

## ***NFSP Guidelines for Regions and Branches***

### Regional Committee

The NFSP is divided into regions which are the principal administrative units, each region should organise and administer their area as they deem appropriate, subject to NFSP Board (Board) approval.

Regions have been established in accordance with the NFSP's Articles of Association (Articles) for the following areas:

North East;  
North West;  
Midland;  
North Thames & East Anglia;  
South West;  
South East;  
Scotland;  
Northern Ireland;  
London; and  
Wales/Cymru.

Members shall be attached to the region appropriate to the location of their post office. Once elected to the Regional Committee, any Regional Committee member may nominate a member of its staff who may attend and vote at Regional Committee meetings.

A Regional Committee shall consist of members from within the region. Each region should establish its own internal structure (see example 1). Regions should submit their proposed structure and any amendments to that structure to the Board for approval. However, the Regional Committee must include a Regional Chair, Regional Secretary and Regional Treasurer whose roles and responsibilities are set out later in this guidance. The appointment of the Regional Secretary, Regional Chair and Regional Treasurer shall take place annually after the NFSP National Conference. The incumbent post holders may stand for re-appointment. If two or more members put themselves forward for any role, the members present can vote by way of a show of hands (or other similar/appropriate means where such meetings are held using electronic facilities).

Each region shall adopt regional guidelines setting out reasonable constitutional operation and fair regional election procedures which require to be in accordance with the NFSP's Articles of Association and these guidelines and may amend them, provided that such guidelines and amendments are submitted to the next Board meeting for their approval. The Board shall have the power to set aside any such amendments that may be in conflict with the Articles or any other rules set by the Board (national rules). Each committee (and its members) shall ensure that they are not in a position where they have a conflict of interest and shall declare any interest they have at any meeting where business is to be conducted.

Each Regional Committee must hold at least four meetings a year. In view of the Covid-19 pandemic, all meetings shall be held by means of a suitable secure electronic facility or facilities until further notice.

Post Covid-19 pandemic there will be a requirement that at least 50% of all meetings shall be held using suitable secure electronic facilities.

Any meeting held using suitable secure electronic facilities will be duly constituted for the purpose of these guidelines if the chair is satisfied that the members attending the meeting by use of these electronic facilities are able to

- (a) Participate in the business for which the meetings has convened;
- (b) Hear all persons speaking; and
- (c) Be heard by all other persons attending and participating in the meeting.

The Board may prescribe or recommend from time to time, what electronic facility or facilities are deemed to be suitable.

At each meeting, the Regional Secretary should give a report on the work done and the Organisational Representative on the Board for that region (Regional Non-Executive Director) should report on the Board's work and policy.

Honorary members of a region may be elected by the Regional Committee in recognition for their service to the members of the NFSP and may attend and speak at any Regional Committee meeting but are not entitled to vote.

In consultation with their Regional Non-Executive Director, Regional Committees should establish the most effective contacts and channels of communication with Post Office Ltd (PO) for dealing with day to day issues within the region. This must be subject to any national rules or other arrangements agreed at national level taking precedence.

Regional Committees are subject to the control of the Board, whose decision on all matters of policy (including disputes as to interpretation of policy) shall be final.

A region may send resolutions to Conference. All resolutions approved at regional level shall be forwarded to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) for consideration by the Board.

Each region is entitled to send delegates to Conference on the basis of 1 per 40 members or part thereof. There will also be a further 20 delegate spaces available through direct application by members to NFSP Headquarters and will be filled on a "first come first served" basis. Any member is entitled to attend Conference as a day delegate.

Members of the Board are ex officio members of their Regional Committee with a right to speak but no voting rights.

Each region must have a recognised current bank account. The starting figure will be no less than £10,000 to allow for the day to day running of regional activities and for the payment of “out of pocket” expenses within the region. Subject to the production of proper receipts and expense claim forms to the Finance Department and provided that the expenditure was in accordance with the agreed budget agreed with the Board, when a regional account dips below £3000-then said account will be topped back up to the original £10,000 figure to allow the work of the region to run smoothly. Applications or transfers for payment drawn thereon in excess of £250 shall be signed, physically or digitally, by two persons; one signatory will suffice under £250. All regional funds shall be applied to the objects and purposes of the region as long as such objects and purposes of the region are not extraneous from or inconsistent with the objects and purposes of the NFSP.

The autonomy of the regional finances shall lie with each region as long as they are not inconsistent with the objects and purposes of the NFSP and are in accordance with an approved budget. However, electronic visibility of the regional accounts shall be made available to the NFSP and its auditors at all times.

Prior to NFSP Conference each year the Finance Department will ensure that regions have sufficient funds to be able to reimburse their delegates.

The Regional Secretary in conjunction with the Regional Treasurer should ensure that the region's accounts are forwarded to NFSP headquarters not later than 30<sup>th</sup> of November each year, to enable the preparation and audit of the Financial Statements to the preceding 30<sup>th</sup> of September.

### Branches

Regions may sub divide into branches.

Expenditure incurred by branches in meeting the objects of the NFSP and in compliance with Region and Branch Guidelines will be settled from funds held and managed by the region.

Where branches are established by regions, members shall be attached to the branch appropriate to the location of their post office. Any member may nominate to the Secretary, a representative who can attend and vote at branch meetings (subject to the NFSP Articles of Association). The appointment of the Branch Secretary or the Branch Chair shall take place annually after the NFSP Annual Conference. The incumbent post holders may stand for re-appointment. If two or more members put themselves forward for any role, the members present can vote by way of a show of hand (or other similar/appropriate means where such meetings are held using electronic facilities).

As a minimum requirement each branch should appoint a Branch Secretary who should be responsible for organising branch meetings and liaising with the Regional Committee. A branch may make other appointments as they see fit.

Each branch shall hold at least 2 meetings per year. Subject to geography within the branch area, it is encouraged that meetings are held in different locations or using secure electronic facilities to allow as many members to attend as possible. Post Covid-19 pandemic there will be a requirement that at least 50% of all meetings shall be held using suitable secure electronic facilities.

Any meeting held using suitable secure electronic facilities will be duly constituted for the purpose of these guidelines if the chair is satisfied that the members attending the meeting by use of these electronic facilities are able to

- (a) Participate in the business for which the meetings has convened;
- (b) Hear all persons speaking; and
- (c) Be heard by all other persons attending and participating in the meeting.

The Board may prescribe or recommend from time to time, what electronic facility or facilities are deemed to be suitable.

Each branch shall adopt Branch Guidelines as described and may amend these provided that such guidelines and amendments are submitted to the Regional Committee within 14 days for their approval. The Regional Committee will have full power to set aside any amendments which are in conflict with either the Regional Guidelines or the Articles of Association and these guidelines.

Branches can be further sub-divided into local hub areas so that members can meet locally on an informal basis to discuss issues relating to the running of their post office. Issues highlighted should be fed back to the regional committee via the hub co-ordinator.

All resolutions from branches must, in the first instance, be submitted to the Regional Secretary in time for inclusion in the agenda for the Regional Committee meeting.

A branch may be dissolved either by a two-thirds majority vote of branch members present and voting passed at any annual or special general meeting of the branch or by the Regional Committee or the Board where in its opinion the branch has ceased to function.

## Social Media

Branches and regions are encouraged to engage with members via social media sites such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter etc. provided they do so in accordance with NFSP Communications Policies. The purpose is to keep members informed of developments within the wider NFSP community. It will also be an opportunity for members to discuss day to day issues along with requesting guidance on Post Office procedures, stock/store numbers and best practice.

## Non-Executive Director Elections

Each region will be entitled to elect one Organisational Representative (to be a Regional Non-Executive Director) in accordance with article 18.3 who will be entitled to attend Board meetings. Elections will take place in accordance with the Articles on a rolling three-year cycle with the next cycles being

### First year 2021:

North West  
South East  
Midland

### The Following Year

North Thames & East Anglia  
North East  
Wales/Cymru  
Scotland

### The following year:

London  
Northern Ireland  
South West

Nominations for election to serve on the Board must be received at NFSP headquarters no later than 5pm on the date specified. In the event of there being more than one nominee for the seat on the Board, an election must take place. A ballot paper bearing the name of each nominee will be prepared and distributed by post by the nominated scrutineers to all members within the region. Nominees will be offered an equal opportunity to provide a personal information statement which will be distributed with the ballot papers.

Completed ballot papers must be returned by post to the nominated scrutineers allowing sufficient time to ensure that they will be received no later than the date advertised. The cost of postage will be borne by National Federation of SubPostmasters (NFSP). A list of nominees will be sent to the Regional Secretary within one week of the closing date for nominations.

If a ballot is held, the result certified by the nominated scrutineers will be notified to the Chief Executive who will in turn notify the nominees and the Regional Secretary.

If an Organisational Representative Non-Executive Director resigns within the term of office the newly elected Organisational Representative will continue until the next Triennial election as described above.

## Roles & Responsibilities

### Chair of the Regional Committee

- Will attend the regional and/or branch meetings and shall chair the regional committee in accordance with any local rules and with the National Guidelines.
- Will be responsible for setting an agenda along with the Regional Secretary
- Will keep a regular dialogue with their Non-Executive Director

### Regional Secretary

- Will be responsible for the management of the region
- Will organise and manage the regional and/or branch meetings to ensure the region complies with the National Guidelines.
- Will ensure that there are no fewer than four meetings per year and notified to the Regional Committee and the NFSP Communications Team as early as possible.
- Will ideally arrange for meetings to be held within two weeks of NFSP Board meetings.
- Will be responsible for setting an agenda (see example 2 below)
- Will arrange local meetings with Post Office Ltd (PO) representatives and liaise with them and try to resolve local issues.
- Will be available to respond to members queries and liaise with headquarters when required.
- Will keep a regular dialogue with their Non-Executive Director
- Will arrange for contact with potential new members in the region to be established

### Branch Secretary

- Will liaise on a regular basis with the Regional Secretary and discuss all relevant issues in the region
- Will arrange meetings with local PO Area Managers to try to resolve issues locally where possible
- Will arrange and manage branch meetings in accordance with the Regional Guidelines, dates to be advised to the NFSP Communications Team as soon as possible.
- Will set agenda for the meetings (see example 3 below)
- Will request NFSP headquarters to notify members of any upcoming meetings

### Hub Co-ordinator

- Will be responsible for organising local informal meetings to update members when required

- Will report to both the Regional and Branch Secretary
- Will be members of the Regional Committee

#### Regional Treasurer

- Will be responsible for the management of the regional funds
- Will be required to pay any expenses in a timely manner from regional funds
- Will be responsible for paying venue costs for meetings from regional funds
- Will be required to submit receipts to NFSP headquarters on a quarterly basis as required by the Articles of Association
- Will be required to submit end of year regional accounts by no later than 30 November after NFSP financial year end (30 September)

#### Regional Committee

The Committee will be made up of Regional Chair, Regional Secretary, Regional Treasurer, Branch Secretaries and any Hub Co-ordinators. These will all be active members within the Region

The Non-Executive Director will be an ex-officio member of the Region

#### Payments/Expenses – submitted as an invoice by official

- Payments to officers and anyone on official NFSP business will be paid as follows
- Regional Secretary £1200/annum plus expenses for attending meetings as described below
- Branch Secretary £600/annum plus expenses for attending meetings as described below
- Regional Treasurer £1200/annum plus expenses for attending meetings as described below
- Regional Committee Expenses for attending meetings as described below

#### Expenses

Time off counter £100/day or £60/half day

Mileage 45p/mile

Subsistence Up to 5 hrs £5

Up to 10 hrs £10

Overnight, up to £100 B&B with £20 for an evening meal (vat receipts required)

#### Non-active regions or branches

In the case of a moribund region or branch, where no meetings have been held for a period of time NFSP headquarters can arrange meetings within that region or can disband the region or Branch.

### Example 1 (structure of region)

Chair  
Regional Secretary  
Treasurer  
Branch Secretaries  
Hub Coordinator – Committee members

### Example 2 (regional meeting)

Agenda (already circulated to attendees)

Welcome and introductions  
Brief overview of agenda.  
Non-Executive Director report (20 mins)  
Secretary report (15 mins)  
Treasurer's report (10 mins)  
Guest speaker/s (e.g. PO, Retail Team, Mails Support Team, HQ support staff) (20 mins)  
Open forum for members (10 mins)

### Example 3 (branch meeting)

Agenda (advisable to circulate prior to meeting)

Welcome and introductions  
Brief overview of agenda  
Officers' reports (maximum 1 hour in total)  
Guest speaker 30 minutes (e.g. POL, Retail team, Mails team, HQ support staff)  
Open forum for members (30 mins)

Refreshments on arrival for all attendees (max £15 per head).