



VETERANS FOR PEACE UK POLICY GROUP REPORT
SUNDAY 25 MARCH 2018

Membership	Total = 590 Subscribed = 518 Active = 137
Finance	PayPal: £576.97 Bank: £1894.43 Total: £2471.4

Vital Information
<p>Regional Autonomy: Regional Coordinators are now in place. Get in touch with your coordinator at http://vfpuk.org/regions/</p> <p>Regional Coordinators are the first point of contact for members and are responsible for organising / facilitating / encouraging VFP activity in their regions.</p> <p>Regional groups are free to act within the VFP UK Handbook and are free to organise as they see fit. For example VFP South East are organising geographically. They have a group in London and hope to have another group in the South East soon. Northern Ireland could well organise according to activity rather than location. These are just examples of how regional groups can organise.</p>

Attendees:

Danny Beever
John Bourton
Phillip Clarke
Ben Griffin

Apologies:

Kathryn Piquette

Statement of Purpose:

Read by Danny Beever.

Agenda:

1. Situation reports
2. Bank Account Change
3. Funding for the USA Convention
4. Priority campaign
5. Upcoming activity

AOB

1. Situation reports:

1.1. Policy Group

Phillip Clarke is the Chair of the VFP UK Policy Group (chair@vfpuk.org).

The Policy Group meets 5 times a year (including the AGM).

The Chair ensures that the Policy Group fulfils its responsibilities as laid out in our Handbook.

The default strategy of the Policy Group is to delegate decision making to the regions and groups of VFP UK whenever possible and appropriate.

1.2. National Coordinator

Ben Griffin is the National Coordinator of VFP UK (coord@vfpuk.org).

The National Coordinator is responsible for the day to day business of VFP UK.

The National Coordinator maintains direct communication with our Regional Coordinators.

All regions now have a coordinator. A coordinator workshop is booked in for the first day of our Annual Gathering. This will be at Friends House Euston.

Regional groups are encouraged to act autonomously in the pursuit of our Statement of Purpose and within the VFP UK Handbook.

1.3. Membership

Kathryn Piquette is the Membership Secretary of VFP UK (membership@vfpuk.org).

The Membership Secretary ensures that our membership database is accurate and that members have provided proof of military service.

Membership numbers explained:

Total = the number of veterans who have joined and not asked to be removed from the membership.

Subscribed = the number of veterans who have joined minus those who no longer receive our email updates.

Active = the number of veterans who have responded to our request to update our membership records in 2018.

In order to comply with upcoming data legislation and to minimize the personal data we store it was decided that the information required for joining VFP UK would be reduced. We no longer require; regiment, years of service or service number. We do require branch of service and proof of service.

1.4. Finance

John Bourton is the Treasurer of VFP UK (accounts@vfpuk.org).

The Treasurer ensures that VFP UK remains in financial good health and that our accounting obligations as an Unincorporated Association are met.

At present Norman Lynch produces our annual accounts on a voluntary basis. He is experienced in this role.

A finance policy was discussed at length during the meeting and a policy document has been agreed and attached to the appendix of this report.

1.5. Annual General Meeting

Daniel Beever is the Annual General Meeting Convener of VFP UK (gathering@vfpuk.org).

VFP UK is governed by our Annual General Meeting (AGM).

The AGM Convener ensures that our AGM takes place during our Annual Gathering and that the correct procedures are followed as set out in our Handbook.

The AGM Convener is also responsible for organising the Annual Gathering.

Preparations for our Annual Gathering including our AGM are in hand. Locations have been booked and registration will open on our website before May.

Contact has been made with a German veterans group and we expect some of their members to attend our Annual Gathering.

A sizeable contingent from the USA is expected.

1.6. Research Group

Nothing to report.

1.7. Admin Group

The shop is maintained by Ben Griffin. We have limited storage space and limited time. The shop will focus on stocking blue sweaters and blue T-shirts in a full range of sizes. Pin badges, hats and handbooks will be available as grouped items. All other stock will not be replaced when sold out.

One off campaign items will be made available through Everpress.

2. Bank Account Change

Veterans For Peace UK is an unincorporated association run by a Policy Group of five members elected at our Annual General Meeting.

The key official roles within the Policy Group are:

Chair: Phillip Clarke

Treasurer: John Bourton

National Coordinator (general secretary): Ben Griffin

Membership Secretary: Kathryn Piquette

AGM Convener: Daniel Beever

Our bank account is currently with the Cooperative Bank. The Cooperative account is not easy to manage, management of the account cannot be done in branch and has to be carried out in writing. Also they no longer accept Unincorporated Associations for their community bank accounts. Metrobank do accept Unincorporated Associations and are

very easy to do business with. They are open seven days a week and you get to speak face to face with a dedicated business manager.

It was agreed unanimously that our account with the Cooperative Bank be closed.

It was agreed unanimously that a bank account should be opened with Metro Bank.

The following persons shall be the account holders and authorised signatories:

Ben Griffin

Daniel Beever

Either authorised signatory can operate the account.

Ben Griffin and Daniel Beever will open the new bank account as soon as possible.

The new account number and sort code will be shared with the membership to allow members to adjust standing orders.

3. Funding for the USA Convention

The PG received two applications for funding to attend the National VFP Convention in the USA. It was decided that Michal Pike would be assisted by funding his accommodation costs.

4. Neutral Country priority campaign:

The draft leaflet for the Neutral Country campaign was discussed. It is close to completion and being sent out for comment.

The leaflet will be used in the recruitment of a working group to further develop the campaign in time for launch in November.

Phillip Clarke will be the project manager and responsible for bringing the campaign to launch in November 2018.

5. Upcoming activity in 2018:

30 June: Armed Forces Day in Blackpool.

(Ian Johnstone northwest@vfpuk.org).

22 to 27 August: VFP National Convention in St Paul, Minnesota, USA

(Ben Griffin coord@vfpuk.org).

8 to 11 November: VFP UK Annual Gathering in London

(Danny Beever gathering@vfpuk.org).

AOB:

Nothing to report

Next Meeting of the Policy Group:

Saturday 30 June in Blackpool.

VETERANS FOR PEACE UK FINANCIAL PROCEDURES

The Policy Group has overall responsibility for the VFP UK finances in accordance with Section 11 of our Handbook, copied below:

SECTION 11: FINANCES

11.1 Accounts Policy Group shall ensure that annual financial accounts are published in accordance with standard accounting practices.

11.2 Transparency Copies of the annual accounts review shall be available on request.

11.3 Fiscal Year The fiscal year of Veterans For Peace UK shall be from April 1 through March 31 of the following year.

11.4 Dues VFP UK does not collect membership dues.

11.5 Grants Applications from members and groups should be made in writing to the Policy Group.

11.6 Expenses Wherever possible hosting organisations should pay members expenses. Members of VFP UK who have incurred costs on VFP UK business can apply to the Admin Group for reimbursement if required.

The following financial procedures have been developed in line with the above policy and are designed to meet the following objectives:

1. Individual members who handle money on behalf of VFP UK need protection from possible accusations of misuse of funds or fraud.
2. We are required to provide accurate annual accounts and balance sheets for the AGM.
3. The Policy Group needs to be in a position to monitor and oversee finances on a regular basis.
4. The Policy Group needs a process for agreeing and authorising future spending , including delegating powers.
5. VFP UK members need to know how and for what purposes they might claim expenses when acting on behalf of VFP UK.
6. Regional Groups need to know how and for what purposes they might apply for VFP UK central funds.
7. Regional groups may need guidance on the possibilities and limitations of holding their own local accounts.
8. We must ensure that in meeting these needs our policy and procedures do not place an excessive administrative burden on individuals. We are all volunteers working on behalf of VFP UK and none of us are paid for our time. KISS applies here!

PROCEDURES:

1. Bank Account.

- a. The National Coordinator is the designated account holder and will hold the VFP UK bank account. There will only be one VFP UK bank account.
- b. An additional member of the Policy Group will be appointed and only these two individuals will be authorised to sign cheques.
- c. Receipts, invoices and bank statements should be kept as evidence for each transaction and passed to the Bookkeeper at the end of each month.
- d. The Book keeper will maintain a regular balance sheet of monthly income and expenditure and will prepare the annual accounts for the AGM
- e. The National Coordinator is authorised to spend up to £300 per transaction without requiring Policy Group approval.
- f. The Policy Group will decide individual expenditure over £300. At least three members must agree the expenditure if all PG members are not available.
- g. The Bank account is never allowed to become overdrawn and the account holders are not permitted to enter into loan agreements.
- h. The Policy Group Member with Financial oversight will ensure that agreed accounting practices are adhered to.

2. Clothing and Equipment.

- a. The member with responsibility for the VFP central shop will provide an annual stocktaking report for the AGM. The stocktaking will be carried out by a VFP member appointed by the Policy Group for that purpose.
- b. The central shop will hold a limited range of stock items. In addition the stockholder will hold and maintain capital items purchased for the national VFP body, such as banners and electronic equipment.
- c. Individual regions may wish to design and develop their own local stock which will be separate from the national shop. Auditing and stocktaking of regional shops will be a matter for each region and the PG will not have a role. Proposed designs of regional clothing will need to be approved by the Regional Coordinators Group prior to manufacture.

3. Expenses.

An individual may claim legitimate travel expenses if undertaking a task in a designated role specifically on behalf of VFP, and where other sources of finance are not available. The following rules apply:

- a. Expenses will be for travel on public transport only and should be at the cheapest rate obtainable. Food and accommodation costs would only be considered in exceptional circumstances and will require Policy Group approval in advance.
- b. Whenever possible if there is a hosting organisation then they should refund expenses and this should be agreed with them in advance.
- c. If a member is intending to seek a refund of expenses they should contact the National Coordinator for agreement prior to making a booking.
- d. If expenses are likely to exceed £100 per claim then additional agreement from the Finance member of the Policy Group (or if unavailable any other Policy Group member) is required in advance.
- e. Payments will only be made on production of proof of expenditure which will be retained for accounting purposes.
- f. Regional Groups may bid for central funds via their Coordinators for legitimate expenditure when hosting and organising national events on behalf of VFP. National events will be those designated as such by the Policy Group.

4. Regions.

- a. Regional Coordinators may wish to maintain a Petty Cash account for their region and if they do so then they must maintain a petty cash record with supporting evidence in the form of receipts.
- b. The Petty cash account is to be checked regularly at appropriate intervals by a designated member who is not the account holder.

5. Donations.

- a. VFP UK does not collect subscriptions from individual members. However, members are invited to make voluntary donations to VFP UK including setting up regular payments by Direct Debit or via PayPal.
- b. Ad Hoc donations may also be made to local Regional Groups via the Regional Coordinator if a local account is being maintained for specific purposes (such as regular room hire).

6. Support for members.

Many of our members have experience of receiving help from a wide range of military charities and other organisations. VFP UK is not a charity and we do not provide such support ourselves, but we can signpost individual members who are experiencing difficulties to charities and organisations that have helped members in the past. Members should approach their Regional Coordinators in the first instance.