



**GRAND UNITED ORDER OF ODDFELLOWS FRIENDLY SOCIETY NO: 204F**

**MINUTES OF THE ZOOM MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
(COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT)  
held on  
SATURDAY, 13<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2021**

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**The Grand Master, Sister M. A. Blankson-VanDyck presided  
and the Meeting commenced at 09.30 a.m.**

**PRESENT:**

<b>Sister M. A. Blankson-VanDyck</b>	<b>Chairman/Grand Master</b>
<b>Sister S. R. Whitehouse</b>	<b>Vice Chairman/Deputy Grand Master</b>
<b>Brother R. W. Penn</b>	<b>Immediate Past Grand Master</b>
<b>Brother N. Robinson</b>	<b>Grand Secretary</b>

**Directors:**

**Sister P. A. Palmer**  
**Brother M. Gordon**  
**Brother P. C. A. Hulland**

**Also Present:**

**Principal Directors of the Grand United Trustees Limited:**

<b>Brother V. M. Houldsworth – P.G.M.</b>	<b>Chairman</b>
<b>Brother D. B. Whittaker – P.G.M.</b>	
<b>Sister J. Birch</b>	

**And**

<b>Brother D. Oakes</b>	<b>Deputy Grand Secretary</b>
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The Grand Master, Sister Marian A. Blankson-VanDyck welcomed all to the virtual Board Meeting.

**2021/11/1 IN MEMORIAM:**

**Minutes Silence:**

Upon the Grand Masters instruction, the meeting held a two minute silence in recognition of “Armistice Day” and in remembrance of all other Brothers and Sisters who have passed away during the last twelve months.

May they rest in perfect peace.

**2021/11/2 MINUTES:**

**2.0 IT WAS RESOLVED, AGREED:** “that the Minutes of the Quarterly Zoom Board Meeting held on Saturday, 14<sup>th</sup> August 2021, numbered: (2021/8/1 – 2021/8/23) be approved as a correct record of the business conducted thereat to be signed by the Grand Master when possible.”

**2021/11/3 SOCIETY’S ACTUARY/ACTUARIAL INVESTIGATION:**

**3.0** Noted, Nigel Silby had phoned the Grand Secretary on the 12<sup>th</sup> November 2021 explaining after further consideration, he was of the opinion to let things work through naturally – the nature of the error being surplus understated not overstated, and he believed it is in the best interest of the Society not to raise the issue and let it run its natural course to be taken into account in the interim valuation.

**IT WAS RESOLVED, AGREED:** “that Nigel Silby’s recommendations be accepted”.

**3.1** Noted, the Actuary is planning to delay updates to Key Information Documents (KIDS) due to ongoing consultations on changing disclosures no longer requiring the EU narrative of £1,000 monthly premium in KIDS which was completely inappropriate for Tax Exempt Savings Plans (TESPS).

**2021/11/4 PASSWORD:**

**IT WAS RESOLVED AGREED:** “that from the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2022, and for twelve months thereafter, or until such time as subsequently revised, the Password for the Order be as follows.”

<b>LODGE OUTSIDE</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>jaelp</b>
<b>LODGE INSIDE</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>okkdlk</b>
<b>TRAVELLER</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>xllz</b>
<b>CMD</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>ounezqljlqz</b>

**2021/11/5 OFFICERS LIABILITY INSURANCE:**

Noted, cover has been renewed at the current level for a premium of **£2,763.00**. No increase on last year’s premium.

**2021/11/6 THE ASSOCIATION OF FINANCIAL MUTUALS:**

**6.0** Noted, the 2021 AGM was held on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> October at the Majestic Hotel, Harrogate with a limited number of attendees, enabling the ability to respond to any changes in Government guidance.

**6.1** It was also noted, at the Conference a concept of “The Mutual Way” was launched with branded material with the intention to use The Mutual Way as a kitemark and as a signpost to the consumer as to the way the sector operates with plans to explore the concept further.

**2021/11/7 ORDER DIARY:**

Noted, that 175 special Order diaries 2022 had been ordered and a resale price of **£4.00** each excluding postage and packing was retained.

**IT WAS RESOLVED AGREED: “that after all orders fulfilled, to distribute any surplus diaries overseas like last year”.**

**2021/11/8 FINANCIAL CONDUCT AUTHORITY/PRUDENTIAL REGULATION AUTHORITY:**

**8.0** Noted, the deadline for submission of Schedule IV Reports by independent inspectors of Lodge systems was 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021 and all reports had been received and were available for consideration.

**8.2** Noted, Brother Martin Gordon had completed the inspection of the Head Office systems and provided his report for consideration.

**IT WAS RESOLVED AGREED: “that Brother Martin be thanked for his endeavours and his willingness to continue in the role”.**

**2021/11/9 BOARD DEVELOPMENT AND COMPLIANCE:**

Noted, the new Skillcast courses were awaited and agreed they be applicable to any new Directors and when election forms are received at Head Office, to inform any new nominee that being a Director is subject to completing the courses.

**2021/11/10 GENERAL RULES:**

Noted, the Grand Master had allocated Brother Martin Gordon the duty of presenting at Conference the proposed new General Rule 39A.

**2021/11/11 PROGRESSION OF THE ORDER:**

Noted, after consideration it was decided not to take the idea of possible incentives to Lodge Introducers any further.

**IT WAS RESOLVED, AGREED: “to book a function room at the Trafford Hall Hotel for the February Board Meeting to allow social distancing.”**

## **2021/11/12 MARKETING STRATEGY:**

Noted, the Deputy Grand Secretary had circulated a list of outdoor shows and dates and it was agreed to consider at future Board Meetings including the Derby show next year when details known.

**The meeting adjourned for a tea/coffee break at 10.19 a.m.,  
recommencing at 10.30 a.m.**

## **2021/11/13 REPORT BY THE SOCIETY'S TRUSTEES:**

Noted, a Board meeting had been held on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> November 2021 and Brother V. M. Houldsworth P.G.M., Chairman of the Trustee reported on various matters highlighting the following:

### **(i) SOCIETY'S BROKERS:**

James C. Horsfall made his presentation on the Society's portfolio to the current date, illustrated by documentation provided to the meeting and answered all questions and comments raised during and after his presentation.

### **(ii) DISTRIBUTION OF INVESTMENT INCOME AND ASSETS LEVY:**

The meeting had deliberated on projections provided in respect of the Order Investment Fund and Order Management Fund Income and Expenditure and agreed on recommendations to be made to this meeting for the distribution of income with the Asset Levy having already been set for 2 years at the 14<sup>th</sup> November 2020 Board Meeting.

### **(iii) OLD TRAFFORD:**

Metrorod attended the premises on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> November 2021 and a hosepipe was inserted to pump water 17 metres from underneath the basement. A load of silt was removed and water is draining slowly. A sonar scan is required to find the blockage further along.

Ongoing demolition works of neighbouring buildings have made the property vibrate and Trafford MBC have been contacted to register the Society's concerns and as advised, numerous photos of the office walls have been taken.

It is looking like the tenants on the Ground Floor Suite are moving out but the basement drainage blockage needs remedying before putting it on the market.

(iv) **STOCKPORT:**

Justin Robinson is in communication with the firm (CBRE) acting for Lloyds Bank who have the building on the market to find a firm to take Lloyds' place with the Lease in force until 25<sup>th</sup> December 2022.

CBRE do not propose making a financial offer to exit the Lease early because any offer would be poor based on Lloyds' standard approach and wouldn't be acceptable.

Interest from Stockport Food Bank looking for space has been rejected as it would have involved the charity paying only business rates and utilities relieving Lloyds Bank of that obligation but Justin thinks the issue is that both Lloyds and the charity wish to avoid costs in administering the building properly which could leave all parties exposed when there is a problem.

(v) **MONEY ON DEPOSIT:**

The current position was highlighted to the meeting.

(vi) **GROUND RENTS:**

**Woodford Green:**

Justin Robinson had reported as follows:

**Number 34 & 36 – Motiwala and Saleem:** Enquiry received regarding the Lease extension. Tenants' solicitors has asked how this will be structured. This is with Chestertons to consider. Tenant has not chased.

**Number 44 – Dunbavan:** - Lease extension requested by notice. Premium offered **£4,700.00**. Counter notice issued last week at a premium of **£95,629.00**.

**Number 58 – Joseph:** – Lease extension requested by negotiation. In legals. Premium £25,374.

**Number 74 – Bedford:** - Lease extension requested by negotiation. In legals. Premium £31,500.

**Number 78 – Gayer:** - Tenant has enquired verbally about a freehold purchase. Justin has diarised a discussion with Chestertons on his return from holiday regarding the structure.

**Number 82 & 84 – Byrne and Farmer:** - Freehold requested. In legals. Premium £26,692.

**Number 94 – Roxby:** - Lease extension requested by notice. Counter notice served by us on the 16<sup>th</sup> August. Premium sought £17,048.

**Number 96 – Reed:** - Enquiry received for Lease extension. Responded on 2<sup>nd</sup> September. The tenant has been told we were looking to have Shulem B fall away from the matter which would ease and speed the process of extensions and it might be better to await the outcome of that prior to negotiations. Explained that serving notice was however an option to Mrs Reed and she should seek legal advice.

The matter of Shulem B is ongoing and Justin is ever hopeful this will fall into place quickly and allow us to conclude those deals agreed and get premiums paid. Going forward and without the involvement of Shulem B, the process will be easier in terms of complexity and most certainly quicker.

Justin is working on a strategy for how we deal with extensions/freehold sales going forward. To date we have been happy to accommodate extensions by negotiation. It is not a bad strategy but has proved challenging and time consuming with the current negotiations in mind. Tenants are constantly calling for updates. Shulem B is of course the hold up at the moment. Once Shulem B are out of the picture the situation should be more straightforward. Justin does though wonder if going forward we should have a policy where extensions and freehold purchases are dealt with by notice. It formalises the matter and sets time frames and provision for fee payments. Negotiations by contrast provides a platform for unease if tenants don't get what they want. A formal way of dealing with things would remove a lot of the time consuming matters. Justin will work up thoughts and advise on what he thinks is best, but get Shulem B dealt with first.

(vii) **DEED LIST MEETING:**

The next meeting provisionally scheduled for Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> February 2022, subject to availability of the Society's Auditors, will include the Deed List Inspection.

**IT WAS RESOLVED AGREED: “that the Trustees be thanked for their informative Report.”**

**2021/11/14 ACCOUNTS:**

**14.0** Noted, the Society's registered Auditors had submitted their fees for the year of account ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020 reflecting inflation increase in costs, a combined fee of **£11,200.00** plus vat (**£11,000.00** plus vat 2019).

**IT WAS RESOLVED AND AGREED: “that settlement of the fees be endorsed”.**

**14.1** Noted, the Deputy Grand Secretary, Brother D. Oakes, presented his report to the meeting confirming assets and liabilities were in balance

and reported on the Society's budget for which he was warmly thanked.

**2021/11/15 LEVIES INCLUDING ASSETS LEVY & DISTRIBUTION OF INVESTEMENT INCOME:**

- 15.0** Noted, it is normal practice at November meeting to determine the rate of the assets levy and to also authorise call in of one third of the amount allocated to Head Office Management Fund from branch valuations.

**IT WAS RESOLVED AGREED: "to appropriate to Head Office Management the amount allocated thereto from the valuation and the Grand Secretary be authorised to issue the annual levy notices to branches."**

Noted, the 14<sup>th</sup> November 2020 Board meeting had agreed for the next two years the Assets Levy be set at 5% with a differential of 0.75% in respect of property re-valuations, the Levy being charged against the assets included in the Branch Consolidated Returns other than a deposit in the Order Investment Fund and the first £500 deposited in a savings bank account.

- 15.1** It was noted, before consideration of the Distribution of Investment Income, Brother V.M. Houldsworth P.G.M. advised the matter received lengthy consideration at a Trustee Meeting held Tuesday the 9<sup>th</sup> of November 2021 and the meeting gave consideration to income and expenditure projections provided by the Deputy Grand Secretary, Brother D. Oakes.

**IT WAS RESOLVED AGREED: "that in accordance with the recommendation of the Society's Trustee calculated in the usual manner as at 30<sup>th</sup> November 2021, surplus to be distributed in the form of interest to all deposits in the Order Investment Fund at the rate of 3% basic and 2% bonus, calculated in the same manner to all Branch deposits and any shortfall in income for distribution to be transferred from the Interest Reserve Account."**

**2021/11/16 FAMILY FUN DAY:**

Noted and agreed the next Fun Day be held in the year of a One Day AGM.

**2021/11/17 FRATERNAL MOVABLE CONFERENCES/AFFILIATED LODGES:**

**17.1 Puerto Rico & Jurisdiction:**

Noted, letter received from Puerto Rico & Jurisdiction requesting approval from the Board to expel from the Order the Brothers listed and

agreed that the Board acknowledge the decision by the Committee of Management of Puerto Rico & Jurisdiction to expel the Brothers listed.

**2021/11/18 “2022” ANNUAL MOVABLE CONFERENCE:**

**18.0** Noted, the Grand Master and the Secretariat met with the Village Hotel, Blackpool representative on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> August 2021 and booked the “Inspiration 3” Suite for Conference on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> May and Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> May 2022 and made a block reservation of 40 assorted rooms for 3 nights arriving Friday.

**18.1** Noted, Warren Tolley, now operating privately, has been booked for audio-visual/technical support on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> May 2022 at a cost of **£1,000 plus VAT**, payable at least 7 days in advance.

**IT WAS RESOLVED AGREED: “the Grand Secretary be authorised to make payment at the due time.”**

**18.2** Noted, attempts to make arrangements for a Service of Dedication at St Paul’s, Marton were unsuccessful due to Covid restrictions but once restrictions have eased, further contact will be attempted.

**18.3** Further noted, Advance Notice and Credential Forms have been issued to Branches and Past Grand Masters, and Election Forms also issued to Branch Secretaries and deadlines informed for both forms being 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021 and 7<sup>th</sup> February 2022 respectively.

**18.4** Noted, additional requirements received consideration.

**IT WAS RESOLVED AGREED: “to have face masks produced for Conference in black with GUOOFs printed in white and arrange sanitizers with GUOOFs branding for all in attendance.”**

**2021/11/19 “2023” ANNUAL MOVABLE CONFERENCE:**

Noted, the venue is being booked for Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2023.

**2021/11/20 HEAD OFFICE STAFF/PREMISES:**

**20.0** Noted, Metrorod attended the premises on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> November 2021 and a hosepipe was inserted to pump water 17 metres from underneath the basement. A load of silt was removed and water is draining slowly. A sonar scan is required to find the blockage further along.

**20.1** Noted, ongoing demolition works of buildings near the office have made the office vibrate and Trafford MBC have been contacted to register our concerns and as advised, numerous photos of the office walls have been taken.

**20.2** Further noted, it is looking like the tenants on the Ground Floor Suite are moving out but the basement drainage blockage needs remedying before putting it on the market.

**2021/11/21 CLIMATE CHANGE PLANS:**

Noted, Specified wording will be required to be included in the Annual Accounts and the Actuary to provide the narrative for the written documentation that will also be required.

Noted and agreed, the Board, to recycle covers and binders of Annual Accounts and that Minutes and Agendas of Meetings to be distributed electronically and Head Office to phase in switching to LED lighting.

**2021/11/22 LUNCHEON ARRANGEMENTS:**

**IT WAS RESOLVED AGREED: “that everyone again be responsible for their own arrangements”.**

**2021/11/23 DATE OF NEXT MEETING:**

**IT WAS RESOLVED AGREED: “that the next meeting of the Society’s Board of Directors be held in accordance with the General Rules on Saturday, 12<sup>th</sup> February 2022.”**

**[The meeting closed at 11.17 p.m.]**

**Signed:** ..... **[Chairman]**

**Dated:** ..... **[2021]**