribute to our outgoing Chair Heidi and his thoughts were echoed by all present.

HK will send out a formal MailChimp email containing details of the new NWTN team. She will also meet with LB regarding the handover.

Meeting Ended: 9.50 pm